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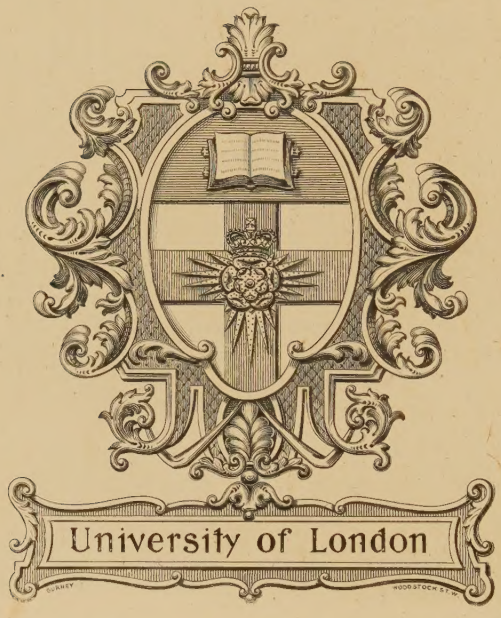

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HANSARD'S
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THIRD SERIES:

COMMENCING WITH THE ACCESSION OF

WILLIAM IV.

48° VICTORIÆ, 1884-5.

VOL. CCXCVII.

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TO

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[1.30.]

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COMMONS, TUESDAY, APRIL 21.

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—o—

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Question put, "That the word 'To-morrow' stand part of the Question:"—The House *divided*; Ayes 67, Noes 5; Majority 62.—(Div. List, No. 119.)
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—o—

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Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that the Vote of Credit to be submitted in Committee of Supply on account of the Soudan Expedition should be considered separately from the Vote of Credit to be submitted on account of other Military and Naval expenditure,"—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor*,)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 229, Noes 186; Majority 43.—(Div. List, No. 129.)

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Original Question again proposed 883

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Amendments made ; the Report thereof to be received on *Thursday* next ; and Bill to be *printed,* as amended. (No. 92.)

Egyptian Loan Bill (No. 74)—
Bill read 3ª (according to order) 953
On Question, "That the Bill do pass ?"—After short debate, Bill *passed.*

NAVY (SHIPS BUILDING)—MINISTERIAL PROGRAMME — Question, Observations, The Earl of Ravensworth ; Reply, The Earl of Northbrook .. 953
[7.45.]

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PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND) — WORKS AT KINSALE AND MALINMORE, BUNDORAN, CO. DONEGAL—Questions, Mr. Deasy, Mr. Lea ; Answers, Mr. Hibbert 959
WAYS AND MEANS — THE INCOME TAX ON TENANT FARMERS — Question, Mr. Birkbeck ; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer .. 960
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Army—The Brigade of Guards—Question, Mr. Percy Wyndham; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 964
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Central Asia—Russia and Afghanistan—Russian Occupation of Herat —Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Mr. Gladstone .. 969
Central Asia—The Afghan Boundary Commission—Mr. Stephen and Sir Peter Lumsden's Despatch—Question, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 970
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Registration of Voters (Ireland) Bill—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland 971

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill [Bill 134]—
Bill, as amended, *considered* [First Night] 972
After long debate, Further Consideration of Bill *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

Supply—Report—Resolutions [27th April] *reported* 1029
First Resolution *postponed*
Second Resolution *agreed to.*
Third Resolution read a first time:—*Moved*, "That the said Resolution be read a second time:"—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*
Resolution *agreed to.*
Subsequent Resolutions *agreed to.*
Postponed Resolution to be taken into Consideration upon *Thursday.*

Registration of Voters (Ireland) [Payment of Additional Revising Barristers]—
Resolution [April 27] *reported*, and *agreed to* 1032

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Post Office Sites [Purchase of Land and Expenses]—
Resolution [April 27] *reported*, and *agreed to* 1032

Industries (Ireland)—Nomination of Select Committee [Adjourned Debate]—
Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [24th April], "That the Select Committee on Industries (Ireland) do consist of Twenty-four Members,"—(*Sir Eardley Wilmot:*)—Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 1032
Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "Twenty-four," in order to insert the words "Twenty-five,"—(*Mr. Sheil,*)—instead thereof.
Question proposed, "That the words 'Twenty-four' stand part of the Question:"—After debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Molloy:*)—After further short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*
Original Question put, "That the words 'Twenty-four' stand part of the Question:"—The House *divided;* Ayes 6, Noes 24; Majority 18.—(Div. List, No. 30.)
And it appearing on the Report of the Division that 40 Members were not present, [House adjourned] [2.45.]

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29.

QUESTION.

Central Asia—Russia and Afghanistan—Russian Advance—Occupation of Maruchak—Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1050

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill [Bill 134]—
Bill, as amended, *further considered* [Second Night] 1050
After debate, it being now a quarter before Six of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.
Further Proceeding on Consideration of the Bill, as amended, *deferred* till *Monday* next.

Parliament—Business of the House—Statement, Sir Charles W. Dilke:—Short debate thereon 1080
[5.55.]

LORDS, THURSDAY, APRIL 30.

Central Asia—Russia and Afghanistan—Russian Advance—Occupation of Maruchak—Question, Earl De La Warr; Answer, Earl Granville 1082

Federal Council of Australasia Bill (No. 69)—
Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee on the said Bill,"—(*The Earl of Derby*).. 1083
After short debate, Motion *agreed to:*—House in Committee:—Bill *reported*, without Amendment; and to be read 3ª *To-morrow.*

Infants Bill (No. 78)—
Bill read 3ª (according to Order) 1084
On Motion, "That the Bill do pass?"—After short debate, Motion *agreed to:*—Bill *passed* accordingly, and sent to the Commons.

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Amendments *reported* (according to Order) 1092
After short debate, Bill to be read 3ª *To-morrow.*

Egypt (Military Expedition)—The Expedition up the Nile—Question, Observations, Viscount Hardinge; Reply, The Earl of Morley .. 1094
South Africa—The Cape Colony—Cape Town and Simon's Bay Railway—Question, Observations, Viscount Sidmouth, Lord Chelmsford; Reply, The Earl of Derby; Observations, The Earl of Carnarvon .. 1096

[7.15.]

COMMONS, THURSDAY, APRIL 30.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 4) Bill [Bill 116]—
Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [23rd April], "That the Bill be now read a second time:"—Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 1098
After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

QUESTIONS.

South Africa—The Transvaal (Finance, &c.)—Question, Mr. Salt; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer 1100
Poor Law (Ireland)—Belfast Board of Guardians—Holywood Burial Ground—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.. 1100
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Poor Law (Ireland)—Amalgamation of Newport and Westport Poor Law Unions—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1103
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Law and Justice (Ireland)—Monaghan Licensing Sessions—Question, Lord Arthur Hill; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland .. 1108
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MERCHANT SHIPPING—SALE OF THE "KINFAUNS CASTLE" TO RUSSIA—Question, Mr. Coleridge Kennard; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain .. 1115

PRISONS (IRELAND)—KILKENNY FEMALE PRISON—Question, Mr. Marum; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1116

PARLIAMENT—ADMISSION OF STRANGERS TO THE HOUSE—THE NEW REGULATIONS—Question, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer 1116

PARLIAMENT—PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—WESTMINSTER HALL (RESTORATION)—Question, Mr. Causton; Answer, Mr. Herbert Gladstone .. 1117

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EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—THE NEW SOUTH WALES CONTINGENT—Questions, Mr. O'Donnell, Mr. Macfarlane, Mr. William Redmond; Answers, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 1119

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND)—THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND—Question, Mr. Dalrymple; Answer, The Lord Advocate 1120

POOR LAW—PRESCOT (LANCASHIRE) UNION—MR. DUNN—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. George Russell 1120

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND) BILL—Question, Mr. Brodrick; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer 1120

CORPORATION OF LONDON TOWER BRIDGE BILL — Question, Mr. Brodrick; Answer, Mr. Brand 1121

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LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND) — THE BARRAVILLA PRISONERS — Questions, Mr. Callan; Answers, The Solicitor General for Ireland .. 1122

CENTRAL ASIA—AFGHANISTAN—ENGAGEMENTS WITH THE AMEER—Questions, Mr. John Morley, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1122

CIVIL SERVICE (PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATURE) — MR. W. JOHNSTON, INSPECTOR OF FISHERIES—Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1124

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—THE DEFENCE OF KHARTOUM—GENERAL GORDON—Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1125

CENTRAL ASIA—THE AFGHAN BOUNDARY COMMISSION—SIR PETER LUMSDEN—Question, Mr. O'Kelly; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1126

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EGYPT — SUPPRESSION OF THE "BOSPHORE EGYPTIEN"—Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1129

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered* in Committee—FINANCIAL STATEMENT—

(In the Committee.)

Moved, "That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, there shall be charged, collected, and paid for the year which commenced on the sixth day of April, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five, in respect of all Property, Profits, and Gains mentioned or described as chargeable in the Act of the sixteenth and seventeenth years of Her Majesty's reign, chapter thirty-four, the following Duties of Income Tax (that is to say):

For every Twenty Shillings of the annual value or amount of Property, Profits, and Gains chargeable under Schedules (A), (C), (D), or (E) of the said Act, the Duty of Eight Pence;

And for every Twenty Shillings of the annual value of the occupation of Lands, Tenements, Hereditaments, and Heritages chargeable under Schedule (B) of the said Act,—

In England, the Duty of Four Pence;
In Scotland and Ireland respectively, the Duty of Three Pence;

Subject to the provisions contained in section one hundred and sixty-three of the Act of the fifth and sixth years of Her Majesty's reign, chapter thirty-five, for the exemption of persons whose income is less than One hundred and Fifty Pounds, and in section eight of 'The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1876,' for the relief of persons whose income is less than Four Hundred Pounds,"—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*) .. 1129

After long debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions 2 to 6, inclusive, *agreed to.*

(7.) Motion made, and Question put, "That, in lieu of the Duty of Excise now payable on British Spirits under the Act of the twenty-third and twenty-fourth years of Her Majesty's Reign, chapter one hundred and twenty-nine, there shall be charged and paid the Duty of Excise following, that is to say:—

For and upon every gallon, computed at hydrometer proof, of spirits distilled in the United Kingdom, the Duty of twelve shillings;

and so in proportion for any less quantity,"—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

The Committee *divided;* Ayes 109, Noes 27; Majority 82.—(Div. List, No. 143.)

Resolutions 8 to 11, inclusive, *agreed to.*

(12.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Duties of Customs now chargeable upon Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-six, on the importation thereof into Great Britain or Ireland (that is to say):

Tea . . . . . the pound . Sixpence" 1251

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "Sixpence," in order to insert the words "Four Pence,"—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor,*)—instead thereof.

Question, "That the word 'Sixpence' stand part of the Question," put, and *agreed to:*—Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

(13.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That on a day to be fixed by the Commissioners of the Treasury the Duties of Customs now chargeable on Wine shall cease and determine, and that on and after such day there shall be charged the Duties following (that is to say):—

	£	s.	d.
Wine containing less than 30·1 degrees of proof spirit, and less of such Wine, the gallon	0	1	0
Wine containing less than 42 degrees of proof spirit, and less of such Wine, the gallon	0	2	6

WAYS AND MEANS—FINANCIAL STATEMENT—Committee—*continued.*

And for every degree of strength beyond the highest above specified an additional Duty of 3*d.* the gallon,"—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*) 1252

After short debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 98, Noes 26; Majority 72.—(Div. List, No. 144.)

Resolution 14 *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow;* Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

FINANCIAL STATEMENT (1885-6)—

Statement *ordered,* "of Income and Expenditure, as laid before the House by the Chancellor of the Exchequer when opening the Budget."—(*Mr. Hibbert.*)

Statement *presented* accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be *printed.* [No. 174.]

Metropolitan Streets Act (1867) Extension Bill [Bill 137]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. H. H. Fowler*) 1253

Motion *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

Medical Act (1858) Amendment Bill [Bill 130]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Dr. Lyons*) .. 1254

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor:*)—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to:*—Debate *adjourned* till *Monday* next.

INDUSTRIES (IRELAND)—NOMINATION OF SELECT COMMITTEE [ADJOURNED DEBATE]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [24th April], "That the Select Committee on Industries (Ireland) do consist of Twenty-four Members:"—Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 1256

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "Twenty-four," in order to insert the words "Twenty-five,"—(*Mr. Sheil,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words 'Twenty-four' stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That the words 'Twenty-five' be there inserted," put, and *agreed to:*—Main Question, as amended, put.

Committee *nominated:*—List of the Committee 1257

MOTIONS.

POST OFFICE MAIL CONTRACT (ROYAL MAIL STEAM PACKET COMPANY)—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That the Contract with the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company, for the conveyance of the Mails to and from the West Indies, be approved,"—(*Mr. Hibbert*) .. 1258

After short debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Sexton:*)—After further short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Holms, Mr. Chamberlain*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 143] 1265

Leasehold Building Land Enfranchisement Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Daniel Grant, Mr. Inderwick, Mr. Spencer Balfour, Sir Thomas Chambers, Mr. Firth*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 145] 1266

Turbary (Ireland) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Lea, Mr. Thomas Dickson, Mr. Findlater*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 146] 1266

Land Tenure (Scotland) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Barclay, Sir George Balfour, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. James Howard*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 147] .. 1266

Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt Practices) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Richard Paget, Sir Joseph Pease, Mr. Bulwer*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 148] .. 1266

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Northfleet Docks Bill—Petitions Presented. Resolution—
Moved, "That the Examiners' Certificate of non-compliance with the Standing Orders be referred back to the Standing Orders Committee,"—(*The Marquess of Salisbury*) 1267
After short debate, on Question? *resolved* in the *negative*.

South Africa—Methuen's Irregular Horse—Militia Lieutenants—Question, Observations, Lord Harris; Reply, The Earl of Morley .. 1272

Egypt—The Soudan—The Friendly Tribes—Question, Observations, Viscount Bury; Reply, Earl Granville; Observations, The Marquess of Salisbury 1273

South Africa—Stellaland—Address for Papers—
Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Papers respecting the settlement of difficulties in Stellaland,"—(*The Lord Harris*) 1279
After short debate, Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn*.

Water Companies (Regulation of Powers) Bill (No. 21)—
Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee on the said Bill,"—(*The Earl of Camperdown*) 1282
After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—House in Committee.
Amendments (proposed by the Select Committee) made; the Report thereof to be received on *Monday* next.

Parliament—Business of the House—Resolution—
Moved, "That this House sits on Mondays at Five o'clock, in lieu of a quarter past Four o'clock,"—(*The Lord Denman*) 1283
After short debate, on Question? *resolved* in the *negative*.

Criminal Law Amendment Bill (No. 92)—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3ª,"—(*The Earl of Dalhousie*) .. 1284
After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill *passed*, and sent to the Commons.

Burgh Police and Health (Scotland) Bill—
Select Committee *nominated*:—List of the Committee 1285

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COMMONS, FRIDAY, MAY 1.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

—o—

Regent's Canal, City, and Docks Railway Bill (*by Order*)—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Dodds*) .. 1286
Amendment proposed,
To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it is not expedient to pass any Railway Bill which involves the payment of interest out of capital during the construction of works pending the introduction of a public measure on this subject, as recommended by a Committee of this House in 1882, especially where such a Bill practically makes the alteration of the Standing Orders of this House retrospective in their action,"—(*Sir Joseph Pease*,)—instead thereof.
Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 187, Noes 117; Majority 70.—(Div. List, No. 145.)
Main Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed*.

QUESTIONS.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—LONDONDERRY ASSIZES — SPECIAL JURORS — Questions, Mr. Healy, Mr. Lewis; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1312

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Registration of Voters (Scotland) Bill [Bill 132]—
Bill *considered* in Committee 1421
After some time spent therein, Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered upon *Monday* next, and to be *printed.* [Bill 151.]

Ways and Means—Report—Customs and Inland Revenue Bill—Ways and Means—Resolutions [April 30] *reported* 1446
Resolution 1 (Income Tax) read a first time.
Moved, "That the Resolution be read a second time:"—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to:*—Resolution *agreed to.*
Resolution 2 (Stamp Duties on Account of Property) 1448
After short debate, Resolution *agreed to:*—Remaining Resolutions *agreed to.*
Bill *ordered* (*Sir Arthur Otway, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Hibbert.*)

Metropolitan Streets Act (1867) Extension Bill [Bill 137]—
Bill *considered* in Committee 1449
After short time spent therein, Bill *reported,* without Amendment; to be read the third time on *Monday* next.

Waterworks Clauses Act (1847) Amendment Bill [Bill 7]—
Bill *considered* in Committee 1450
After some time spent therein, Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered upon *Friday* next, and to be *printed.* [Bill 152.]

East India Unclaimed Stocks [Expenses]—
Considered in Committee 1469
Resolution *agreed to;* to be reported upon *Monday* next.

Gas and Water Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill — *Ordered* (*Mr. Holms, Mr. Chamberlain*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 149] 1470
[3.30.]

LORDS, MONDAY, MAY 4.

Central Asia—Russia and Afghanistan—The Russo-Afghan Frontier—The Negotiations—
France and Egypt—Suppression of the "Bosphore Egyptien"—The Negotiations—Question, Observations, The Marquess of Salisbury; Reply, Earl Granville 1470
Egypt (Affairs of the Soudan)—The Egyptian Frontier—Question, Observations, The Earl of Galloway, Viscount Cranbrook; Reply, Earl Granville; Questions, The Earl of Milltown, The Marquess of Salisbury; Answers, The Earl of Kimberley 1474
The New Public Offices—The War Office and Admiralty—The Stone for Building—Questions, Lord Lamington, The Earl of Wemyss; Answers, The Earl of Rosebery 1477
Railways—Level Crossings — Question, Lord Braye; Answer, Lord Sudeley 1478

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TURKEY—THE BOSPHORUS AND DARDANELLES—CONVENTION OF PARIS, 1856, AND TREATY OF BERLIN, 1878—Postponement of Resolution, Lord Stratheden and Campbell 1479

[5.0.]

COMMONS, MONDAY, MAY 4.

QUESTIONS.

WAYS AND MEANS—INLAND REVENUE—THE STAMP DUTIES—PATENT MEDICINES—Question, Mr. Stuart-Wortley; Answer, Mr. Hibbert .. 1479

VACCINATION—HOSPITAL ATTENDANTS—SHEFFIELD HOSPITAL—Questions, Mr. Hopwood; Answers, Mr. George Russell 1480

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND)—BEITH SCHOOL ELECTION—Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The Lord Advocate 1481

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS—PENSIONS—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman .. 1482

FISHERY COMMISSIONERS (IRELAND)—CANDIDATES FOR VACANT COMMISSIONERSHIP—Question, Mr. O'Shea; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman .. 1482

CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT (IRELAND)—GALWAY CUSTOM HOUSE—AMOUNT PAID FOR OVERWORK, 1884-5—Question, Colonel Nolan; Answer, Mr. Hibbert 1483

ARMY (INDIA)—THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER—GRANT OF MEDAL AND BATTA TO OFFICERS AND MEN ENGAGED IN THE ZHOB EXPEDITION—Question, Mr. Guy Dawnay; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross 1484

PARLIAMENT—PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—VENTILATION OF THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT—Question, Sir Lyon Playfair; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1484

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS—THE FIRE BRIGADE COMMITTEE—Questions, Baron Henry De Worms, Mr. Causton; Answers, Sir James M'Garel Hogg 1485

CIVIL SERVICE (PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATURE)—MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON, INSPECTOR OF IRISH FISHERIES—Questions, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Healy, Mr. Lewis; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1486

LUNATIC ASYLUMS (IRELAND)—RICHMOND LUNATIC ASYLUM—GRIEVANCES OF ATTENDANTS—Question, Mr. T. D. Sullivan; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1488

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES)—PENSIONS TO TEACHERS—Question, Mr. Brodrick; Answer, Mr. Mundella 1488

THE COMMISSIONERS OF IRISH LIGHTS—BALLYSHANNON HARBOUR—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 1489

COMPANIES ACT, 1862, SEC. 51—Question, Mr. Kenny; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 1490

PUBLIC SCHOOLS—DEATH OF A STUDENT AT KING'S COLLEGE SCHOOL—Questions, Mr. Acland, Mr. Alderman W. Lawrence; Answers, Sir William Harcourt 1490

PAPAL SEE—DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATION WITH THE VATICAN—MR. ERRINGTON—Questions, Mr. Sexton, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Mr. Mitchell Henry, Mr. Bourke; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice .. 1492

THE CITY OF LONDON PAROCHIAL CHARITIES COMMISSION—Question, Mr. Bryce; Answer, Mr. Mundella 1494

POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)—PRESCOT (LANCASHIRE) UNION—APPOINTMENT OF RATE COLLECTOR—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. George Russell 1494

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—MISCONDUCT OF A POLICE CONSTABLE AT MULLINGAR—Question, Mr. T. D. Sullivan; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1495

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CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT — REDUNDANT CLERKS — Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Hibbert 1500

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—SPAIN AND THE WINE DUTIES—Question, Mr. Whitley; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1501

EGYPT (THE SOUDAN)—PRISONERS OF THE MAHDI—Question, Mr. Montagu Scott; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1501

SUNDAY CLOSING EXTENSION (IRELAND) BILL—Question, Mr. Gibson; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1502

ARMY—DIVINE SERVICE—PRESBYTERIAN CHAPLAINS—Question, Mr. Samuel Smith; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1503

ARMY ORGANIZATION—THE TERRITORIAL SYSTEM—Question, Mr. A. J. Balfour; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1503

ARMY—ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN—DEFECTIVE CARTRIDGES—Questions, Sir Frederick Milner, Lord Eustace Cecil, Captain Aylmer; Answers, Mr. Brand 1504

GREAT BRITAIN AND RUSSIA—PORT HAMILTON (COREA)—Question, Viscount Lewisham; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1505

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—RUSSIAN ATTACK ON THE AFGHANS AT PENJDEH—THE NEGOTIATIONS—Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1506

EGYPT—SUPPRESSION OF THE "BOSPHORE EGYPTIEN" — Statement, Mr. Gladstone; Observations, Sir Stafford Northcote; Reply, Mr. Gladstone 1506

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—THE RUSSO-AFGHAN FRONTIER —THE NEGOTIATIONS—Observations, Mr. Gladstone; Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1508

ARMY—EXAMINATIONS FOR COMMISSIONS—Question, Mr. Heneage; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1511

THE REGISTRATION BILLS—Questions, Mr. Healy, Lord John Manners, Colonel Nolan, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Gorst, Sir George Campbell, Mr. Gibson; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke, The Lord Advocate, The Solicitor General for Ireland 1512

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—Questions, Mr. Serjeant Simon, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke .. 1515

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—THE MALT TAX — Question, Sir Walter B. Barttelot; Answer, Mr. Hibbert 1516

REGISTRATION EXPENSES—RELIEF AS TO BOROUGHS—Question, Sir Massey Lopes; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1517

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE VOTE OF CREDIT—Questions, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Onslow; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke:—Short debate thereon 1517

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ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—VOTE OF CREDIT—REPORT—Postponed Resolution [27th April] *further considered.*

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £11,000,000, be granted to Her Majesty, beyond the ordinary grants of Parliament, to defray the Charge which may come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1886, for—(1.) Remaining Charges in the Soudan and Upper Egypt; (2.) Special Naval and Military Preparations" 1523

Amendment proposed, to leave out "£11,000,000," in order to insert "7,000,000,"—(*Mr. Labouchere,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That £11,000,000 stand part of the proposed Resolution:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 79, Noes 29; Majority 50.—(Div. List, No. 151.)

Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution" 1553

After debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Chaplin:*)—After further short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 114, Noes 181; Majority 67.—(Div. List, No. 152.)

Original Question again proposed 1605

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Baron Henry De Worms:*)—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 111, Noes 169; Majority 58.—(Div. List, No. 153.)

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Sidney Herbert:*)—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 106, Noes 164; Majority 58.—(Div. List, No. 154.)

Original Question again proposed 1616

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Brodrick:*)—After short debate, Question put, and *negatived:*—Original Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 130, Noes 20; Majority 110.—(Div. List, No. 155.)

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND) [REMUNERATION OF OFFICERS]—

Considered in Committee 1620

Resolution *agreed to;* to be reported *To-morrow.*

[2.45.]

LORDS, TUESDAY, MAY 5.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—THE NEGOTIATIONS—Question, Earl De La Warr; Answer, Earl Granville; Observations, The Marquess of Salisbury 1621

RAILWAY BRAKES—LEGISLATION—Question, Observations, Earl De La Warr; Reply, Lord Sudeley 1622

PUBLIC HEALTH—CREMATION—Observations, Question, The Earl of Onslow; Answer, The Earl of Dalhousie 1623

Sea Fisheries (Scotland) Amendment Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Earl of Dalhousie*); read 1ª (No. 102) 1625

[4.45.]

COMMONS, TUESDAY, MAY 5.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Channel Tunnel (*Experimental Works*) *Bill* (*by Order*)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time" 1626

Amendment proposed, "That the Order be postponed until Tuesday the 12th instant,"—(*Mr. Webster:*)—After short debate, Second Reading *deferred* till *Tuesday* next.

QUESTIONS.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—WORK OF THE COURT OF SESSION — Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The Lord Advocate 1628

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS, MANORHAMILTON UNION—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman .. 1628

COMMITTEE OF PRIVILEGES—THE LOVAT PEERAGE—REMOVAL OF COFFIN PLATES FROM VAULT AT KIRKHILL — Question, Mr. Morgan Lloyd; Answer, The Lord Advocate 1629

PARLIAMENT—PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—WESTMINSTER HALL (RESTORATION)—Question, Mr. Mitchell Henry; Answer, Mr. Herbert Gladstone .. 1630

THE SCOTTISH ISLANDS—DEATHS IN THE ISLAND OF RONA—Questions, Dr. Cameron; Answers, The Lord Advocate 1631

PUBLIC HEALTH (METROPOLIS)—STATE OF THE RIVER LEA—Question, Mr. James Stuart; Answer, Mr. George Russell 1632

AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT—INSECTS INJURIOUS TO CROPS—Question, Mr. Rankin; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1633

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—SURVEYORS' CLERKS — Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre 1633

POST OFFICE—ANNUITIES AND INSURANCE TABLES—Question, Mr. Rankin; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre.. 1634

LIGHTHOUSES — BURNERS — SIR JAMES DOUGLAS'S BURNERS — Question, Colonel King-Harman; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 1634

DISPENSARIES (IRELAND) ACT—DISPENSARY DOCTOR, SKULL DISTRICT — Question, Mr. Deasy; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman .. 1635

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—THE CLERK OF THE SOUTH DUBLIN UNION—Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.. .. 1635

WOODS AND FORESTS—THE FOREST OF DEAN—Question, Mr. Ackers; Answer, Mr. Hibbert 1636

INFIRMARIES (IRELAND) ACT—DONEGAL INFIRMARY, LIFFORD—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1637

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—PROTECTION AT KILMOON, CO. CLARE—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1637

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. HAMILTON, RESIDENT MAGISTRATE, ARMAGH—SALARY AND ALLOWANCES—Questions, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1637

WAYS AND MEANS—THE DEFICIT OF 1884-5 — Questions, Mr. Gorst, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answers, Mr. Hibbert 1638

WAYS AND MEANS—INLAND REVENUE—THE NEW BEER DUTY—Questions, Sir Joseph Bailey, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Allsopp; Answers, Mr. Hibbert .. 1638

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—THE "DEATH DUTIES"—Question, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answer, Mr. Hibbert 1640

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—THE HIGHLAND CROFTERS—Question, Mr. Macfarlane; Answer, The Lord Advocate 1640

TURKEY—THE BRITISH EMBASSY AT CONSTANTINOPLE — Question, Mr. Cartwright; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1641

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—POLICE DISTRICT OF JOHNSTOWN—Question, Mr. Marum; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1641

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—THE FREE FORCE—Question, Mr. Marum; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1643

EGYPT (THE MILITARY EXPEDITION)—THE NILE FORCE—Questions, Colonel King-Harman; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington .. 1644

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—SPAIN AND THE WINE DUTIES—Questions, Mr. Mac Iver; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1644

THE SUEZ CANAL COMMISSION—Question, Mr. Puleston; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1645

CURRENCY—GOLD AND SILVER COINAGE—THE CONFERENCE—Question, Mr. Puleston; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1645

Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1646

Egypt—The Soudan—Policy of the Government—Question, Mr. Guy Dawnay; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1646

Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—The late Mr. F. Power — Question, Mr. William Redmond; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice .. 1646

British Empire—The Native Princes of India—Question, Mr. Puleston; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1647

Central Asia—Russia and Afghanistan—The Afghan Boundary Commission—Recall of Sir Peter Lumsden—Questions, Sir H. Drummond Wolff, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Onslow, Sir Stafford Northcote, Lord Randolph Churchill, Lord John Manners, Mr. Chaplin; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1647

Egypt — Suppression of the "Bosphore Egyptien"—Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Mr. Speaker.. 1653

Egypt (The Military Expedition)—The Nile Force—Condition of the Troops—Questions, Colonel Nolan, Lord Eustace Cecil; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington 1653

Parliament—Business of the House—Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1654

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

Registration (Occupation Voters) (*re-committed*) **Bill** [Bill 140]—[First Night]

Order for Committee read:—*Moved*, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" 1654

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House, while desirous of facilitating in every way the Registration of Voters, is of opinion that, inasmuch as the preparation of the Register for Parliamentary Elections is a matter of National rather than local concern, the expenses connected therewith should not be imposed on ratepayers in counties and boroughs, and levied in respect of the occupation of a single description of property," —(*Sir Massey Lopes,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After long debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 240, Noes 237; Majority 3.

Division List, Ayes and Noes 1721

Main Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill *considered* in Committee .. 1726

After short time spent therein, Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) (No. 8) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 158] .. 1734

Ways and Means—

Order for Committee read:—*Moved*, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" [House counted out] [1.30.]

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, MAY 6.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—o—

Registration (Occupation Voters) (*re-committed*) **Bill** [Bill 140]—

Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress 5th May*] [Second Night] .. 1735

After long time spent therein, Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

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PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—ORDER OF PUBLIC BUSINESS—Observations, Mr. Gladstone:—Short debate thereon 1810

Representation of the People (Consolidation) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Hardcastle, Sir Alexander Gordon*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 160] 1813

[5.55.]

LORDS, THURSDAY, MAY 7.

DOMINION OF CANADA — INSURRECTION IN THE NORTH-WEST TERRITORY—Questions, The Earl of Carnarvon, The Earl of Redesdale; Answers, The Earl of Derby 1813

SALMON FISHERIES (SCOTLAND)—LEGISLATION—Question, The Marquess of Huntly; Answer, The Earl of Dalhousie 1814

Friendly Societies Act (1875) Amendment Bill (No. 77)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Lord Greville*) .. 1815

After short debate, on Question? their Lordships *divided;* Contents 32, Not-Contents 33; Majority 1.—*Resolved* in the *negative.*

TURKEY—THE BOSPHORUS AND DARDANELLES—CONVENTION OF PARIS, 1856, AND TREATY OF BERLIN, 1878—ADDRESS FOR PAPERS—

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Protocols or treaties by which the authority of the Sublime Porte to admit foreign ships of war into the Dardanelles is regulated,"—(*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell*) 1818

After short debate, on Question? *resolved* in the *negative.* [6.0.]

COMMONS, THURSDAY, MAY 7.

QUESTIONS.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—INCIDENCE OF TAXATION—Question, Mr. R. H. Paget; Answer, Mr. Hibbert 1827

VACCINATION—HOSPITAL ATTENDANTS—Question, Sir Lyon Playfair; Answer, Mr. George Russell 1828

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND)—THE SHOTTS SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS—Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The Lord Advocate .. 1828

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT, 1884—RETURNS UNDER THE ACT—Question, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answer, The Attorney General .. 1829

PARLIAMENT—PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—WESTMINSTER HALL (RESTORATION)—Questions, Mr. R. H. Paget, Mr. Mitchell Henry; Answers, Mr. Herbert Gladstone, Mr. Shaw Lefevre 1831

PRISONS (IRELAND)—VISITATION OF MOUNTJOY PRISON—Question, Sir Henry Holland; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1832

EGYPT—THE SOUDAN—MILITARY OPERATIONS—THE SUAKIN-BERBER RAILWAY—Questions, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Lord Eustace Cecil, Sir William Hart Dyke; Answers, Mr. Brand 1832

SUGAR BOUNTIES—PROPOSED CONFERENCE—Question, Mr. E. Stanhope; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1833

SPAIN—THE ZAMORA WATERWORKS COMPANY—Question, Mr. J. R. Yorke; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1834

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS—THE JAPANESE VILLAGE—CONSTRUCTION AND MEANS OF EXIT — Question, Mr. Onslow; Answer, Sir James M'Garel Hogg 1835

SECRET SOCIETIES (IRELAND)—USE OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS FOR MASONIC MEETINGS—THE COURT HOUSE, MARYBOROUGH, QUEEN'S CO.—Questions, Mr. Lalor, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman .. 1836

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS, MALLOW—Question, Mr. O'Brien; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1836

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—SUNDAY DELIVERY IN Co. MAYO — Question, Mr. O'Brien; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre 1837

POST OFFICE — SUNDAY DELIVERY IN THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT—Question, Mr. Small; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre 1838

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—ARMS LICENCE—NENAGH PETTY SESSIONS—CASE OF GEORGE NAPIER—Question, Mr. John O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1838

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS — ESKER DIVISION, EDENDERRY UNION—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1839

SEED SUPPLY (IRELAND) ACT—EXTENSION OF TIME FOR REPAYMENT OF LOANS—Question, Colonel Nolan; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1839

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE ULSTER CANAL—Questions, Dr. Lyons, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, Mr. Hibbert .. 1840

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND) — SLIGO HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS — MEMORIAL FOR EXTENSION OF TIME FOR REPAYMENT OF LOAN—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Hibbert 1841

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN) — SUPPLIES FOR THE TROOPS AT SUAKIN—Question, Mr. Digby; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington .. 1841

THE PAPAL SEE—DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATION WITH THE VATICAN—MR. ERRINGTON—Question, Mr. T. D. Sullivan; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1841

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION) — HEALTH OF THE TROOPS ON THE NILE — Questions, Viscount Lewisham, Colonel Dawnay, Mr. O'Kelly; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington 1842

LAW AND POLICE — THE FOLKESTONE ABDUCTION CASE — Question, Sir Edward Watkin; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 1843

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE RIVER BARROW—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman .. 1844

ARMY (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT) — THE MARTINI-HENRY CARTRIDGES — Question, Sir Frederick Milner; Answer, Mr. Brand 1844

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE KILKENNY DRAINAGE DISTRICT SCHEME—Question, Mr. Marum; Answer, Mr. Hibbert .. 1845

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND) — CASE OF MRS. ELIZA COLGAN — Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Hibbert 1846

LUNACY LAWS—MR. HILLMAN'S CASE—Questions, Mr. W. J. Corbet, Mr. Grantham; Answers, Sir William Harcourt 1846

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—HEAD MONEY—Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1847

CENTRAL ASIA—THE AFGHAN BOUNDARY COMMISSION—SIR PETER LUMSDEN —Questions, Mr. Gibson, Mr. Onslow, Sir H. Drummond Wolff, Lord George Hamilton; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice .. 1847

"THE SYNOD OF THE CHURCH OF IRELAND"—Questions, Mr. Healy, Mr. Gibson, Sir R. Assheton Cross, Mr. Illingworth; Answers, Sir William Harcourt; Question, Mr. Sexton [no reply] 1849

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—M. OLIVIER PAIN—Questions, Mr. Justin Huntly M'Carthy, Mr. O'Kelly, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington 1851

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—ARKLOW HARBOUR WORKS—Questions, Mr. W. J. Corbet, Mr. William Redmond; Answers, Mr. Hibbert .. 1852

INLAND REVENUE — STAMP DUTY ON FOREIGN BONDS—Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, Mr. Hibbert 1854

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN) — ALLEGED PROCLAMATION OF LORD WOLSELEY—Questions, Colonel Dawnay, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. O'Kelly; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington 1854

CENTRAL ASIA — THE AFGHAN BOUNDARY COMMISSION — Question, Mr. Montagu Scott; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1855

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EGYPT — SUPPRESSION OF THE "BOSPHORE EGYPTIEN"—Questions, Mr. Montagu Scott, Sir R. Assheton Cross; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, Mr. Gladstone 1856

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION) BILL—THE NEW DIVISIONS OF COUNTIES—ALTERNATIVE NAMES—Question, Mr. Francis Buxton; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1857

CENTRAL ASIA — RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—THE RUSSIAN ATTACK ON PENJDEH—THE PROPOSED ARBITRATION—Questions, Mr. Onslow, Mr. Healy, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answers, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Gladstone 1857

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—THE RUSSO-AFGHAN FRONTIER —THE BATTLE AT AK TEPE—COLONEL ALIKHANOFF—Question, Baron Henry De Worms; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1859

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—Questions, Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mr. John Morley, Lord Randolph Churchill, Lord Eustace Cecil, Mr. Labouchere; Answers, Mr. Gladstone, The Marquess of Hartington .. 1860

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—THE RUSSO-AFGHAN FRONTIER —Questions, Mr. Montagu Scott, Baron Henry De Worms, Mr. Labouchere; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1863

EGYPT (THE SOUDAN)—MILITARY OPERATIONS NEAR SUAKIN—Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, Mr. Gladstone.. 1865

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE REGISTRATION OF VOTERS BILLS—Questions, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Gorst, Sir Stafford Northcote, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1865

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—ARMY ESTIMATES—

(In the Committee.)

(1.) £58,100, Divine Service.

(2.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £38,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Administration of Military Law, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886" 1869

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £36,000, be granted, &c.,"—(*General Alexander.*)—After long debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(3.) £320,500, Medical Establishment and Services.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1918

(4.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £526,900, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay and Allowances of a Force of Militia, not exceeding 136,175, including 30,000 Militia Reserve, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886" 1923

After short debate, Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £519,000, be granted, &c.,"—(*General Alexander.*)—After further short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(5.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £72,500, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for Yeomanry Cavalry Pay and Allowances, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886" 1933

After short debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 80, Noes 27; Majority 53.—(Div. List, No. 159.)

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow;* Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

Registration (Occupation Voters) (*re-committed*) **Bill** [Bill 140]—

Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress 6th May*] [Third Night] .. 1944

After short time spent therein, Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered upon *Monday* next, and to be *printed.* [Bill 163.]

[*May* 7.]

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Registration of Voters (Scotland) Bill [Bill 151]—
Bill, as amended, *considered* 1967
After short debate, Bill to be read the third time upon *Monday* next.

WAYS AND MEANS—
Considered in Committee 1970
Resolved, That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886, the sum of £13,315,334, be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.
Resolution to be reported *To-morrow*; Committee to sit again *To-morrow*.

Burial Grounds Bill—*Considered* in Committee :—Resolution *agreed to*, and *reported*:—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. Osborne Morgan, Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Henry H. Fowler*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 164] 1971

[1.15.]

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

IN THE

Sixth Session OF THE *Twenty-Second Parliament* OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF *Great Britain* AND *Ireland*, APPOINTED TO MEET 29 APRIL, 1880, IN THE FORTY-THIRD YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

FIFTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1884-5.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 17*th April*, 1885.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Third Reading*—Tramways (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1) * (34); Elections (Hours of Poll) * (43); Educational Endowments (Ireland) * (44), and *passed*.

ARMY ORGANIZATION—THIRD BATTALIONS.

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY, in rising to move—

"That, in consequence of the severe strain now being placed upon the British Army, an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty praying that Her Majesty may be most graciously pleased to direct that the recommendation made by the Military Committee appointed in 1871-72 for the formation of a third battalion, in the event of both the line battalions of a regiment serving out of this country, may at once be put into execution,"

said, that this subject had been raised in 1879 and again in 1881, when Mr. Childers was Secretary for War. On those occasions he could not raise any enthusiasm on the subject; but he thought they had now every hope of attention being drawn to what was the real strength of our Military Forces. He might remind their Lordships that when he gave his present Notice of Motion, more than three weeks ago, not only had the recent events on the Afghan Frontier not occurred, but the Message from Her Majesty as to the calling out of the Army and Militia Reserves had not been communicated to Parliament. Subsequent events on the Afghan Frontier had made it all the more imperative on him to bring this subject before the House. In order to show the exact point of his Resolution, he would ask their Lordships to carry their minds

back some years to the origin of the present territorial system, and to the principles on which it was based. It was now 12 years since Lord Cardwell started the scheme. Its basis was that there should be one battalion at home to be the feeder of its twin battation abroad, and that arrangement had continued down to the present. At the same time, it was thought desirable to establish a local connection between the Militia regiments in the districts in which these pairs of battalions were supposed to be localized, two Militia battalions being affiliated to two battalions of the Line, making the third or fourth battalions of the brigade, or, as it was to be termed, the "territorial" regiment. The noble Earl, having traced the history of the system down to the present time, and pointed out in what respects it had been carried out and what still remained to be accomplished, concluded by making the Motion which stood in his name.

Moved, "That, in consequence of the severe strain now being placed upon the British Army, an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty praying that Her Majesty may be graciously pleased to direct that the recommendation made by the Military Committee appointed in 1871-72 for the formation of a third battalion, in the event of both the line battalions of a regiment serving out of this country, may at once be put into execution."—(*The Earl of Galloway.*)

THE EARL OF MORLEY said, if the noble Earl meant by his Resolution that in the absence abroad of two battalions the depôts should be largely strengthened, he was preaching to the converted, and he entirely agreed with him. At the present time there were a good many regiments in that position. The noble Earl was aware that the Vote of Credit had not yet been taken in the House of Commons; but he might remind him that the depôts of the regiments referred to had been very largely strengthened, and that, according to the last Return, many of them were over 400 strong. The Motion, he thought, was a little premature. His noble Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had informed their Lordships a day or two ago that a statement as to the policy of the Government would shortly be made. When that statement was made he should, if the House desired it, be happy to give all the information in his power as to the military measures that might be necessary consequent upon the policy of the Government. Meanwhile, he could assure his noble Friend that the point which he had raised had not been neglected by the Government, but that, on the contrary, careful attention had been given to it.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK said, he thought that his noble Friend had attained his object in the answer he had elicited from the noble Earl, because what was required was that they should not make war on a peace establishment. The raising of the depôts to a larger number was practically equivalent to the forming of a third battalion, and the Government had in that way really met the necessities of the case. The steps which the noble Earl had indicated having been taken, he would advise his noble Friend to withdraw his Motion for the present, and to discuss it hereafter if there should be occasion to do so.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY said, he had no hesitation in withdrawing his Motion after the very satisfactory statement made by the noble Earl the Under Secretary of State for War.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

House adjourned at Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 17th April, 1885.

MINUTES.] — PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*) — *Second Reading*—Felixstow, Ipswich, and Midlands Railway.

PUBLIC BILLS — *Ordered* — Medical Act (1858) Amendment.

First Reading — Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers' Act) (No. 1) * [128].

Second Reading—Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders * [123].

Committee—Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) (*re-comm.*) [49]—R.P. [*Sixteenth Night.*]

Committee — Report — Local Authorities (Expenses of Conferences) [88-129].

Third Reading—Egyptian Loan [122]; Royal Irish Constabulary Redistribution * [105], and *passed.*

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

—o—

FELIXSTOW, IPSWICH, AND MIDLANDS RAILWAY BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Charles Forster.*)

MR. BRYCE said, that in withdrawing his opposition to the Bill, he wished to explain his reason. The Bill was provided for the purpose of constructing a railway in the Eastern Counties, and it was originally proposed to take an acre and a-half of certain common land near Cambridge for the purposes of the railway. It had appeared to those who were interested in the maintenance of open spaces in the neighbourhood of populous towns, that such a proposal would have been most injurious; and, therefore, it had been determined to offer a strenuous opposition to the Bill. Representations had been made to the Railway Company of the state of the matter, and the desirability of reserving this plot as open land. It was only fair to say that the Railway Company had met the objections in a very proper spirit, and had expressed a desire to do all that they could to remedy the evil complained of. In consequence of the communications which had taken place, an arrangement had been made by which the Company undertook to introduce a clause into the Bill in Committee, binding themselves not to take more than an acre and a-half of land, and to purchase and add to the common the same quantity and the same value of other land adjacent, and also, in the interests of the inhabitants, to make proper communications between the parts of the common which were to be severed. In that way they had removed all the ground for objection; and, under the circumstances, and realizing the fact that the public would not suffer, but would get back as much land as the Railway Company took away from them, he did not propose to persevere with his opposition to the Bill.

MR. HICKS said, he was very sorry that he felt himself called upon to move the rejection of the Bill, because he had hoped that the reasonable Amendment or Instruction which he had intended to move for the purpose of limiting the powers of the Company to the construction of a railway between Ipswich and Six Mile Bottom, would have been accepted by the promoters, and in that case he, for one, would not have offered any further opposition. At the same time, he was not prepared to admit that there was really any necessity for this railway. There were at present two lines of railway from Cambridge to Ipswich, one by way of Shelford, going away to the South, and the other by way of Newmarket and Bury to the North. The projected line proposed to take a middle course; but, as far as the locality was concerned, he could not see that there was any great necessity for an additional railway, or that it would be of very much value when constructed. There were no persons on the Cambridge portion of the line between the town of Cambridge and the borders of Suffolk who were more than four or four and a-half miles distant from a railway; and he did not think that in this country four or four and a-half miles was a very great distance for any person to be away from a railway station. If it were deemed necessary to have a railway station within a mile or a mile and a-half of every district, the whole country would be cut up into railways. He certainly did not think that any extra accommodation in the shape of railway communication was at present required between Cambridge and Ipswich. He would not, however, raise that question now, but would prefer to wait until he heard what arguments the promoters brought forward in support of their case. There was, however, one thing touching this point to which he wished he draw the attention of the House, and it was this. From information he had received, it did not appear that Petitions or Memorials had been presented to the Great Eastern Railway Company, who were in possession of this district, asking them to afford this accommodation or anything approaching to it; and he thought it would only be right and fair, before allowing a new Company to enter into a district which had been well served for many years, at great loss by a particular Company, which Company had been striving during all those years to improve their service, which was now serving the district in a way that equalled the service of any of the great Companies, and

yet was only paying a very small dividend, amounting to something like 1½ or 2 per cent on its capital—under such circumstances he thought it would be very unjust to allow a great Company like the Midland to come in and try to tap the traffic which naturally belonged to the Great Eastern Company. And the traffic, even when so tapped, would not be better accommodated in the district as far as London was concerned, but only in a Northern direction. All those who were acquainted with railway matters knew that a distance of five or six miles in the carriage of goods was not really of any serious importance. He had been sorry to trouble the House at this length in regard to the main line; but he would now leave that matter in order to come to the real point, so far as his opposition to the Bill was concerned. There was an Amendment standing in his name upon the Paper which, in the event of the Bill being read a second time, he proposed ultimately to move as an Instruction to the Committee. He had been in hopes that that Instruction would have been accepted by the promoters of the Bill. There was at the present moment a railway from Cambridge to Ipswich, by way of Newmarket and Bury. The distance on that line from Six Mile Bottom to Cambridge was, as nearly as possible, nine miles, or about one-fifth of the main line of the proposed railway, and it passed through a strictly agricultural population in a district which possessed a very small population, and which consequently had very little local traffic. This Company proposed to make the new railway alongside the existing railway for no less a distance than nine miles, only going through one parish or village which was not already served by the existing line, and a village containing only something like 300 inhabitants, which village was itself, at the present moment, within a mile and a-half or two miles of two other railways. Therefore, as far as these nine miles were concerned, there was really no necessity for the construction of the present line; but while there was no necessity for it, there was this very great objection—that it would interfere with the comfort of the inhabitants of the district. It would cut up the land into narrow slips; and, without affording the slightest benefit, it would do serious and permanent injury to those who lived in the district and occupied the line. His proposal was that an Instruction should be given to the Committee to strike out those nine miles of railway, and to confine the powers of the Company to the construction of a line between Ipswich and Six Mile Bottom. If that were done, it would have this effect. There had been a Petition presented to the House by Mr. Hall, a large landowner in the neighbourhood of Six Mile Bottom, complaining of the way in which his land would be cut up, and the comfort of his residence and of his family interfered with by the projected railway. It was proposed to carry the line close to Mr. Hall's premises, and the embankment which it was proposed to construct would be a very serious annoyance to him and to the residents of his house. If the proposal he ventured to make to the Committee were carried out, instead of running over the present line of the Newmarket and Bury line, the Company would require to form a junction with that line, and they would then be able to go further away from Mr. Hall's house, and with very little trouble to make a much better line through his property, instead of proceeding in a serpentine fashion and crossing his hedges backwards and forwards for a distance of three or three and a-half miles, and that, too, in a country which was not an enclosed country where there were fields of various shapes and of very small size, but in a district where the fields were of very large area. In addition, the fields would be, in the most part, cut at right angles. If his proposal were accepted, the Railway Company, perhaps by spending a little more money in filling up a hole here and a hole there over a distance of some three miles, would be able to proceed in a straight line much more easy for themselves than the meandering route they now proposed to take. That was the reason why he thought the Amendment might have been accepted by the Railway Company, and why they should allow his Instruction to be sent to the Committee. If that had been done, the Company, instead of crossing the existing line, would have formed a junction with it, and would have been able to alter their gradients in a satisfactory manner. He would now draw attention to some of the provisions of the Bill. In one in-

stance, there was to be a level crossing, and there were various other crossings of the line with gradients as steep as 1 in 16, and in one instance as 1 in 10. He thought the House would agree with him that any gradient over a railway bridge ought not to be more than 1 in 20. He presumed that the object of this Bill was to benefit those who were engaged in agricultural pursuits; and if the agricultural interests were to be consulted, if the gradients over any part of a road were increased by the Railway Company to such an extent that the same horse-power which would take a load now along a road would hereafter have to be increased, it would really be a very serious injury to every occupier of land who would have to cart his produce over the line. He was told by a very good authority that a gradient of 1 in 20 was equal to about 1 cwt. on the horse's back over and above a ton when drawn in a cart, and if they increased the gradients from 1 in 20 to 1 in 10 the extra load upon the horse's back must be proportionately increased, and therefore its power of carrying a load up a hill would be very much diminished. He thought that was another reason why the House should not allow the measure to go forward in its present shape, but that there should be an Instruction to the Committee to provide that the inclinations of the roads should in no case be steeper than 1 in 20, and that no bridge carrying the railway over the road should be of a less span than 25 feet. On looking at the provisions of the Bill, he found that in three instances the gradients had been increased from 1 in 10, and in several others from 1 in 14, 1 in 15, and 1 in 16. There was also a further objection to the Bill —namely, that it increased the tolls upon artificial manures. That question had been brought before the House several times during the course of the last two or three years, and last year the House came to a compromise upon it, by which they allowed the Companies to charge 1½*d.* per ton instead of 1*d.*, which was the toll under which all the great railways of the country had been established. This Bill proposed, previously, to benefit the agriculturists in the district, and yet it would raise the tolls paid by the occupiers of land for the conveyance of artificial manures to a much higher rate than they had hitherto been in the habit of paying. Therefore, instead of being of benefit to the agricultural interest, it would be really injurious to that interest. He would not trouble the House further; but as the promoters had not thought proper to accept what he believed to be a very moderate proposal, which would have confined the line to the first 36 miles—from Six Mile Bottom to Bury—he would move that the Bill be read a second time on that day six months.

MR. BIRKBECK said, he rose to second the Motion of the hon. Member for Cambridgeshire (Mr. Hicks), and he did so for this reason—the proposal was simply to construct a line of an alternative character, 52 miles in length, which would cost over £1,000,000, and the prospect which the shareholders who invested their money in the undertaking had of realizing a dividend must be poor in the extreme. The Great Eastern Railway Company had experienced considerable difficulty in obtaining any dividend at all, and, at the present moment, the accommodation of the district, traversed by the proposed line, was amply met by the existing Railway Company. The through traffic between Cambridge and Ely and Ipswich was fully accommodated, and not only did this Company ask to supplement the existing accommodation, but they further sought to obtain running powers over the Great Eastern Railway. In the interests of the county of Norfolk, he strongly objected to such running powers being granted. The Great Eastern Railway Company had given an admirable train service to Norwich, and to all that district, by placing on their line as good express trains as were to be found upon any other line from London; and if these running powers were conferred upon this new Railway Company, the traffic would most certainly be interfered with, and the county of Norfolk, instead of being benefited by the line, would find its traffic seriously impeded. He trusted that the House would not allow the Bill to go upstairs to a Select Committee, but would refuse to read it a second time. He had no interest whatever, either as a shareholder or in any other way, in the Great Eastern Railway, and he simply opposed the projected line, because he was of opinion that it was not wanted, and that it would do a great injury to the Great Eastern Company. He

had not heard a single person say a word in favour of the proposed railway, and, therefore, he begged to second the Amendment of the hon. Member for Cambridgeshire that the Bill be read a second time on that day six months.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Hicks.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. BIDDELL said, he only intended to make a few remarks in support of the Bill. He had a very different opinion of this line to that which was entertained by his hon. Friends. It was a line which was proposed to be constructed through a part of the county of Suffolk which he had the honour to represent. His hon. Friend the Member for North Norfolk (Mr. Birkbeck) said that that county had an admirable train service already for the whole of its traffic, and his hon. Friend seemed to infer that that was also the case in reference to Suffolk. He (Mr. Biddell) would call the attention of the House to the facts of the case in reference to the place in which he lived. The town of Laverham had a population of nearly 2,000, and within a radius of six and a-half miles there was a population of 33,000. Ipswich was its natural port. It was only 18 miles distant; but by the Great Eastern Railway it was necessary to travel a distance of 42 miles in order to reach it in one way, and 36½ miles by another route. Under those circumstances, he did not think that the Great Eastern Railway provided proper accommodation for the district.

MR. HICKS said, that he had said nothing whatever as to the merits of the line in regard to the county of Suffolk. He had merely confined his remarks to that part of the line which affected the district with which he was intimately connected.

MR. BIDDELL said, the inhabitants of the locality had for years past asked the Great Eastern Company to give them facilities for getting to their natural port—namely, Ipswich; but the Company had not done so, and there was, therefore, no reason why they should now come forward and endeavour to prevent other people from doing that which they declined to do themselves. The inhabitants had now induced another Company to undertake to make a line, and he could not see what ground the Great Eastern Company had for opposing the Bill, seeing that they had, in the first instance, refused to do the work themselves. When the dock accommodation was fully developed in the Eastern Counties, he thought there would be a large increase in the heavy traffic, and that in the end no loss would be sustained by anybody in consequence of the construction of this railway. The hon. Member for Cambridgeshire (Mr. Hicks) said that for a considerable distance the proposed line would run parallel with the existing line. So it would, he believed, for about seven or eight miles, but not for so long a distance as nine miles.

MR. HICKS said, the distance it would run parallel with the existing line was fully nine miles.

MR. BIDDELL said, he believed that, if that was the case, any hon. Member who was acquainted with the town of Cambridge must know that there was an unusual pressure on the station there, and it would be of great advantage rather than otherwise to relieve the traffic at that station. He did not think there had ever been a line devised which had met with more approbation from the locality through which it passed than this line. Several meetings had been held where resolutions had been unanimously passed in support of the line, and he maintained that the hon. Members for Cambridgeshire (Mr. Hicks) and for North Norfolk (Mr. Birkbeck) had not raised a single point against the Bill which could not be dealt with in Committee. Surely, the proper place to fight the question of gradients, of which his hon. Friend (Mr. Hicks) spoke, was not on the floor of that House, but in a Committee upstairs? It was quite clear that the Company would not be able to make steeper gradients on the public roads than they were permitted to make by the General Acts of Parliament. And with regard to the increase of tolls, no increase could be maintained. If it were proposed to increase the tolls at present levied, he, as an agriculturist, would be one of the first to object. But even that was a case for the Committee, and he hoped the Committee would be allowed to decide these matters. The hon. Member for

Cambridgeshire said that the line would cut up Mr. Hall's estate, and injure it. Was there an hon. Member in that House who ever heard of a railway that did not cut up somebody's land? It was proposed, by the construction of this line, to effect a great public good, and if, in carrying out that public good, the property of any individual sustained injury, the Company would have to pay in the shape of compensation for the injury inflicted. He could not believe, for an instant, that the House would refuse to allow the Bill to go upstairs. As to level crossings, he was told by the solicitor of the Bill that there was not a single public level crossing upon it, and, therefore, in that respect it was a much better measure than those of many other Railway Companies. As an agriculturist, he asked the House to consider the matter seriously, and to bear in mind that, at the present moment, the agriculturists of the district to which he had referred had to pay rates for the conveyance of manures from Ipswich either for 36 or 42 miles, although they were only 18 miles away. He thought that fact alone afforded a clear case in substantiation of the want of railway communication. As he had already stated, the Great Eastern Railway Company had been asked, over and over again, to give facilities for the construction of a line to serve this district, and they had always refused to do so. Therefore, they could not come before the House with any grace whatever to oppose the present scheme. He submitted, with confidence, that the House would not allow themselves to be persuaded by the remarks of his hon. Friends the Member for Cambridgeshire and the Member for North Norfolk, but that they would allow the Bill to go before a Committee, where all the objections which might be urged against it might be fairly met. He sincerely trusted that the House would not make this Bill an exception to the general course pursued in the case of private Bills, but that they would allow all these matters to be inquired into and decided by a Select Committee, who would consider the whole of them fairly and impartially. He, therefore, left the matter, with confidence, to the House.

MR. DILLWYN said, he had listened to the speeches of the hon. Members for Cambridgeshire (Mr. Hicks) and North Norfolk (Mr. Birkbeck), expecting to hear some reason why the House was asked to depart from the ordinary course of sending a Bill of this kind to the Committee upstairs. The House generally required a very good reason before taking that course; but he (Mr. Dillwyn) confessed that in this case he failed to see the slightest ground for taking the Bill away from the jurisdiction of a Select Committee. He did not see how the House could be expected to come to any decision upon the merits of the Bill from the discussion they had just heard. He, therefore, hoped the House would take the ordinary course and send the Bill to a Committee upstairs. He had no personal interest whatever in the matter, except that he objected to see the public time wasted; and, in the interests of the public, he felt bound to suggest that no case had been made out for taking the Bill out of the ordinary category of Private Railway Bills.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time and *committed.*

MR. HICKS said, he presumed that he would now be in Order in moving the Instruction to the Committee which had been placed upon the Paper. He would, however, ask whether, as a point of Order, the Instruction ought to be moved now or postponed until another day?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member can move it now.

MR. HICKS, in moving—

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee to limit the powers of the Company to the construction of a Railway between Ipswich and Six Mile Bottom, and provide that the inclinations of roads shall in no case be steeper than 1 in 20, and that no bridge carrying a Railway over a road shall be of a less span than twenty-five feet,"

said, he would not trouble the House with a word, in addition to what he had already said, in pointing out the absolute absurdity of making a railway for nine miles parallel with a railway already existing. There was not a single village or inhabitant proposed to be accommodated by the projected line who was not accommodated already.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee to limit the powers of the Company to the construction of a Railway between Ipswich and

Six Mile Bottom, and provide that the inclinations of roads shall in no case be steeper than 1 in 20, and that no bridge carrying a Railway over a road shall be of a less span than twenty-five feet."—(*Mr. Hicks.*)

MR. BIDDELL said, he certainly thought the question of gradients was clearly a matter for the Committee, and he did not think that the House ought to saddle them with such an Instruction as that proposed by his hon. Friend (Mr. Hicks). The House had already heard arguments on both sides in regard to the other part of the Instruction, and if the the people of Six Mile Bottom had any *locus standi* before the Committee, and did not desire to have the Bill, they would have their objections heard. He did not think any case had been made out for giving any exceptional Instruction to the Committee.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND thought it would be unwise, in the absence of any knowledge as to the merits of the case, for the House to pass this Instruction. The Committee would have the whole matter before them, and it would be unreasonable for the House to declare that, under no circumstances, should the Committee consent to a gradient over a road that was steeper than 1 in 20, and that no bridge should be less than a certain span. These were mere matters of detail. So far as he was concerned, he thought this was a most unusual Instruction to give to any Committee.

MR. HICKS said, that after this expression of opinion by the House, he would not press the Amendment. He thought the object he had in view would be answered by the Committee having their attention drawn to the discussion which had taken place. He would, therefore, withdraw the Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

QUESTIONS.

—o—

REGISTRATION (OCCUPATION VOTERS) BILL—REGISTRATION EXPENSES.

SIR MASSEY LOPES asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government that the increased charges in respect of the remuneration and expenses of clerks of the peace and overseers, arising out of the Registration (Occupation Voters) Bill now before Parliament, are to be defrayed by the local rates, or whether it is proposed to provide out of moneys voted by Parliament relief from the obligation to bear increased liabilities for a matter of National interest?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES), in reply, said, such expenses were always defrayed out of local rates, and there was no intention of making any change in this respect.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ROBERT GRAHAM, CLERK OF COOTEHILL UNION.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What decision the Local Government Board has come to relative to Robert Graham, clerk of Cootehill Union?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Guardians, by a large majority, have expressed unabated confidence in Mr. Graham as their clerk; and having regard to this fact and to Mr. Graham's statement in his explanation that he answered Mr. Mattheson's question truthfully according to his recollection, and that if he interpreted the Local Government Board's letter wrongly he is very sorry for it, the Board have decided not to interfere on the present occasion with the Guardians' wish to retain Mr. Graham.

MR. BIGGAR gave Notice that he would call attention to the action of the Local Government Board in this matter in Committee of Supply.

MR. HEALY: If Boards of Guardians exonerate an officer, is that sufficient for the Local Government Board?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No; I mentioned there were other circumstances as well as the vote of the Guardians, which was very large—two to one.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS—ARMAGH DIVISION OF ATHLONE.

MR. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the attention of the Government has been called to the interference of Mr. Hynds, rate collector, in the recent Poor Law election, in the Armagh Division of Ath-

lone; whether it is usual for officials to interfere in a Poor Law election as he did; and, whether any rule exists governing the conduct of the officials in such circumstances; and, if not, whether the Government will frame such a rule?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I understand that two charges have been made against Mr. Hynds—(1) that he nominated a candidate at this Poor Law election, and (2) that he used intimidation and undue influence in connection with it. As regards the first charge, the Local Government Board are satisfied with Mr. Hynds's explanation of his reason for seeking to have a person nominated. As regards the second charge, if the person who brings it will adduce any particular cases in support of it, which he has not done hitherto, it may become necessary to make further inquiry.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—SCHOOL TEACHERS—AGE FOR PENSIONS.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that National School teachers who are past their work, some of whom have served nearly forty years, but have not yet reached the age of sixty-five, to entitle them to the maximum pension, are holding on because of the small amount they can claim if they retire; whether he can state what progress the actuaries have made with the calculations concerning the proposed pension scheme; and, whether he would, in the interests of education, recommend the Lords of the Treasury to reduce the limit of age, so that it would be optional for male teachers to resign at sixty on full pension, and females at fifty-five?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The powers of the Commissioners of Education enable them to deal with any such cases of inefficiency as those referred to in this Question. The valuation of the pension fund will not be finished for some weeks to come, and it would be premature to consider any alteration of the present scheme until the valuation is completed.

IRELAND—THE PHŒNIX PARK, DUBLIN—THE POLO GROUND.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, By what right the officers of the Dublin Garrison have caused warnings to be erected requesting riders to keep off what they call "the Polo Ground" in the Phœnix Park, who made this plot a Polo Ground, how many acres does it contain, who allowed it to be railed off as such, is it not one of the finest levels in the entire Park, how much is now railed off in inclosures for the use of cricketers and polo players in the Phœnix Park, and are there any such privileges accorded to cricket and polo clubs in Hyde Park and Regent's Park?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am unable to answer the last query of the hon. Member, and the entire Question is one which should properly have been addressed to my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasuary, the control of the Phœnix Park being vested in the Commissioners of Public Works. However, I have ascertained from the Commissioners that the ground on which the game of polo is played is about seven acres in extent. It is not enclosed, but the Commissioners have permitted barriers to be erected which consists of posts and handrails on two sides of the ground, to protect from accident the public who assemble there in large numbers to see the game played. These barriers are so constructed as to admit of removal if necessary when the game is not being played. The notice to which the hon. Member refers is not a warning but a request, and the Commissioners have not, therefore, objected to it. There are five cricket grounds in the Park—some, I believe, for working men's clubs—containing about 15 acres altogether.

MR. HEALY: I beg to give Notice that when the Vote in reference to Phœnix Park comes on in Committee of Supply I shall call attention to the continual encroachments on public property by the snobs and swells of Dublin Garrison. [*Cries of* "Order, order!"]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is quite out of Order. The hon. Member must withdraw that expression. It is not a proper or Parliamentary expression to be used in this House.

MR. HEALY made no reply.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the hon. Member withdraw the expression?

MR. HEALY took off his hat and bowed.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—SCALE OF EXPENSES IN CROWN CASES.

MR. PATRICK MARTIN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Has his attention been called to the severe comments and observations of the Judges of Assize in Ireland on and in respect to the Circular issued by the Attorney General, varying and reducing the scale of expenses to be allowed in Crown cases in Ireland; is the decision as to the amount actually to be paid by Law vested in the Judges, and must not the sums so awarded by them, notwithstanding such Circular, be paid in the first instance by the treasurers for the several counties out of the county rates, aud in case the allowances so awarded by the Judges exceed the sums mentioned in the Circular, has it been stated, on behalf of the Treasury, that they will not in future reimburse such extra allowances to the county rates; is it the intention of the Government to now insist that such extra allowances, when sanctioned by the presiding Judge of Assize, shall not in future be reimbursed to the county treasurer, and can he state the reasons which have led to the imposition of this increased charge and burden on the county rates; and, will he have any objection to lay upon the Table of the House Copies of the present Circular and the one issued in the year 1880?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I believe some of the Judges have disapproved of the Circular referred to. It must be borne in mind that the Treasury are not liable for any of the expenses of witnesses or prosecutors in Ireland, which, under the law, are chargeable to the counties. The Treasury, however, have been in the habit of recouping to the counties the amount so paid; but in assuming this responsibility they have never divested themselves of the right to fix the amount they will contribute, and Circulars with this object have been issued from time to time. In a Circular issued in 1880 a minimum and a maximum scale were laid down, and, so far as I am aware, no objection was made to this. The effect of the Circular recently issued has been to restrict the amount to be paid to the minimum allowed by the Circular of 1880, unless special reasons exist for exceeding it. I consider the amount so fixed to be fair and reasonable; and if in any special case a larger sum be paid—the right of the Judge to order this not being controverted—the burden thrown on the counties will be insignificant. I have no objection to lay Copies of these two Circulars on the Table. It is the intention of the Government to adhere to the course they have laid down.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—(SUB-COMMISSIONERS)—MR. EDWARD GREER.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Edward Greer, Sub-Commissioner, was, until his appointment, partner with Mr. R. A. Mullan, Solicitor, Newry; whether on the door the words "Greer and Mullan, Solicitors," still appears, and cheques are still issued on the Newry Branch of the Bank of Ireland in the names of Greer and Mullan; and, whether there is an agreement between these gentlemen that on the cessation of Mr. Greer's employment as a Commissioner he is to resume his place in the firm?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I must ask for longer Notice of this Question, which obviously involves local inquiries, and which only appeared yesterday.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—HEALTH OF THE TROOPS.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN asked the Financial Secretary for the War Department, What are the last reports as to the health of the troops in the Soudan?

SIR ARTHUR HAYTER: The troops on the Nile are so scattered that it is difficult to make up from the Returns any percentage of sick on a given date, but it may be said generally that the health is good. At Suakin the latest report states there is a little over 4 per cent. of sick.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Can the hon. Gentleman say how many men have been invalided home from the Red Sea?

SIR ARTHUR HAYTER: I cannot say.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—THE KINSALE MAILS.

MR. DEASY asked the Postmaster General, Whether the Post Office autho-

rities intend to make the alterations in the mail service to and from Kinsale which the Town Commissioners have suggested to them?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE regretted to say that he had not yet come to a decision on this matter.

MR. DEASY: I beg to remind the right hon. Gentleman that he undertook four months ago to look into this matter.

PRISONS (IRELAND) ACT, 1877—ILLEGAL LEVY ON CO. CORK—REPAYMENT.

MR. DEASY asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether the Government will refund the sums declared by the Court of Queen's Bench in 1882 to have been illegally levied on the county of Cork under "The Prisons (Ireland) Act, 1877?"

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): This subject is engaging the attention of the Irish Government, and if the hon. Member will repeat the Question on a future date I will answer it.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE TUBBERCURRY CASE—PAYMENT OF COSTS OF ACCUSED, &c. IN DEFENCE.

MR. SEXTON asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, With regard to his undertaking to inquire, during the Easter Recess, into the question of the delay in paying the costs of the accused, and witnesses summoned for the defence, in the Tubbercurry (county Sligo) cases, whether those costs have yet been paid?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, that the witnesses' expenses in this case had been settled.

MR. SEXTON: When will they be paid?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) was understood to say immediately.

POST OFFICE, DUBLIN—PROMOTION.

MR. SEXTON asked the Postmaster General, If it is a fact that a Dublin Post Office Telegraphist, of twenty-two years' service, is intended to be passed over in making the promotions now about to be made in the Dublin Department; if so, for what reason; and, whether it is an accepted principle that seniority should be recognised in the matter of promotion unless when cause is shown to the contrary?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that all promotions in the Post Office Service were made by the Postmaster General alone, and as those to which the hon. Member referred had not yet come before him, he was unable to answer his Question. He might state, however, that neither in this nor any other case would anyone be passed over without his claims and qualifications being fully considered. In making promotions seniority certainly formed an element for consideration.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—THE PURCHASE CLAUSES.

MR. PATRICK MARTIN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Have any suggestions been made by the Irish Land Commissioners to the Irish Executive in respect to the complete dead lock which has taken place in the operation of the Purchase Clauses in the Land Act of 1881; has any draft Bill which proposes to remove the obstacles which prevent the efficient working of the Purchase Clauses been prepared by one of the Land Commissioners and submitted for the consideration of the Irish Government, and has any Correspondence taken place between any members of the Irish Government and any member of the Land Commission in respect to the preparation of a Bill of this character; and, will he have any objection to lay Copies of such suggestions or Correspondence upon the Table of the House?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Communications have passed between the Land Commissioners and the Irish Government on the subject of the Purchase Clauses of the Land Act, and proposals in reference thereto have been made by the Commissioners; but such communications and proposals are essentially of a confidential nature, and not such as should be laid on the Table.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE—OUTBREAK AT HAMBURG.

MR. BIRKBECK asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether

there are at the present time any cases of foot and mouth disease at, or in the neighbourhood of, Bremen, Geestemünde, or any of the other German cattle exporting ports; and, if so, whether he will forthwith impose the necessary restrictions on the importation of live animals from such ports?

MR. TREVELYAN: No cases of foot-and-mouth disease are known to exist at or in the neighbourhood of any German ports from which animals are sent to this country. Information has been received from the Consul at Hamburg that two cattle were found to be affected and were slaughtered at once on the 11th instant. All the sound animals in the infected place were likewise slaughtered, and the export of animals to England from Hamburg was at once prohibited by the German Government. We have requested the German Government to communicate with us before they propose to re-open the port of Hamburg.

GIBRALTAR—ORDINANCE—ZEBEHR PASHA.

MR. GORST asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Ordinance authorising the detention in custody of Zebehr Pasha was made in consequence of instructions from the Colonial Office in London; when those instructions were given; whether they can be laid upon the Table of the House; whether the General Officer who commands the garrison exercises by himself all the functions of legislation at Gibraltar; whether the Ordinance in question was first promulgated or made known publicly some hours after Zebehr Pasha had been landed by being affixed to the Exchange Buildings, by leave of the Exchange Committee and Chamber of Commerce, at the request of the Colonial Secretary; and, whether any Ordinance was ever published in this way before?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: Yes, Sir. On the 25th of March telegraphic instructions were sent to the Governor of Gibraltar instructing him to pass the necessary Ordinance. There will be no objection to lay on the Table of the House the despatch which followed, and which was the extender of the contents of the telegram. The General Officer commanding, who is also the Governor, is the sole legislative authority. Whether the Ordinance was published by being affixed to the Exchange Buildings or not I do not know; but it duly appeared in *The Gibraltar Chronicle* of the 30th of March, the day on which Zebehr landed, and this is the usual mode of promulgating Ordinances in Gibraltar.

ARMY—GARRISON RATIONS.

SIR HARRY VERNEY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will direct that in weighing the rations of meat for soldiers of the British Army the weight of bones and gristle shall be omitted?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: No change is contemplated in the garrison ration. In the field, where soldiers are much exposed, the meat ration is largely increased, so that the soldier obtains more than a pound, exclusive of bone. The General commanding has always authority in the field to vary or increase the ration to meet the requirements of climate, work, &c.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—DIARIES OF COLONEL STEWART.

SIR ROBERT PEEL asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he can give any information respecting the Journals or Diary of events (known to have been written both in English and in Arabic and of which General Gordon speaks in the highest terms) kept by the late lamented Colonel Donald Stewart, C.M.G., Chief of the Staff of General Gordon at Khartoum, who was subsequently wrecked and murdered near Merawi; and, whether he will undertake to hand over whatever papers there may be of the nature referred to, to that Gallant Officer's family, which anxiously desires to possess them?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The only papers belonging to the late Colonel Stewart which have been recovered are some pages of a rough pencil note-book of daily events kept by him. These are evidently not part of the diary referred to in the right hon. Gentleman's Question. All that have been recovered have been handed over to his brother.

MR. RITCHIE: In handing over the notes, were any conditions made as to the non-publication of certain portions of them?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: No, Sir; I am not aware of any.

ARMY (INDIA)—HORSE AND FIELD ARTILLERY.

LORD ALGERNON PERCY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the Horse and Field Artillery in India are armed with 9-pounder M. L. guns of 6 cwt. and 8 cwt. respectively; whether the batteries in England are not armed with 13-pounder B. L. guns; and, whether any steps are being taken to arm the Indian batteries with the more perfect weapon?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The batteries of Horse and Field Artillery are armed as stated in the Question. Some of the Horse Artillery batteries at home are armed with 13-pounder muzzle-loading guns, and the remainder with 9-pounder muzzle-loading guns; but none with breech-loading guns. No application on the subject has been received from the Government of India.

ARMY—SALE OF MILITARY CLOTHING.

MR. ONSLOW asked the Surveyor General of the Ordnance, Whether it is a fact that the usual practice has this year been departed from of inviting tenders for the purchase of military condemned clothing, and an offer from a buyer accepted without competition; and, if so, for what reason has the usual course been departed from?

MR. BRAND: The results obtained in advertising these sales led me to the conclusion that it would be better to adopt the principle of limiting competition in this particular business.

ARMY—ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT—MILITARY SWORDS.

SIR FREDERICK MILNER asked the Surveyor General of Ordnance, Whether it is a fact that, as the result of recently testing the swords of the 2nd Dragoon Guards and 7th Hussars at Aldershot, fully one-half have been found unfit for use, even for recruits' drill, and whether the majority of the swords for the Commissariat and Transport Corps were also found to be unserviceable; whether it has been known for some time past that a number of the swords and bayonets supplied to our troops are of an unserviceable nature; if he will inform the House by whom these inferior weapons were manufactured; and, whether he will take care for the future that the lives of our gallant soldiers shall not be imperilled by false notions of economy?

MR. BRAND: I would ask the hon. and gallant Member whether he really thinks it will advance the public interest to reply to this Question? If so, I will reply. Then, Sir, the facts are these. For some time past it has been known that the pattern of sword adopted by the Military Authorities in 1882 was too light to stand severe strain. Upon the failure of certain swords of this pattern in the Soudan in 1884, a Committee was appointed under the Presidency of Sir Drury Lowe, and they recommended that the tests should be increased in severity. This has been carried out, and the whole of the swords in store and in possession of the troops have either been re-tested, or shortly will be put through that process. Care will be taken that all swords in possession of the troops are serviceable. The bayonets are perfectly serviceable. The last two Questions are argumentative, and, in reply, I have to say that the swords of which complaint has been made were strictly according to the pattern of 1882, and passed tests. Considerations of cost have not in any way influenced the question of the pattern of the swords.

NAVAL EXPENDITURE—APPLICATION OF VOTES.

SIR ROBERT PEEL, who had the following Question on the Paper:—To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, with reference to a statement made by the Member for Cardiff, in a speech at Portsmouth on the 18th March, to the effect that much of the money voted for shipbuilding purposes had been used to meet expenditure in other Departments, whether such a misapplication of the funds voted by Parliament would not constitute a flagrant violation of the pledges given to Parliament in voting Estimates for a specific purpose; and, whether, if such alleged diversion has taken place, he can inform the House how much of the money voted for shipbuilding purposes, during the past four years, has been thus diverted from its legitimate channel to meet expenditure in other Departments? said: Since putting this Question on the Paper, I have received a letter from the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward Reed), in which he informs me that the re-

porter failed to catch the sense of his remarks. The speech of the hon. Member appeared in all the Liberal newspapers of the day, and therefore I copied the statement from that source.

"I did not intend to imply," the hon. Member says, "that the funds voted by Parliament were differently applied, although that was sometimes the case."

I shall, therefore, leave out the reference to the hon. Member, and ask the second part of the Question only.

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: I can only say that, within the period for which the present Board of Admiralty is responsible, money voted for shipbuilding purposes has not been used to meet expenditure in other Departments.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—REPORTED RETIREMENT OF AFGHAN TROOPS TO HERAT.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Afghan troops have retired from Meruchak and other positions to Herat, leaving the valleys of the Murghab and the Khusk Rivers open to Herat; and, whether Captain Yate's account of the attack of the Russian Commander upon the Afghans on March 31st has been confirmed by Sir Peter Lumsden?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The latest information received from Sir Peter Lumsden is to the effect that the Afghan Forces retreating from Penjdeh were, on the 10th instant, partly at Kaleh Nan and partly at Kushk. In reply to the second part of the Question, I believe a similar inquiry is likely to be made by the right hon. Gentleman opposite of the Prime Minister.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Will the noble Lord state, in reply to the third line of the Question, whether this retirement of the Afghan Forces, "leaving the valleys of the Murghab and the Kushk rivers open to Herat," has been completed? I understand Kushk is close to Herat. Is that so?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I understand that this is a matter of military opinion, on which I am not competent to pronounce.

CENTRAL ASIA—THE RUSSO-AFGHAN FRONTIER—DELIMITATION.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT, who had given Notice to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Russian Government have yet consented to send their Commission to delimitate the Afghan frontier; whether the Russian Government have asked that the debatable zone shall be extended southwards some sixty miles to the line of the Parapronisus and the Murghab; and, whether Her Majesty's Ministers have offered to give up to Russia Penj-deh, Ak-Tepe, Zulfagar, and the salt lakes of Er Oilan, or any of these positions, which have all been occupied by Russia since the appointment of the Boundary Commission? said: Before I put this Question, perhaps, it would be better to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he wishes to reply to the Leader of the Opposition should he wish to ask him any Questions?

MR. GLADSTONE: The right hon. Gentleman will probably do so, and I was about to say that I am not able to enter on the matters touched by the hon. Member in his Question.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—THE AGREEMENT OF MAR. 17, AND ACTION OF MAR. 30, &c.—REPORTED OCCUPATION BY RUSSIA OF PENJDEH.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I think it would be convenient to the House that Questions should be asked, whether we are able to get any further information or not, in order that we may know where we stand. The Question I am particularly anxious to ask the Government is whether they are yet in possession of a full account, or a sufficiently full account, of the proceedings of the 30th of March and the days following? A considerable time has now elapsed, and we should like to know whether the Government are now, and, if not, when they expect to be in possession of a full account?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have no difficulty in saying that we are in possession of no full account of those proceedings, nor of anything approaching to a full account. But a request, which I think I signified before, was addressed to Sir Peter Lumsden to ask for a full and consecutive account; and my noble Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs informs me that a telegram has arrived, and is now in course of being deciphered, which may contain that full account. I cannot say whether it does or not; but, of course, the right hon.

Gentleman will see that it would be necessary to have it compared with the accounts which may be received elsewhere before we should be in a position to give a definite or conclusive judgment to the House upon the matter. We have, however, an independent telegram from Sir Peter Lumsden which clears up an important point. The House will, I have no doubt, remember that—because I recollect that it naturally produced a considerable sensation in the House—on the first occasion of referring to this question of the engagement on the 30th of March I used, I believe, these words—that Captain Yate had met the Chief of the Russian Staff by appointment, and the Chief of the Russian Staff informed him that no such arrangement as that referred to in our telegram of the 17th of March as to the non-advance of the Russians had been received. The House will, I am sure, recollect those words. There was no date attached to that meeting between Captain Yate and the Chief of the Russian Staff. It must, of course, have been before the 29th, and we now see that it must have been two or three days before the 29th, because we have received to-day a telegram from Sir Peter Lumsden containing an account of some further communications of Captain Yate with the Chief of the Russian Staff. Writing on the 28th of March, the Chief of the Russian Staff says that—

"He has received a notification from our side respecting the account which Lord Granville had given of the arrangement made;"

and he goes on to say that—

"what was stated by Lord Granville was in accordance with the orders received by us"

—namely, the Russian officers, and consequently, on the 28th of March, the Russian officers were in possession of the orders given by the Russian Government in conformity with the arrangement of the 17th. The question whether they had acted on these orders remained a matter for future consideration, and therefore the point of the communication of these orders is so far disposed of. I am bound to say that, putting together the dates as best we can, I am inclined to think that probably that was about as soon as the Russian officers upon the spot could have received the orders sent from St. Petersburg in conformity with the arrangement of the 17th of March. There is nothing else of a conclusive character in the telegram which Sir Peter Lumsden writes, nor is there anything of an unfavourable character as to the communications which are still going on.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Is there any truth in the report that Penjdeh has been occupied by the Russians, and that Her Majesty's Government have assented to that occupation?

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir; we know nothing more on the subject of Penjdeh than we knew yesterday. What we were informed of yesterday was that an administration had been established in Penjdeh. There is no intimation whatever of a military occupation of Penjdeh. I had better not undertake to explain what the administration is. The explanation was given in the newspapers yesterday; but whether that be authentic or not I cannot undertake to say, because we are not officially informed.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: In regard to the present position of Sir Peter Lumsden, can the noble Lord tell us whether Tirpul, where he is now, is in Persian or in Afghan territory?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: It is in Afghan territory, but it is not far from the Persian Frontier. It is marked on nearly all the maps which are now arriving.

MR. J. LOWTHER: In regard to the despatch which is now being deciphered at the Foreign Office, I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, in the event of its not being injurious to the public interest, he will undertake to make its contents known to the House before its rising?

MR. GLADSTONE: That must depend upon what they are. If anything of great importance or interest should arise we will, undoubtedly, take the earliest opportunity of making it known.

MR. LEWIS asked the date of the telegram just read by the Prime Minister?

MR. GLADSTONE: It is dated Tirpul, April 13.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: The Prime Minister has given the 17th of March as the date of this agreement, under which neither the Russian nor the

Afghan Forces should advance. I would ask him if it is not a fact that the real date on which that agreement was first announced to this House was the 13th of March, and not the 17th, and that we were informed it really dated from the 2nd of March? And are we to understand that the responsibility for the attack on the Afghans is now shifted from General Komaroff to the Government of St. Petersburg; and, if so, whether, the Government of St. Petersburg have offered any reparation to our Allies, the Afghans, and have they offered to restore a considerable number of guns taken from the Afghans on that occasion? I should like to know also if the noble Lord can tell us how far the town of Kushk, not the river, is from Herat; and whether we are to understand from his answer that not only have the Afghans retired to Kushk, but that the Russians are free to follow them to the point?

MR. GLADSTONE: With regard to the question of dates, I am not aware of having been inaccurate; but there were several statements made to the House, and it would be better that I should ascertain exactly what those statements were.

MR. CHAPLIN: As to the administration which we are informed has been established as Penjdeh, I should like to ask the Prime Minister this Question—whether the administration has the sanction and consent of Her Majesty's Government, and whether Her Majesty's Government have made any communications with regard to it to the Russian Government?

MR. GLADSTONE: We have made no communication on the subject. We have nothing before us except the fact that there is an administration, and the explanation of it placing it on the ground of necessity for the maintenance of peace, which I have seen in the newspapers. I cannot say whether it is authentic or not. But I am bound to say, taking the facts as they appear, there is a fair presumption attending the case which would make us desirous of having fuller information on the matter before we made it the subject of official representations.

MR. ONSLOW asked whether it was Sir Peter Lumsden's intention to remain at Tirpul, or whether, if the Russians advanced thither, he would be driven to any other portion of Afghan or Persian territory?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I must ask the hon. Gentleman for Notice of this Question.

MR. LEWIS asked the date of the long message which was now being deciphered?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I cannot state. It only arrived at the Foreign Office a short time before I left the Office.

MR. LEWIS: Is it from Tirpul?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I presume it is undoubtedly from Tirpul.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I beg to give Notice that, on Monday, I will ask the Government what is the exact position of the Russians in their advance towards Herat, and whether Her Majesty's Government have received any assurance from the Russian Government that they will not seize Herat itself?

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. GLADSTONE: It may be convenient to the House that I should now say a few words as to the course of Business for next week. We hope to close the Committee on the Seats Bill to-night; but if that should not be the case, we propose to go on with that Bill on Monday. It will be my duty on Monday or Tuesday to lay the Vote of Credit on the Table; and probably it will be convenient to the House that in laying it on the Table I should make a short statement to enable the House to understand what the demand is and for what purpose the Vote is to be applied. I presume that no appreciable time will be occupied with the Vote of Credit on that occasion. We shall proceed on Monday with Supply, taking the Navy Estimates, provided that we finish the Committee on the Seats Bill. If the Committee on the Bill is not concluded to-night, then we shall go on with it on Monday. Then it will have to be considered whether the Seats Bill cannot be taken on Report on Tuesday. ["Oh!"] That, I say, is a matter for consideration, and in any case I do not think it need call forth any strong manifestation of emotion. On Thursday, of course, it is understood that, whatever may be the progress made with the Seats Bill, my

right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer will make his Financial Statement.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: The right hon. Gentleman has stated that the Vote of Credit will be taken on Monday or Tuesday. I would point out that, supposing the Seats Bill is not taken on Tuesday, the ordinary Rules of the House would give precedence to Notices of Motion, and the Vote of Credit could not come on until the Notices of Motion have been disposed of.

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes; it could be presented and laid on the Table, accompanied by some such explanation as is necessary to make it intelligible to the House, but without entering into any argument.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR inquired whether, in the event of the Navy Estimates not being taken on Monday, they would be taken on Tuesday?

MR. GLADSTONE: I am afraid I cannot say.

In reply to Mr. LEWIS,

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that of course the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill must be reprinted before the Report stage, and there must be, at least, a day for putting down Amendments.

MR. LEWIS thought that an interval of not less than a week ought to be given between the closing of the Committee on the Bill and the Report stage.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked the Prime Minister whether the House was to understand that it would be competent for a Minister to make a statement on the Vote of Credit, but that it would not be competent for Members of the House to debate that statement?

MR. GLADSTONE said, it was a very common thing for Ministers, if it were required, to make an explanation for the convenience of the House in such cases. The statement would not, in the slightest degree, enter into argumentative matter, but would be confined to making the Vote intelligible.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked the Speaker whether, when a Minister presented Papers to the House, and made a statement with reference to them, the Motion would not be made that the Papers lie on the Table?

MR. SPEAKER: The Motion would be to refer the Vote to Committee of Supply.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: And on that a debate would arise?

MR. SPEAKER: Yes.

MR. J. LOWTHER: Will it take precedence of Notices of Motion on Tuesday?

MR. SPEAKER: Yes; it would take precedence.

In reply to Lord JOHN MANNERS,

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that he proposed to take the first opportunity, but not that evening, of bringing on the second reading of the Telegraph Acts Amendment Bill at a reasonable hour.

MR. HEALY said, he wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, with respect to his statement as to the course of Public Business, what facilities would be given by the Government for the Irish Registration Bill? There would be 700,000 new voters in Ireland who would be incapacitated from getting on the roll unless the Bill were passed. He also wished to know whether the Prime Minister was aware of what had taken place last night in the House, when an attempt had been made to bring on the Bill at 12 o'clock, and a number of Gentlemen, Privy Councillors and others, had wasted time in order to bring up the time to half-past 12 o'clock?

MR. GLADSTONE: I cannot answer the contentious part of the Question of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Monaghan; but I think I had better confine myself to saying that I am not in a position at present to depart from the rule of doing one thing at a time; and I think it is best, as far as the Bill is concerned, for the interest of all parties and of legislation, that we should direct our attention steadily to the remaining important stages of the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill. We deem it quite essential to proceed with the Irish Registration Bill, and we feel it to be our bounden duty to make provision at the earliest time we can for proceeding with it.

MR. HEALY: Then I give Notice that, in consequence of the way in which the Irish Party were treated last night, when the English Registration Bill comes down from Committee I shall block it.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION) (*re-committed*) BILL.—[Bill 49.]

(*Mr. Gladstone, The Marquess of Hartington, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Attorney General, The Lord Advocate, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 16th April.*]

[SIXTEENTH NIGHT.]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

SEVENTH SCHEDULE.

COUNTIES AT LARGE.

NUMBER OF MEMBERS AND NAMES AND CONTENTS OF DIVISIONS.

PART III.

IRELAND.

MR. HEALY, in moving an Amendment on the Paper to leave out from line 15 to line 8, in page 92, and insert—

No. 1.—North Armagh Division.

"Barony of O'Neiland East.
"Barony of O'Neiland West (except parishes of Armagh, Grange, Kildarton, and Mullaghbrack).

No. 2.—Mid-Armagh Division.

"Barony of Armagh.
"Barony of Fews Lower.
"Barony of Tiranny.
"Barony of Fews Upper (parish of Lisnadil).
"Barony of O'Neiland West (parishes of Armagh, Grange, Kildarton, and Mullaghbrack).

No. 3.—South Armagh Division.

"Barony of Orior Lower.
"Barony of Orior Upper.
"Barony of Fews Upper (except parish of Lisnadil),"

said, he proposed to move the three parts into which it was divided separately, because it would not suit his purpose to move them altogether. He would point out that it was necessary, before moving the Amendments, to settle the names of the Armagh Divisions; and, therefore, it would be necessary to move the Amendments relating to the divisions separately. He had intended, after the name of North Armagh, which was assigned to this division, to move the additional name of "O'Neiland;" but his hon. Friends thought it would be better to have no alternative names whatever. If he were not allowed to have his way on that point, and names were afterwards inserted in connection with other counties, he should feel himself at liberty to move alternative names in regard to Armagh on the Report; but he hoped the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) would give an assurance that in no other county would alternative names be given. He would now simply move a verbal Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in page 91, line 14, to leave out the word "The," in order to insert the word "North,"—(*Mr. Healy,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the word 'The' stand part of the Schedule."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that, as far as he was personally concerned, he should prefer that Ireland was treated in the same manner as England. There were, however, one or two cases in which local names were extremely popular in the district interested; and he doubted, therefore, whether he could bind the Committee as to anything like a distinct course in regard to every county.

MR. SEXTON said, that, in reply to the remarks of the right hon. Baronet, he wished to say that, as far as his memory served him, there was only one case in which there would be anything like a strong feeling in favour of including an alternative name in the division. He was not, however, aware that in that case there was any strong opinion that an alternative name was required; and he was not aware that there were on the Paper any proposals for an alternative name, except in the instance of the county of Galway, where it was proposed to call the divisions by the name of the county instead of Connemara, &c. The divisions of the Irish counties would be few enough to allow the introduction of the compass points; and there was no necessity, therefore, to introduce alternative names. The Commissioners had reported that the general feeling was in favour of the names of the counties; and he believed that the most brief and simple way of naming the divisions was to give the compass points.

MR. CALLAN said, the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Charles W. Dilke), in the case of the English counties, had made an exception in favour of merged boroughs. He (Mr. Callan) wished to know if the right hon. Gentleman intended, in Ireland, to extinguish the

name of any county in favour of a merged borough?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he did not; but it was possible that some Representative of a merged borough might desire to retain the name, and he should not stand in the way, if such a proposal were made, after the course the Committee had taken in connection with the English counties.

MR. HEALY said, there was a strong opinion among the Irish Members in favour of leaving the county names as they stood in the Bill.

Amendment *agreed to.*

MR. HEALY moved an Amendment in the same line to omit the word "Division," which would have the effect of describing the first division in the county of Armagh as "North Armagh," instead of "the North Armagh Division."

Amendment *agreed to.*

MR. HEALY said, he now came to the Amendments he had placed upon the Paper in regard to the constitution of the Armagh Divisions—namely, North Armagh, Mid Armagh, and South Armagh. He would, however, take the discussion upon the first proposal, which was that the North Armagh Division should consist of the "barony of O'Neiland East, barony of O'Neiland West (except parishes of Armagh, Grange, Kildarton, and Mullaghbrack." He presumed that it would be necessary, in the first instance, to move the omission of the words of the Schedule from line 15 to line 23, inclusive. It must be borne in mind that the county of Armagh was the only three-Membered constituency in Ireland, and he thought the Irish Members had good reason to complain of the fact that the county was to receive an undue number of Representatives when the Committee bore in mind the way in which Dublin was treated. The county of Armagh was to have three Representatives; while the county of Dublin, a much more important constituency, was to be deprived of its proper weight in the House of Commons by receiving only two. The county of Dublin, according to its population, was only 12,000 lower than the county of Armagh, and that was simply because the township of Pembroke had been taken out of it and included in the City of Dublin. If it were included in the county, as it ought to be, unless the other townships were also included in the City of Dublin, the county of Dublin would have a far larger population than the county of Armagh. Therefore, Dublin absolutely suffered not only relatively by the jerrymandering which the constituencies had undergone, but also in a double sense, because the intrusion of the township of Pembroke within the municipal limits of the City of Dublin prevented the county from having a sufficient population to entitle it to three Members. Dublin was, therefore, not only cheated by the way in which the proposed extension of the city had been treated by the Boundary Commissioners, but the county was also deprived of the additional Member it would have been entitled to if the county boundaries had been properly arranged. This was the first of the Ulster counties which had been brought under the notice of the Committee; but what was to be said of the jerrymandering of one county might be said of all, so far as Ireland was concerned. Whatever course had been pursued in regard to any one of them was much the same as had been taken in regard to the rest. By the first scheme which was proposed by the Commissioners for the county of Armagh, the Nationalists would have carried two divisions of the county. He fully admitted that in the original scheme proposed by the Commissioners a slight error had been committed in regard to the population. He referred to that fact because the Amendments he was now proposing were very much in the direction of the original scheme of the Commissioners, and he preferred to revert to that scheme rather than lay himself open to any charge of jerrymandering the county for Nationalist purposes. He had, therefore, simply put down on the Paper the scheme of the Commissioners as already proposed before the minds of the Commissioners were affected by listening to the arguments brought forward by the Tory Representatives. It was an extraordinary circumstance that, with one exception, the scheme of the Bill was the scheme of the Tory Party. He referred to the case of Tiranny, which barony the Commissioners had adopted in favour of the Nationalists; but they had not adopted as much of it as was

necessary to prevent the Nationalist votes from being swamped. To use a catch word, there had not been too much jerrymandering, but just jerrymandering enough; and the result of it was to cheat the Nationalists out of two votes. The way in which the matter stood was this—three Members were given; the North of Ulster was, undoubtedly, Conservative; but the South was overwhelmingly Nationalist. The entire question was, therefore, how to arrange the Mid Division of the county so as to throw in a sufficient number of Orangemen from the North, and exclude a sufficient number of Nationalists of the South, the Southern end of the county being, at the present moment, overwhelmingly Nationalist. The Southern Division would be Nationalist under any circumstances; but by the scheme of the Commissioners it was made so preponderatingly Nationalist, that they would have a majority of between 5,000 or 6,000 at least. That had been done, as anybody would see, who referred to the statement contained in a Paper issued by the right hon. Baronet, dated March 17th, and prepared by Major Macpherson, the gentleman who conducted the local inquiry on behalf of the Commissioners. It was somewhat extraordinary that wherever Major Macpherson had gone, with the sole exception of the county of Down, where he had made a small concession to the Nationalists, which, however, they could have done without—wherever Major Macpherson had gone a seat had been taken away from the Nationalists. He was really at a loss to know what promotion Major Macpherson was to get in return for the great services he had rendered to the Tory Party. He presumed that whenever the Tory Party came into Office Major Macpherson would be promoted to, at least, the dignity of a Major General. Hon. Members could read Major Macpherson's own notes, and would know exactly what it was that was proposed by the Tory Party in reference to this constituency. Mr. Peel, a solicitor of Armagh, put forward the Tory scheme, and Mr. Peel was a gentleman who would be a candidate for the representation of the Central Division of Armagh. He was a local Coroner, and Grand Master of an Orange Society. He was a gentleman who, on a recent occasion, had advised the Orangemen to bring in their pockets not only a copy of Sankey's hymns, but a Colt's revolver. Mr. Peel's proposal was opposed by everybody on the popular side; and it was a remarkable fact that the division of the county corresponded with the original scheme of the Commissioners, so far as the barony of Orior was concerned. The Commissioners had now cut that barony into two, and, to suit their own purposes, they had thrown the upper and Orange end of the county into the Central Division in order to make weight. The Committee had heard a good deal about the necessity of adhering to strict geographical lines, and about compactness, and the desirability of maintaining well-marked boundaries; but the moment it suited the purposes of the Tory Party this gentleman had no hesitation whatever in departing from any principle of that kind; and, as a matter of fact, in the Northern Division he had abolished all the old baronies and other well-known boundary lines hitherto adopted for the purpose of compactness; whereas in other cases, when he had been asked to take a similar course, in order to secure compactness, his answer was—"No; I must adhere to the old barony lines." This striking high and low was afterwards resorted to for the purpose of jerrymandering the counties in order to assist the Tory Party. Major Macpherson's excuse for his conduct was certainly a pretty piece of official writing. In the county of Armagh more baronies were broken up than in any other Irish county, and so much was that the case that the Commissioner had found it necessary to say something in his own defence. He, therefore, said that some of the baronies were very irregular in shape, and he considered that an excellent reason for lopping so much off of a Conservative district as it was considered necessary to fill up the Central Division. For instance, the barony of O'Neiland West was included partly in North Armagh and partly in Mid Armagh; and a piece of land, forming a narrow projection something like a wen on a man's head, had been conveniently cut off. In the barony of Fews a piece of land projecting northward was also got rid of, and the land in the barony was distributed between the Mid Armagh and the South Armagh Divisions. Major Macpherson said that he had found it impossible to avoid in any new

arrangements the getting rid of the old boundaries. What was the use, then, of the Lord Lieutenant issuing Instructions to the Commissioners to respect the natural boundaries, if the Commissioners were to take a *carte blanche*, and act upon it just as they pleased, with the notion that whatever satisfied the Tory Party would satisfy the Government, and whatever the Boundary Commissioners agreed to the Government would force through the House of Commons? It virtually amounted to this—"If you say it would be better to have these separations, we (the Government) will use the Front Opposition Bench and the Treasury Bench as the two blades of a pair of scissors, in order to lop off any proposals that may be brought forward against your action." The Commissioners, therefore, went into the operation with a full knowledge that in whatever way they exercised their discretion they would be backed up by the Government, and by the Leaders of the Opposition in the House of Commons. He must say that no previous Commission had ever been sent out to discharge important duties with such an assurance as that. At the very least, when the Government gave the Boundary Commissioners the extraordinary powers possessed by this Commission, the first thing they should have had placed before their minds was the drag of the "rod in pickle" of public opinion. That drag had been entirely removed from them by the knowledge that any agreement come to between the Marquess of Salisbury and the Government would afterwards be ratified in the Act of Parliament; and not only had they that knowledge, but their minds were further affected by the extraordinary intimidatory address of the Marquess of Salisbury, who told the Orangemen, when they complained of the way in which the Bill might operate against them, to be of good cheer, and not to be in the least alarmed, because very much would depend on the spirit in which the Commissioners carried out their Instructions. They had now seen the manner in which the Commissioners had carried out their Instructions. They had taken out this long narrow strip from the barony of O'Neiland West, and this projection from Upper Fews, and by that means they had rendered the division practically impervious to the Nationalists; whereas, as it originally stood, the Nationalists had a fair chance of carrying the county. This gentleman, Major Macpherson, put forward similar excuses for his operations in the barony of Tiranny and the barony of Orior; but all his precious excuses were simply so much "bosh." The evident object of Major Macpherson was to make such a boundary as would give the Tory Party an additional seat. He would like to tell the right hon. Baronet that this was a more serious matter for the peace of the North of Ireland than he seemed to think. There would be more heads broken over these jerrymandering schemes, more lives would ultimately be lost in election fights, and there would be more danger and difficulty in preserving the peace of Ireland, than by any modern invention of Her Majesty's Government. And why? Because in several counties — Donegal, Tyrone, Armagh, and Derry, the constituencies in more than one instance had been so manipulated as to make the balance of Parties pretty nearly equal. Future elections, therefore, would be scenes of the most frightful tumult; passions on each side would be strung up to the highest pitch of intensity; the Orange Lodges would issue their mandates, and the other side would be equally energetic, so that when the election come both Parties would be strung up to an extraordinary pitch of excitement, and it was highly probable that when the two Parties were running neck and neck some most deplorable occurrence would take place. It was much to be regretted that the Government should have placed this blister upon the North of Ireland. He did not complain, in the least degree, of the Tory Party getting their due proportion of seats in Ulster. They were certain to have had that under ordinary circumstances. They would have had their due proportion of seats under the original scheme of the Boundary Commissioners; but now they would have at least three or four seats they would otherwise never have been entitled to. The Catholic population of Armagh amounted to 47 per cent; and to give the Orangemen two seats out of three, under those circumstances, was to give a tremendous preponderance to the Tory Party. No doubt the Tory Party considered themselves extremely clever in having brought about these arrange-

ments; but it still remained to be seen which Party in Ulster would be allowed to derive most benefit from them. It was certain that whenever the Nationalists felt themselves aggrieved, they would still be able to sway the balance of power as regarded Liberal and Tory; and they would take good care to use it to the best advantage to themselves, and against the other side, whichever it might be. He had made this protest not with the hope of inducing the Government to assent to the Amendment he proposed to submit. He knew that they had sworn to the Marquess of Salisbury that those divisions should be constituted as they were set forth in the Bill; but he believed that it would be found necessary, in a few years, to pass another Bill for the purpose of arranging those divisions, and the Irish Members, therefore, intended to place their protest against the present measure on record, so that it should not be said that, as far as they were concerned, those divisions had been allowed to go by default. As a matter of fact, Her Majesty's Government had only extended the franchise to one set of people, because their electoral arrangements would be such that it would be quite impossible for the National and popular Party in Ulster to obtain the number of Members they were justly entitled to. The consequence would be that in future they would only have a bogus representation of Ulster opinion in the House of Commons. Perhaps he might be told by the right hon. Baronet that the Tory Party were extremely indignant at some of the divisions recommended by the Commissioners; but he should like to know what they had to be indignant at? He would like to know what they could propose which would make things worse than they were for the Nationalists, or better for themselves? Could they suggest any division of Armagh, or of any other county, which would give them greater advantage than they would obtain under the provisions of the present Bill? He would defy the Tory Party to produce out of any county in Ulster better provisions for themselves than were to be found in the present Bill. They knew very well that the Whig and Tory Party had held a conference in that House. They had met for the purpose of putting pressure upon the Government in order to make the provisions better for themselves; but having met and considered the matter, they found that it was physically impossible to suggest any division of Ulster which would give them a single seat beyond what the present Bill gave them. He would freely make the Tory Party a present of any division of the Province of Ulster which they could make for their own purposes in a better way than the divisions already laid out for them. He could only say that the experience they had now gained of Major Macpherson, and of the other gentlemen upon the Commission who had been appointed to see fair play between the two Parties, completely proved to them that the Catholics and Nationalists of Ireland, and especially in Ulster, could place no reliance whatever on the *bona fides* of the Government, and that the Commissioners, like the agents appointed under the Land Act, were simply the nominees of the Orange Lodges in Ireland?

Amendment proposed,

In page 91, line 16, to leave out from the word "and," to the word "Tullymore," in line 23, inclusive, and insert the words "The barony of O'Neiland West (except parishes of Armagh, Grange, Kildarton, and Mullaghbrack."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Schedule."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that, as the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), in introducing the case of Armagh, had touched upon the religious question in that county between the Catholics and Protestants, it would be as well that, in answer to the remarks of the hon. and learned Member, he should place the exact figures upon that subject before the Committee. The total population of the county was 157,000, of whom 72,000 were Catholics and 85,000 almost exclusively Protestants. Now, the Northern portion of the county was predominantly Protestant, and the Southern predominantly Catholic. The hon. and learned Member was right in his supposition that that was, to some extent, a matter which had guided the arrangement of the county divisions. It was only natural to find that there would be a majority of Protestants in the Northern Division, and a majority of Catholics in the Southern Division;

and no doubt the Committee would expect to find that the numbers were pretty equally divided in the Mid Division. As a matter of fact, there were in the Mid Division 22,000 Catholics, and 21,000 who were exclusively Protestants. He, therefore, did not think that any conclusion could be drawn from the figures in regard to Catholics *versus* Protestants, to which the hon. and learned Member had referred. There was another point to which it was necessary to refer before he came to the main argument of the hon. and learned Member. The hon. and learned Member had spoken of Armagh being unduly favoured in its number of Members. It would have three Members, and it stood exactly in the middle of the list of counties having three Members, so far as its population was concerned—among those counties being Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, Warwickshire, and the East Riding of Yorkshire. Therefore, there was not much in that point. The hon. and learned Member complained that Dublin was only allowed two Members. But there was no special grievance in that respect in Ireland, because throughout the whole country hardships had been inflicted in that way, which were quite as patent as in Ireland. Putting that matter aside, and adverting to the main argument of the hon. and learned Member, this Amendment was to restore the original proposal of the Boundary Commissioners. Of course, it was rather tempting to the Committee, at first sight, to be reminded of the original proposal of the Commissioners; but when that proposal first came out, it was bitterly attacked as having been proposed, to use the words of *The Freeman's Journal*, "in utter ignorance." To a great extent, he admitted that that was the fact. The map did not show the actual configuration of the country, and, therefore, did not convey the necessary information.

MR. HEALY remarked that the original proposal—the only portion attacked—was the scheme for the county of Donegal.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that very little turned upon the precise application of the words he had referred to; but he would remind the Committee that in the case of the original schemes of the Boundary Commissioners in England there was hardly an instance in which they had been rigidly adhered to. In some cases they had created as much feeling as appeared to have been produced in Ireland. For instance, the other night the hon. Member for Perthshire (Sir Donald Currie) made a somewhat plaintive appeal in regard to the division of Perthshire, on the ground that the manner in which the county had been divided would jeopardize the interests of the Liberal Party. But that was not the real matter for the Committee to consider, although similar objections had been put forward in connection with Cornwall and other places, as well as Perthshire, and large additions had been made to the original scheme of the Commissioners. The case of Staffordshire, also, was a very strong case; and there were others in which the original schemes had been subjected to what some persons considered an improvement, whereas, in the opinion of others, they had been rendered worse. The question of Armagh turned entirely upon the constitution of the Mid Division of the county, and upon whether Tanderagee should be included. If any hon. Member would look at the map, he would see that the proposed Mid Armagh Division was a much more natural and simple-looking division than the division originally proposed. It commended itself more to the eye; and he was also informed, by the proceedings at the local inquiry, that the Commissioners, having the map before them, came to an impartial conclusion. To have turned Tanderagee into the Eastern Division would have been a very artificial arrangement. The Commissioners, in their original scheme, were, no doubt, guided by some Return in reference to population, to which the hon. and learned Member had fairly and frankly referred, but which turned out to be erroneous. There was an important mistake made, the result of which was to give a discrepancy in the population of the Northern Division, so that it became necessary to include part of the district in the Mid Division. That had been done by transferring certain parishes, both from the North and South, to the Mid Division. No doubt, the Conservative Party, when before the Commissioners, applied for certain things to be done which had been done; but there were other things for which they asked which had not been conceded;

and, among other things, they urged that the district of O'Neiland should be put in the Southern Division. They further wanted to transfer two other districts to the Mid Division, which the Commissioners also refused. The Commissioners were of opinion that the amended scheme, besides being larger in population, provided in a better way for the pursuits of the population; but the equalization of the population was certainly the main reason why it was put forward. Throughout Ireland the Commissioners had endeavoured to make the county divisions equal, as far as possible, in respect of population. They certainly would have been charged with unfairness in their distribution of the population if they had not endeavoured to make each division as equal in population as possible. In England the Commissioners had endeavoured to accomplish the same object; and, no doubt, in some cases, where they had tried to equalize the population, there had been strong opposition on the part of hon. Members to the proposals put forward. He might instance the county of Cambridge in reference to the Isle of Ely, and also Lincolnshire.

MR. HEALY said, there was no parallel between those cases and that of Armagh.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the population of Lincolnshire and Cambridgeshire was very similar in its pursuits to that of Armagh. The Commissioners had endeavoured to pay deference to local sentiment; and, for all the reasons he had mentioned, he did not think it was desirable to disturb the arrangement as set forth in the Bill.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said, there was one point in connection with this subject on which he desired to express his opinion. The hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) took upon himself to assume that the whole of the Catholic population of Armagh would vote for the Nationalist Party, and that a large proportion of the members of other denominations would also vote for them. Now, he begged to repudiate in the strongest terms that idea of the hon. and learned Member. He believed that there was amongst the Catholic population of Ireland a very large body of loyal men, thoroughly devoted to the Union with this country, and thoroughly devoted to law and order. He wanted the Committee to understand, speaking with knowledge on the subject, that there was not the slightest ground for supposing that the Roman Catholics would go with the Party represented by the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) and by the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy)—the Party which was seeking for separation from this country.

MR. SEXTON said, he would only observe, with reference to the remarks of the hon. and gallant Member who had just spoken, that the interests of political Parties and the unity desired by some hon. Gentlemen in respect of different parts of the Empire was not likely to be served by attempts to cheat any section of the people. Political unity could be best preserved by showing the people of all grades that they were fairly treated by that House, and that no question of creed would be permitted to exclude them from their just share in the politics of the nation. He held that the scheme of the Bill in the present case did not do that; it excluded them from their fair share of political influence. The hon. and gallant Gentleman who had just spoken had come to the conclusion that the Catholics in Ireland would vote in a solid mass as against the Nationalists, who, he implied, would not have a single Catholic vote behind them. The hon. and gallant Gentleman had had some experience—he made the remark in no invidious sense—but he would suggest to the hon. and gallant Gentleman that his political expulsion from the county of Sligo in 1880 was due to the fact that he had not a solid majority behind him. [Colonel KING-HARMAN: I had the Protestant vote behind me.] The Protestant vote was broken up into two portions. His (Mr. Sexton's) view of the question of creed in reference to the county of Armagh was that the National Party would have behind them a solid Catholic vote—and not only that, but also that of an intelligent section of the Protestants in Ireland. The right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had spoken of the Mid Armagh Division, and had described the division now proposed as being more symmetrical than that which appeared in the first scheme of the Commissioners. He (Mr. Sexton) said that the first scheme had

this recommendation—that it observed the instruction to have regard to the boundaries of Unions in existing areas. The original scheme of the Commissioners for the County of Armagh proposed to preserve the integrity of the barony boundaries—the North Division was composed of three baronies, with four parishes taken out; the Mid Division of several baronies, with five parishes added; and the Southern Division of three baronies, with one parish taken out. Therefore, the scheme should be acceptable from the point of view of those who wished to save expense in the revision of the electoral rolls, and who wished to give the public the convenience of well-known areas. But the final scheme of the Commissioners which the Government sought to press upon them was very different in character, and went against the instruction as to well-known areas. The list before him showed that the North Division was composed of one-half of a barony and part of another; in the case of the second division, not only were baronies cut up, but there was a string of names in one barony so long and complicated that it would be folly to endeavour to convey to the Committee by any reference to those complicated areas any idea of the merits or demerits of the scheme adopted by the Commissioners. The right hon. Baronet had referred to the question of creed, and said that in the Mid Division of Armagh there were 23,000 Catholics and 28,000 Protestants there. He (Mr. Sexton) should not mention the name of Catholic or Protestant in this debate, because he held that future political action in Ireland would not be governed or found to be materially influenced by any difference of creed. The plea taken up by the Tory Party was that Protestants, as such, were entitled to have separate representation in Ireland, and he emphasized that plea, which he (Mr. Sexton) rejected, as having no reference to the question. The Commissioners found there would be no use in jerrymandering the Northern Division of Armagh, where the Catholic majority was 20,000, or the Southern Division, where the Catholic majority was 12,000. Now, in the Mid Division the Catholics and Protestants under the original scheme were about equally divided, and there was a chance at first that the Nationalists would have what the Americans called "a fair show" in that division without running to extremes. The right hon. Baronet said that when the first scheme was devised the Commissioners had no local knowledge. But he held, on the contrary, that the first scheme of the Commissioners was more suited than their final scheme to the natural features of the county, because by the final scheme they had taken from Mid Armagh a great part of the barony of Lower Fews, and by so doing they had not only violated the instruction which directed them to have regard to the boundaries of well-known areas, but had also overlapped the great natural boundary of the division, and thrown the electors of Fews into a division with which they had no kind of interest. What was the result? The Commissioners, by disregarding the practical considerations which ought to have guided them, had produced a district which contained 25,000 Catholics and 28,000 Protestants; and they had done it by a treble operation. It was all nonsense to tell them that the Commissioners had made that change out of any regard for their Instructions. No question as to the pursuits of the people arose in reference to the county of Armagh, except in a part of the Northern Division. There were some small manufactories in Newry and in the Northern Division; but they were of so trifling a character as to be unworthy of observation. The pursuits of the people were for all practical purposes agricultural, and the fraction of them engaged in manufactures of any kind outside the town of Newry was so small as not to be appreciable, and such as certainly did not entitle them to consideration on an occasion like the present. Now, what was the character of the treble operation he had referred to? First, half of the barony of Lower Fews had been put away from the Mid Division. That was to say, the Catholic people of Lower Fews were not allowed to remain in the division of Mid Armagh, where they would have produced that equality of population which, in their opinion, would have given them a fair chance at an election. Therefore they were cut off from the Mid Division, not because there was any difference in the pursuits of the two portions of the barony—not because any considerations of boundary

made it necessary, and not because the arrangement was dictated by the natural features of the country—for the pursuits of the people were identical—the boundaries had to be broken to meet the exigencies of the scheme, and for the same reason mountains had been overleaped. What were the other alterations to be made? Two districts of opposite composition were taken—the one from the South, the other from the North—and thrown into the Mid Division of Armagh. Thus, where the Catholics had a chance they were cut off from their natural division of the county. And when he saw that one alteration threw out a large body of the Catholic people, and that the other brought in two Protestant populations—when he saw that the Catholics had been brought down to 25,000, and the Protestants left in a majority of 28,000—then, he said, it was apparent that Major Macpherson, in spite of the plausible plea in his Report, was influenced by no other motive than that of gratifying the desire of the agents of the landlord class who appeared before him, to give to them not only the North but also the Mid Division of the county of Armagh. The hon. and learned Gentleman who opened this debate invited the Committee to consider what would be the political effect of this at the next General Election. Well, the people of Armagh would probably remember then the two schemes of the Commissioners, and that the first scheme was not an unfair one—the scheme which the Commissioners drew while they were impartial, when they were in Dublin and consulted the maps of the county, and the barony boundaries, and the Census Returns, and before they came to consider the question of creeds; and the Catholic people would remember what occurred when the Commissioners went down to the county—that an Orange attorney, a Grand Master of an Orange Lodge, who would himself be a candidate at the next election in Armagh, appeared before the Commissioners and dictated to them a scheme the essential parts of which they accepted. The Catholic people would remember that at the dictation of this Orange attorney a great body of Catholic electors were thrown out of the division with which their rights and their interests were connected. The whole effect and purpose of this elaborate farce called an inquiry was simply to throw dust into the eyes of the people. He was convinced that its result would be the production of feelings destructive of the harmony which ought to exist amongst people of different creeds; that the change made from the original scheme of the Commissioners which Irish Members desired to maintain would not have the effect which the Government intended, and that the Nationalist Party at the next General Election would be able to say to them that they had tried to be dishonest and failed.

Mr. KENNY said, the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke), in his argument against the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), had stated that the Catholic voters in South Armagh outnumbered the Protestant voters as largely as the Protestant voters in the North Division of the county. But the case was the very reverse of what he had stated, and it followed that a serious injustice would be done to the people of the county of Armagh. The Amendment of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Monaghan was one which, in his judgment, ought to commend itself to the Committee, because it simplified the scheme of the Commissioners. In the scheme of the Commissioners which had been submitted to Parliament and adopted by the Government a number of divisions were proposed with boundaries never before known outside the localities. They proposed to divide localities and towns; and under this scheme it would be a most perplexing and difficult thing for persons resident in the county of Armagh to know in which division of the county they would be registered as voters. He observed that in the North Division of Armagh it was proposed to divide six parishes and about 20 towns, a course which he thought would be most inconvenient and perplexing in its effect. He contended that the Amendment of his hon. and learned Friend would be infinitely superior to the scheme of the Commissioners which the Government had adopted, inasmuch as it proposed to adhere to the old boundaries known in the county for hundreds of years. Again, his hon. and learned Friend's scheme, as against that of the Government in respect of the Northern Division, was much more advantageous, because the scheme of the

Commissioners was more complex in respect of North Armagh than South Armagh. The Commissioners had adopted baronial lines only in two instances, whereas they proposed to divide parishes and town-lands in 50 cases at least. Now, his hon. and learned Friend proposed to follow the baronial lines all through, except in one instance. He felt confident that if the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Shaw Lefevre), or whichever Member of the Government remained in charge of the Bill, would consider the remarks he had made, and compare the relative merits of the two schemes, he would be forced to admit that the scheme of his hon. and learned Friend had advantages which were apparent. He could not understand how it was that the Commissioners had departed so very much from the original scheme which they put forward, and which was almost identical with the scheme now proposed. He did not intend to make any remarks upon the relative strength of population in the three divisions; but he would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill from a geographical stand-point, and say, that whatever the result might be this scheme of the Commissioners was bad in itself, and ought not, therefore, to be accepted by the Committee.

MR. TREVELYAN admitted that hon. Gentlemen had argued the case very quietly and fairly, though the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), warming to the subject, had said that by the scheme of the Commissioners an injustice was done which would be remembered by the electors of Armagh for generations to come. He thought, however, that the arguments with which the hon. Member supported that view would hardly have produced that amount of lasting indignation in the minds of the inhabitants of Armagh. The hon. Gentleman had said that in one of the divisions of Armagh the Protestants—he (Mr. Trevelyan) was bound to use that division of the population as it had been used throughout—had an overwhelming majority, that in another division the Catholics had an overwhelming majority, and that the balance of Parties was in the Central Division. He said, also, that two additions were made by the Commissioners in their revised scheme to the Central Division, both of them consisting of an infusion of Protestants, and that there was one deduction from the division which was notoriously one of the Catholic population. The hon. Member spoke of the three operations as being all equally unacceptable from his point of view; but the hon. Member himself must allow that it was necessary to make an addition to Mid Armagh. The Commissioners had, in their original scheme, made an incorrect calculation to the extent of 6,000—the population of Mid Armagh was short by 6,000, and the population of North Armagh was excessive by 6,000. In order to bring up the population of Mid Armagh to its proper level it was evidently necessary to take the excess population from North Armagh. The hon. Member could not deny that, and that at once accounted for the great effusions of Protestants to which the hon. Member objected. That brought them to the question of the inclusion of Kildarton on the one hand, and the exclusion of Lower Fews on the other. The hon. Member for Ennis (Mr. Kenny), speaking of the North and South Divisions, had said that there was a considerable majority of Protestants in the one and of Catholics in the other; and, speaking of the third division, he had said Protestants and Catholics were in about equal proportion. The statement of the hon. Gentleman must not be taken too literally, because the proportion of Catholics to Protestants in the South was as two to one, whereas in the North the proportion of Protestants to Catholics was as 12 to 5. As to the inclusion of Kildarton in Mid Armagh, it must be borne in mind that the Commissioners were governed by two things—they were governed to a certain extent by the wishes of the population, and to a very much greater extent by the pursuits of the people. On that point they spoke very decidedly. They stated that the Northern Division included considerable industrial towns, and that in the central part of the county there were considerable though smaller industrial populations. In their description of Mid Armagh they stated that there were many flax mills, and that the district they had included in the North was more identical with the pursuits of the Northern than the Southern part of the county. The Southern part of the county, they said, was entirely agricultural. The determination of the Com-

missioners was suggested by the pursuits of the population. Now, as to the indignation which this arrangement would create in Armagh or elsewhere, he must say he thought the inhabitants of Armagh would admit, when they came to consider the matter coolly, that the general result of the arrangement would be to give fair and proportional representation to the county, though a slight advantage might be given to the Protestants. Turning from the question of population, he thought that anyone who looked at the map would acknowledge that no county was more naturally and sensibly divided than Armagh. North Armagh consisted of the genuine Northern part of the county; Mid Armagh was the middle of the county, and South Armagh was not only the Southern part of the county, but it was the Southern part of the county which, from its physical appearance, bore the marks of being homogeneous. He had studied very carefully the statistics of the relative populations—Catholic and Protestant—in the different counties of Ireland; and he was certainly very much struck by the manner in which the probable electoral advantages would be distributed between those counties. He believed that result had been attained by the Commissioners following the admirably clear and perfectly impartial Instructions which were laid down in their charter of appointment. He was satisfied that any slight advantage which the Protestants might have obtained in Armagh would be compensated for in other counties; and he could not but believe that the expressions of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) about the action of the Commissioners would, on the whole, be found to be as exaggerated as the counter charges brought against Catholics in other divisions.

MR. HEALY said, the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Trevelyan) had referred to counter charges. Who brought them?

MR. TREVELYAN said, he referred to other counties in which complaints were made.

MR. HEALY said, that, unfortunately for the contention of the right hon. Gentleman, the only case in which it was proposed to change a division of Ulster was that of Fermanagh. The noble Viscount the Member for Fermanagh (Viscount Crichton) was the only person of distinction in the Conservative Party who proposed to make a change in a division. The hon. Baronet the Member for Coleraine (Sir Hervey Bruce) attempted to get another Member for Derry; but that was another matter. The noble Viscount was the only person who had any fault to find with any division in Ulster. But in Fermanagh there were 55 per cent of Catholics; therefore the noble Viscount's proposal was absurd. When the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Trevelyan) attempted to ride off on the pretence that some of the Tory Party objected to this scheme, he could not have examined the Amendments which had been put upon the Paper. The right hon. Gentleman said that the divisions had been arrived at because the Commissioners followed the admirable, clear, and impartial Instructions of the Lord Lieutenant. Why, the complaint of the Irish Members was that the Commissioners had not followed the Lord Lieutenant's Instructions; and in no county were there more glaring or more bare-faced instances of a disregard of those Instructions than in Armagh. One of the Instructions of His Excellency was—

> "Subject to this important rule, each division shall be as compact as possible with respect to geographical position, and shall be based upon well-known existing areas such as baronies, townlands," &c.

In the original scheme regard was had to well-known existing areas; but in the scheme adopted parishes and townlands had been split up. Armagh afforded a very gross case. In some cases where jerrymandering had been resorted to something like decency had been observed; but there were more gross cases of splitting up baronies and even parishes in Armagh than in any other county in Ireland. It would have been bad enough if the Commissioners had split up baronies; but they had not been content with that, for they had split up parishes, a thing which had only been done in one other county — namely, Tyrone. If that was such a fine and delicate matter, he would like to know why it was, if Mid Armagh was short originally, it was now 2,000 plus—the population of Mid Armagh was now 2,000 more than that of South Armagh, and 1,000 more than that of North Armagh? It was this 2,000 which made all the difference; for there were in

the district exactly 2,000 more Protestants than Catholics. The arrangement was so beautiful that it was to be admired. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Trevelyan) had said the Commissioners had had regard to the pursuits of the population. The Irish Members did not believe it. The right hon. Gentleman made his remarks, of course, in good faith; but he had had nothing to do with the arrangement of the divisions. He (Mr. Healy) could understand the Government saying—"We appointed as Commissioners men of character and of the greatest ability; we entrusted them with plenary powers; and we promised the Marquess of Salisbury we would stick to everything they did." That was the defence one Minister had made. But another Minister had said that in the arrangement of the boundaries the Commissioners had had regard to the pursuits of the population, while a third Minister had said—"Oh, this barony had too much, and this had too little." It was appalling to think the Irish Members had been treated in this manner, night after night, under the pretence of fairness. When the Government insisted upon adding hypocrisy to their other sins, it was a little more than he and his hon. Friends could stand. Reference had been made by an hon. and gallant Gentleman above the Gangway that the Party led by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) relied on the Catholics, but could not rely on the Protestants. Why, he (Mr. Healy) would not be in the House if he had not received many Protestant votes. The Catholics of Monaghan did not command a majority on the electoral roll when he was elected; but he was elected by a majority of 365 votes. It was nonsense to talk about religious denominations. It was like the Pyrenees—it no longer divided the people, and the Government would find that out before long. The Government had made two populations, one having a very narrow majority; they had thrown such a bone of contention into Ulster by this jerrymandering scheme that at the next General Election they would be required, in all probability, to incur an outlay of £100,000 for extra police. All the Orangemen were armed, and Party riots and tumults would occur. By this scheme a virulent poison was put into the bowels of Ulster; and at every General Election until the Nationalists got the upper hand, as they would, there would be disorders and tumults. Every one of the Ulster counties, one after another, would drop into the National phalanx. The fact that in the next Parliament there would be 85 Nationalists returned would be a great magnet to the people of Ulster. They would not care to be left out in the cold, and therefore they would flock to the one fold. He trusted the Government would see the propriety of making the arrangements in County Armagh provisional until it was seen which Party got the upper hand. If it was seen that the Nationalists gained the ascendancy let them have the advantage; if the Tories gained that position let them have the advantage. He and his hon. Friends objected to have their baronies and parishes—Lower and Upper Orior, Lower and Upper Fews, and O'Neiland West—split up contrary altogether to the Instructions of the Lord Lieutenant. Finally, let him point out to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan), who had said that in the original scheme there was in one division an overplus of 6,000, that the Nationalist Party proposed a scheme which would have equalized the population without touching the baronies to the same extent as the Commissioners had done; and it was a very remarkable thing that the Commissioners, in their Report to Parliament, omitted all reference to that scheme. It was scarcely fair to the Nationalists. The pledge was obtained from the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) that he would present a Paper showing the reasons why the Commissioners made alterations in the original schemes respecting the counties of Armagh, Donegal, Kerry, and Tyrone, and the City of Dublin. It was very strange that in that Paper there was no mention of the fact that a scheme which would have equalized the population without cutting up the baronies was laid before the Commissioners by the Nationalists.

MR. PLUNKET said, the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) seemed rather to call upon someone on the Conservative Benches to enter into this debate. He (Mr. Plunket) did not wish to enter into the discussion in a more heated or controversial spirit

than was absolutely necessary. The hon. and learned Member had challenged the Opposition why they did not put down Amendments in the same proportion that he and his hon. Friends had done. There was one very good reason to be given for it; and that was that in order to give the Amendment which the hon. and learned Member had put down, in this instance, a colour of support, the hon. and learned Member had been obliged, with all his great ability and ingenuity, to have recourse to the most extraordinary series of arguments he (Mr. Plunket) ever heard. Amongst other things the hon. and learned Gentleman had said there was a meeting of Whigs and Tories, and they tried to invent some more favourable scheme; but they had to give up the task as impossible. There might have been such a meeting; but he could assure the hon. and learned Gentleman that that was the first time he had heard of it. Well, what was another ground on which the hon. and learned Gentleman objected to the Commissioners' scheme? He said it was a violent attempt to produce something like equality in the various parts of Ulster, and that if they succeeded in doing that they would pour a most deadly poison into the bowels of the Province. He (Mr. Plunket) did not understand what was the alternative the hon. and learned Gentleman suggested, because it was perfectly plain that if they were not to equalize, as far as they could, the Protestant and Catholic populations, they must give preponderance to one or the other. If they were to give preponderance, to which Party ought it to be given? He should say to that Party which was, on the whole, in a majority. According to the reasoning of the hon. and learned Member, it was the duty of the Commissioners to give the preponderance to the Protestants, who were in a very considerable majority in the county. He did not think that argument, if the effect he had stated were given to it, would be exceedingly satisfactory to most of the hon. Member's Friends. The fact of the matter was that there was a very plain and good reason given by the Commissioners for what they had done, a reason not resting on any question of equalizing the Protestant or Catholic populations. The Commissioners reported—

> "In this particular instance we have been obliged to depart from the ordinary process of going by boundaries of baronies and parishes, because in this particular county some of the baronies are very irregular in shape, and parishes in a great many cases overlap the boundaries, so we must fall back on the townland areas to a considerable extent, so as to get the divisions as compact as possible, and containing populations as nearly equal and as similar in pursuits as possible."

They went on to say that in each of the three divisions they had succeeded in making the boundaries compact. He submitted that the Commissioners had not founded their decision on any such ground as that of giving preponderance to one Party or the other; and therefore the Committee were bound to support the conclusion arrived at.

Mr. SEXTON said, it was quite unnecessary for the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) to explain why his Party had not put down Amendments to the proposals of the Commissioners. The Tory Party had got all they could expect to get, therefore there was no reason why the right hon. and learned Gentleman should elaborately explain why that Party had not proposed to amend the scheme. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had suggested that as the Protestants were in a considerable majority in Armagh they ought to have two seats, and that the Catholics ought to be content with the one seat which remained. But wherever the Catholics had an overwhelming majority the same argument did not apply in the view of the Tory Party. No matter how small, how numerically trivial, the Protestant minority in any place might be, it was argued that they ought to have a Member. The argument which was considered very good by the co-religionists of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, when applied to the counties of Ulster, was considered by them worthless when it was applied to other counties of Ireland. After all, the Protestants had only a slight majority in Armagh—there were 72,000 Catholics and something over 80,000 Protestants. He thought the right hon. and learned Gentleman would agree with him that it would have been more absolutely fair, and more in accordance with the principles of equity, if his co-religionists—the Catholics—had had an equal chance in the Mid Division of the county. It was not fair that such a

division should have been artificially procured as to give one creed a dominance, especially when the members of the two creeds in the division were ordinarily equal. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) had greatly simplified the case. He had argued the matter with a frankness which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) might be inclined to call excessive. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy had said that it was necessary to equalize the population, and to have regard to the pursuits of the people, and had pleaded those two facts in justification of the scheme now before the Committee. What did he say to the arrangement of his (Mr. Sexton's) hon. and learned Friend? It was true that the middle division would have 6,000 less of a population than the upper division in the scheme of the Commissioners. Why, then, in order to adjust the balance, had they started by taking a number out of the middle division? An easy way to adjust the balance of population would have been to take 3,000 people out of the Northern Division, there being a difference of 6,000 between the Northern and the middle. But that would not have answered the purpose. It was necessary to take a great number of Catholics, and he, therefore, said that in the alleged pursuit of equality of population the Commissioners had been guilty of a manifest absurdity, for in order to increase the population of a division they had taken a large population out of it. He challenged contradiction when he said that such manufactures as there were in Armagh did not exist in the Northern Division and in Newry. Except in Newry, the North Armagh manufactures did not exist in any part of the county. North Armagh was a manufacturing division, and Mid Armagh was agricultural. The principle of the identity of pursuits of the population had been flagrantly outraged. The Government took a large body of artizans out of the only artizan division of the county, and threw them in amongst the farmers, with whom they had no community of interest, and in like manner they took farmers from agricultural districts and threw them amongst artizans.

Mr. SMALL said, he was glad to have the opportunity of taking part in the discussion, as he possessed an intimate local knowledge of the county of Armagh, and, moreover, had the advantage of having been present at the boundary inquiry held by Major Macpherson. When the original boundary scheme for the county was issued, it was generally considered a very fair one. It divided only one barony, O'Neiland West—which from its large size would have to be intersected, and very slightly another. The Commissioners stated that the population of the Northern Division would be 55,033, of the Mid Division 51,166, and of the Southern Division 51,033. However, at the inquiry it was announced that the Commissioners had made a serious error in stating these figures, and that they ought to have been for North Armagh 56,233, for Mid Armagh 49,966, and for South Armagh 51,033. There would, therefore, have been a difference of 6,267 between the highest and lowest division, and it became necessary to make some alteration in the scheme. At the inquiry he (Mr. Small) had proposed an alteration to equalize the population, which would have necessitated the transfer of parts of two parishes only—the transfer of the part of Loughgall which lay in the barony of O'Neiland West and had a population of 3,302, from North Armagh to Mid Armagh, and the transfer of the part of Mullaghbrack, in the same barony, with a population of 1,339, from Mid Armagh to South Armagh. These changes would not have divided any baronies beyond those intersected in the original scheme, and they would have left the populations of the three divisions as follows:—North Armagh 52,931, Mid Armagh 51,929, and South Armagh 52,372. The Conservatives proposed an utterly absurd scheme, which would have intersected no less than six baronies out of a total of eight. Now, what had the Boundary Commissioners done in the revised scheme, for the division of the county? They had divided four baronies and seven parishes. In dividing two of those parishes they had adhered to barony lines which already intersected those parishes; but in dividing the remaining five they had not done that, but had actually divided the parishes by town-

lands, and that although some of those parishes laid in two baronies. They had joined together parts of the county which had no connection, either legal, business, or social, with each other, and people who had no interests in common. As regarded the question of equality of population, the plan which he (Mr. Small) put forward at the inquiry would have left a difference of 1,002 people between the highest and lowest division, the Commissioners left a difference of 2,213. Then, as to compactness, the Commissioners had framed the Mid Division so that a line drawn due North and North through it at a certain point would be about 15 miles long; but a line due North and South, a couple of miles east of that point, would be only about four miles long. It might be considered that Lurgan and Portadown would be the principal political centres in the North Division, Armagh City in the Mid Division, and Newry in the South Division; yet the Commissioners had put into the South Division some places which were about three and a-half miles from Armagh and 12 miles from Newry. The parish of Lisnadil seemed to have been particularly hardly treated. It laid in two baronies, and had now been so cut and carved that it was almost impossible to know, at first sight, in which division any townland was. In one case the Commissioners had transferred the four townlands of Cashel, Foley, Segahan, and Ballymacnabb from Mid to South Armagh. They were very near to Armagh City in the Armagh Union, and Armagh was their market town. It was rather curious that in three of those there was not a single Protestant householder, and in the fourth very few. He presented some days ago a Petition, which he understood was signed by every householder in the four townlands, protesting against the change. The Commissioners at first put the entire barony of Lower Orior into the Southern Division. Now, they had put into the Middle Division that very considerable portion of the barony which was comprised in the parishes of Kilmore and Ballymore. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy (Mr. Trevelyan) had said that the Commissioners stated that the Tanderagee district, which consisted of Kilmore and Ballymore, was connected with the North of the county. Then, why did they not put it into the Northern Division? Along the Eastern side of the county and through this district there ran, from North to South, the Great Northern Railway, which gave the people facilities of direct access to Lurgan aud Portadown in the North, and to Newry in the South. Anyone from the district desiring to go to the City of Armagh had to make a considerable detour by rail, or else to drive by road across the entire county. The Commissioners had taken this district from the South, with which it had some connection and direct intercourse. They had not added it to the North, with which it had also some connection and direct intercourse; but they had added it to the Middle Division, with which it had not any connection or intercourse whatever. He (Mr. Small) had presented Petitions from almost every parish in the county which was affected by the alterations in the boundaries, complaining of them. He was not aware that any Petitions had been presented on the opposite side. In fact, arguments to insert in any such Petitions could not have been found. He did not see any Ulster Members present who would oppose the Amendment of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy); and he hoped the right hon. Baronet in charge of the Bill would accept it.

MR. BIGGAR said, the discussion had spread over a very considerable amount of space in point of time, and also a very considerable amount of space in the way of argument. As to the influences which were supposed to have been brought to bear upon the Boundary Commissioners, and also as to what ought to be the decision of the Committee, he thought himself that it was rather unfortunate—indeed, that it was very unfortunate—that the Committee should be called upon to decide a question of this sort on the ground of the religious Parties who were affected by the boundaries of the particular divisions. But, at the same time, he thought it was legitimate, for the opponents of the scheme as it now stood, to endeavour to find out some reason why the Boundary Commissioners had changed the plans so very much from those originally supplied to them as the provisional proposition upon which to base their inquiry. He wished to say this—

that he had had an opportunity of seeing the boundaries, not of very many counties in Ireland, but of some of them, and that he thought the original plans were superior in point of impartiality and sound judgment to the boundaries which were ultimately decided upon. He said that because he thought the reason was that the parties who drew up the plans originally were the Ordnance Survey officers, who had practical and great personal knowledge of the maps of those places—and not only of the maps, but also of the natural configuration of the land. They knew what the real boundaries ought to be very much better than anyone could who simply took their views from the plan of the Surveys, such as hon. Members were obliged to do, by means of the information supplied them for their guidance. He believed the great complaint in connection with the decision the Boundary Commissioners had come to in connection with this county of Armagh was that they entirely ignored the written Instructions given to them by the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. The Instructions of the Lord Lieutenant were that so far as possible the Boundary Commissioners should conform to the local boundaries, baronial parishes, and town lands. They had not the power to divide the town lands, but they had the power to divide other districts. He must say that the right hon, Baronet the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had seemed to him to very much undervalue the importance of a barony in Ireland as a local description of a particular district, and for this reason. They knew that in Ireland a barony was a local area, which was especially used for taxation purposes by the Grand Juries—for laying on the taxation in respect to new roads, new bridges, and so forth. Nothing was more common than to lay a particular rate upon a particular barony, and in other places to levy it on the county at large. So that, in point of fact, the baronies were important areas in connection with the taxation of Ireland and in connection with the local county government of Ireland as it at present existed. More than that, they had bodies of local taxpayers in Ireland who met together in the baronies to decide upon certain local repairs to be effected, and which were afterwards authorized by the Grand Juries. Those baronies were much more important areas than the right hon. Baronet and the Government seemed to think them, or that Major Macpherson had seemed to think them. As a matter of fact, Major Macpherson seemed to know very little about the wishes of the Irish people in the counties. The Instructions of the Lord Lieutenant had been so flagrantly set at defiance in this instance that they had good reason to ask why the Boundary Commissioners had so acted. The only explanation they could arrive at was that Major Macpherson had adopted the course he pursued in order to favour one particular party at the expense of another. If the boundaries had been impartially drawn up, nobody would have known anything about the question of religion—certainly the Boundary Commissioners would have known nothing about it, and would not have taken it into account. As had been shown by the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Small), in some places districts had been put in, and in other places taken out—place after place had been treated in that way in the county of Armagh—so as to reverse the effect of the original scheme. In districts where, if the original scheme had been adopted, there would have been a substantial majority of Catholics, alterations had been made, the result of which would be to give a substantial majority of non-Catholics. If it had not been that the Commissioners had investigated the religious opinions of the inhabitants, instead of acting altogether impartially, the result would have been much more favourable to the Nationalist Party. He did not himself value to a very enormous extent the difference between non-Catholics and Catholics, because they knew very well, as had been proved in the county of Monaghan by the fact that a large number of non-Catholics must have voted for the hon. and learned Member who at present sat for that county (Mr. Healy), that the Nationalist Party would get the votes of non-Catholics almost as readily as they got those of Catholics. What they had seen taking place at the Monaghan Election, no doubt would occur in other places. With regard to the hon. and gallant Gentleman who represented County Dublin (Colonel King-Harman), he now posed as anti-Catholic, anti-Home

Ruler, and anti-Nationalist; but he (Mr. Biggar) could remember the time when the hon. and gallant Gentleman was elected as a Home Ruler. He remembered that at the first great political meeting he (Mr. Biggar) had ever attended, the hon. and gallant Member was one of the leading speakers of the Nationalist Party. As to Irish land, he (Mr. Biggar) certainly held a very strong opinion that it would be extremely difficult to bring up a non-Catholic tenant farmer to vote against an Irish Nationalist, seeing the advantage he had to get from his support of the Nationalist Party compared with what was likely to result from his support of one or the other of the English Parties. But, be those things as they might, the fact still remained that the question of religion had been taken into account in the county of Armagh, and alterations had been made in the original scheme which should not have been made. The hon. Member for Wexford was the Coroner for one of the districts of the county, and he knew a great deal that the Committee was not acquainted with in regard to those particular transactions. He (Mr. Biggar) thought the Committee should be guided by such Gentlemen, for they had good opportunities of forming accurate opinions, and were well possessed of every local knowledge. He thought that they should agree to the proposal of the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan, and show that the Committee was guided by strict rules of impartiality, and not by the principles which had evidently actuated Major Macpherson, and which had influenced him in his decisions when dealing with the county of Armagh.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 70; Noes 22: Majority 48.—(Div. List, No. 110.)

MR. BIGGAR said, that in line 14 he wished to move to omit the word "The."

MR. WARTON said, that if he might be allowed, before that Question was put, he should like to protest against what took place that morning. Some hon. Members would, no doubt, remember the circumstances, which were these. After a great many hon. Gentlemen had left the House, particularly among the Tories and Liberals, that part of the Schedule affecting Antrim, and particularly those divisions in which the Conservative Members were most interested, had been considered. Liberal and Conservative Members, to whose absence he was referring, had gone away under the impression that the Committee would not proceed beyond the Scotch part of the Schedule, and that County Antrim, therefore, would not be considered. He wished to elicit now some sort of promise, pledge, or assurance from the Government that they would consult the wishes of those Members before Report as to the naming of the divisions. He did not know what names would be preferred by those hon. Members who, as he said, were most interested in the county of Antrim; at any rate, he did not wish that their silence should give consent to what had taken place that morning in their absence. He understood that some of those hon. Members were horrified that morning when they were informed as to what had taken place at the late Sitting some hours previously. The hon. Members for Carrickfergus (Mr. Greer) and Lisburn (Sir Richard Wallace) had been especially disgusted when they understood that the case of their county had been brought on, when they had been told that the Committee would not proceed beyond the Scotch part of the Schedule.

MR. CALLAN said, that if any answer to the censure now uttered by the hon. and learned Member upon the Government for proceeding with the Irish part of the Bill last night were necessary, it would be found in the condition of the Committee at that moment. Notwithstanding that full Notice had been given of the part of the Schedule which was to be considered, there was not a single Irish Tory or Whig Member present to object to the alterations. Though Notice had been given for a fortnight, there was not a single Irish Tory or Whig Member present, showing that those hon. Gentlemen had given it up as a bad game.

MR. HEALY said, that perhaps he might say, to ease the mind of the hon. and learned Member, that he (Mr. Healy) had taken the trouble to consult two hon. Members—namely, the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) and the hon. Gentleman the Member for Tipperary (Mr. J. O'Connor), who was also a Cork man, and a third, he himself (Mr. Healy)—

being a Cork man—had carefully considered the question. The result of their meeting and consultation had been the Amendments that were put on the Paper. He thought the hon. and learned Gentleman might feel perfectly sure that all scruples in the case had been met.

MR. WARTON said, he did not complain of that; but what he complained of was that the recommendations of the Commissioners in regard to Conservative districts had been extinguished in the absence of Conservative Members.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he had answered the hon. and learned Gentleman on that point yesterday.

MR. WARTON said, the right hon. Baronet's answer had simply been that he had declared that he had privately intimated that it was his intention to proceed with the Schedule so far as it affected the county of Antrim. But the right hon. Baronet's public announcement had been that he should proceed with the Schedule until that part affecting Scotland had been disposed of. The private announcement was given after the public announcement.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that he had said what had taken place between himself and the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket).

MR. WARTON again rose.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the hon. and learned Member that he is entirely out of Order in the course he is adopting. He has addressed the Committee three times, although there is really no Question before it.

MR. HEALY said, he wished to move, on page 94, line 4, to leave out "Youghal," and insert "South-East Cork." He admitted that there was extreme difficulty in dealing with the divisions of Cork. The county consisted of seven divisions, and any hon. Member who had taken the trouble to examine the map would see that it was only after most mature consideration that the subject could be satisfactorily dealt with. A meeting of the Irish Party had been held upon the subject, and they had come to the conclusion that it was impossible to deal with the matter in any other way than that proposed in the Amendment.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he should have suggested a transposition. The most Eastern part of Cork was in Youghal; therefore he should be inclined to call Youghal "East," and Bandon "South-East Cork." He would suggest that the hon. and learned Member should put down his Amendment for Report.

MR. HEALY said, it was quite immaterial to the Irish Members how that was done; but if the right hon. Baronet would consider the advisability of doing as was proposed, they would be satisfied. The right hon. Gentleman would, no doubt, see the reasonableness of the proposition.

THE CHAIRMAN said, that if the matter were discussed, it must be on a formal Motion. As yet the hon. and learned Member had not moved anything.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: We will discuss the matter privately.

MR. HEALY said, in moving the Amendment standing in his name, he wished to take the same course as he had taken in the case of the county of Armagh. He should confine himself to moving the omission of lines 5 to 10, inclusive, which embraced the names of the baronies and parishes which the Government proposed to include in the Northern Division of the county of Donegal, and it was upon that part of the Schedule that he would take the discussion. He regretted that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket) was not in his place; but he would be extremely well represented during the discussion by the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton), who, of course, took a deep interest in everything concerning the county of Donegal. He had to consider the way in which the Commissioners had dealt with constituencies in which Catholics were in the majority as compared with places in which they were in the minority. For his own part he was in favour of the fullest and fairest representation of all parties and all religions in the county; he thought the more fully they were represented the better it would be for the general interest. But a moment or two ago, on his Amendment in connection with Armagh, the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket) said that as the Protestants were in a large majority in

Armagh, surely it was only fair that they should have two seats out of the three that were given to the county, and that argument would have been admirable if a similar course were pursued in counties in which Catholics were in the majority. But let the Committee observe the way in which the Government dealt with the Irish counties. In every county in which Catholics were in the minority no representation had been given to them whatever except in the two instances where it could not be avoided—that was to say, in the county of Down, which had four Members, and in the county of Armagh, which had three. In the county of Antrim, where there were 55,000 Catholics, who were clearly entitled to a seat, there would be no Catholic representation at all; in Belfast, where the Catholics were in similar proportion, there would be no Catholic representation; and in Derry—the most shameful case of all—there would be neither Catholic nor Nationalist representation. In Donegal and Tyrone the most shameful jerrymandering had been resorted to for the representation of the minority. They had heard a good deal from the noble Lord the other night, upon the debate about Liverpool, of the proposal to give special representation to Catholics—he "greatly deprecated the severing of the interest of Catholics from that of Protestants." He (Mr. Healy) would remind the noble Lord of that now that they had come to discuss the case of Donegal. And what had the Commissioners done there? They had departed from all rules—geographical and common sense—as well as the Instructions of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, for the purpose of securing Protestant representation in one of the divisions of the county. He should not complain of that at all; he should rejoice to have his Protestant fellow-countrymen receive the fullest amount of representation in that House, provided the same rule were applied to Catholics. But there was no representation for them in Antrim, Belfast, and Derry, and only one out of three in Armagh. In Tyrone the Government had given two Representatives to the minority, although the Catholics were 75 per cent of the population, and, accepting the correction of the noble Lord, they were endeavouring to give the minority representation in the county of Donegal, where the Catholics were 76 per cent of the population. But why was that rule entirely departed from by the Government when they came to deal with Catholic minorities? Why was the Protestant minority in Donegal to be represented at the expense of everything in the shape of logic and common sense, and in spite of the Instructions of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland? The Instructions of Earl Spencer had been trampled under foot by the Commissioners wherever it was necessary to do it in order to give the Whigs or Tories a Member. The barony of Kilmacrenan, as was well known, fulfilled all the conditions entitling it to a Member, and in the first scheme of the Commissioners it was to have a Member allotted to it. He maintained that this barony was, on the showing of the Commissioners themselves, entitled to a Member. Why, then, was that barony not allowed to stand as the Commissioners placed it? Because, if Kilmacrenan were not split up, it would be impossible to have the two Raphoes together, and the Government considered it far more important to meet Tory prejudice in Donegal, than to follow the Instructions of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. The barony of Kilmacrenan, as he had shown, was, by the first scheme of the Commissioners, to get a Member, as it was entitled to do; but the Commissioners went down to Donegal and met the noble Lord, or his representatives if he was not there in person, and the noble Lord's brother, who hoped to be Member for the constituency, and the representatives of the rest of the family; those gentlemen got at the Commissioners, they made their representations, and the barony of Kilmacrenan was now split up, and the two Raphoes, hitherto separated, were now united—the Government had crossed Lough Swilly in order to divide the Inishowens; they split up Kilmacrenan and united the two Raphoes, for the purpose of giving the Tories a Member. Under what pretences had that been done? The right hon. Baronet would, no doubt, say that there was an extreme similarity of pursuits on both sides of the lough, and Irish-speaking people also on both sides. He had taken the trouble to ascertain exactly how the matter stood. The Government had taken three parishes out of Kilmacrenan and put them with Inishowen, under the

pretence that the people of those places were all fishermen. But the fact was that had they been left where they were they would have been united to an Irish-speaking and a fishing population, because more fishing was done there and more Irish spoken. So the Government had violated their own Instructions, and had taken out of Kilmacrenan the three parishes of Clandavaddog, Killygaran, and Tullyfern, and classed them with Inishowen, because the people were supposed to be fishermen. But he had ascertained that there were no fishermen and no fish to be caught in them but salmon, and his informant said that Killygaran was agricultural with the exception of two or three spots, and that Clandavaddog was more agricultural still. There were 631 families in Clandavaddog, not one of which fished; in Killygaran there were 474 families, of which 63 fished; and in Tullyfern there were 1,126 families, of whom 112 lived by fishing. Therefore, it was absurd to go to the pursuit of fishing as a reason for splitting up those parishes. If the Government had taken firm ground and said—"We are ready to give the Tories a seat in Donegal on general principles," he could have understood the position they took up in regard to that county. But the right hon. Baronet said—"All the people live by fishing, and are Irish-speaking, and therefore we cross over a distance of three miles to unite them with people of the same language and pursuits." But he had shown that that was not the case, and therefore he said that to unite them with the people on the other side of Lough Swilly would be about equivalent to uniting the people of Kingstown with those of Holyhead—there would be just as much similarity of pursuits and interest in the two cases. He repeated that he could understand the Government saying that they would give the Tories a seat in the county; but this peddling fallacy about an Irish-speaking and fishing population would not bear a moment's investigation. Then, as to crossing the lough. When Irish Members proposed that the lake in County Down should be crossed where it was only half-a-mile wide, and there was a half-penny ferry, they were snubbed and laughed at for the notion of people crossing that half-mile of water; but when it was a question of crossing Lough Swilly with its four miles of sea and a ferry that was, so to speak, only crossed once in 1,000 years, so far as the pursuits of the people were concerned, why then in the eyes of the Government the Swilly was a bagatelle, a cypher, a mere drop of water. He did not know why if the Government wanted to swindle the Irish people they should not do so openly, and not add hypocrisy to their acts. They gave a seat to the Tories, who were not entitled to it; while the Nationalists of Antrim, Belfast, Derry, Central Armagh, and Tyrone were not getting the full share of representation to which they were entitled. As he had said before, the combinations of the Government should have the word "partiality" stamped upon them, and so long as the name of Donegal remained so long would its divisions be remembered with contempt for the Government who sanctioned them.

Amendment proposed, in page 95, leave out lines 5 to 10, inclusive.—(*Mr. Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Schedule."

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, that his family took a great interest in the divisions of this county, and he and other members of it were present and heard what took place when the Commissioners came to inquire into the wants of the locality in question. The hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) had stated what at first sight seemed to be a great objection to the scheme with reference to Donegal—namely, that certain parishes had been cut up; and he had particularly referred to the case of one barony which seemed to have a population which, in respect of numbers, entitled it to one Member. He (Lord George Hamilton) felt sure that if the hon. and learned Member had been sent down to Donegal as one of the Commissioners, he would have arrived at the very same decision as that arrived at by the Commissioners. He agreed that there were alterations in the schemes of the Commissioners. In this case he believed they took the Ordnance map and marked out the districts where they were contiguous one to the other; but when they got to the mountainous parishes they found there were insuperable difficulties in the

way, and that some places apparently contiguous had little or no means of communication. In the case of Raphoe they proposed to cut the barony in two and join the two districts with Inishowen. Under the other arrangement the connection would have been by railway, and persons passing from one part to another would have had to pass through two or three counties; that was to say, they would have to go by the railway which started from Donegal to Tyrone and Fermanagh. Now, there was an unanimous objection to that in the locality, and it was proposed to associate the barony as appeared in the Schedule. Now, the objection raised to that was that there was an arm of the sea between the parishes. Mr. Dogherty argued the case of the Nationalist Party with great ability; but he not only asserted, but brought witnesses to prove, that the sea was the only means of communication in that part of Donegal, and that the arm of the sea did not constitute any objection to the connection proposed. Later on, when it was proposed to connect certain districts in the Northern Division with those on the East side of Lough Swilly, the Nationalist Party changed their front, and said that the lough constituted an insuperable obstacle. Of course, no one could take that as a reasonable objection. Now the hon. and learned Member had not moved the substitution of the original scheme of the Commissioners for that which was embodied in the Bill, but he proposed to substitute the scheme put forward by the Nationalists for the revised scheme of the Commissioners. The county of Donegal was a very remarkable county; there being an inner and an outer Donegal, as everyone would know who had passed any time there. The outer Donegal was inhabited chiefly by Roman Catholics, many of whom spoke nothing but Irish; it was a poor district; the farms were very small, the people very poor, and a considerable proportion of them were occupied in fishing pursuits. But the inner Donegal was quite distinct and separate in its character from the outer Donegal; there were better farms there than in any other part of the country, the people were Protestants, and were quite distinct from the neighbouring population of the county. Therefore, if ever there was a case in which the single-Member principle ought to be applied it was in respect of this portion of Donegal. He thought the Commissioners in every single instance had tried to assimilate as far as they could the population of each county, but there had been immense difficulties in the way of doing so. Now, the Commissioners in their desire to equalize had, as far as they could, preserved existing boundaries. But they had in the case of the two Raphoes added two towns which most resembled them in respect of pursuits and numbers of population. The Commissioners had undoubtedly split up a barony; but on the Nationalists' own showing it was immaterial how those baronies were cut up, because the interests and political opinions of the people were almost identical in every case, and that, as a matter of fact, the boundaries were more artificial than natural. Therefore, he was convinced that any impartial man would have arrived at the same result in this case as that in the revised scheme of the Commissioners. But the hon. and learned Member proposed to substitute for that the Nationalist scheme, which was the association of the barony of Raphoe South with the barony of Boylagh. But Boylagh was probably one of the most Roman Catholic districts in the North of Ireland, and the effect of adding to its population that of the two Raphoes would be at once to submerge the Protestants. The baronies were neither geographically nor socially connected. There was a high range of hills between the Raphoes and Boylagh. But this scheme of the Nationalists had been practically put out of court by a speech made by Mr. Patrick Gallagher, one of the most prominent supporters of the hon. and learned Member, and who had been the representative of a certain district at the National Convention in the days of the Land League. Mr. Gallagher spoke to the effect that the question they had to consider was, what was best for the Nationalist Party; that they wanted to promote the cause; that they did not care a twopenny ticket if they could jerrymander the district, and that they wanted to join South Raphoe to Boylagh. That was the report in a Conservative organ, and he might mention that while the other papers reported the proceedings there was no report of

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Mr. Patrick Gallagher's speech. The scheme of Mr. Gallagher was to dissect or cut up one Protestant barony and tack it on to the Catholic baronies of the county with which it had no connection. Now, so far as Donegal was concerned, he contended that the scheme of the Commissioners was a perfectly fair one. The Nationalist Party had 75 per cent of the population, and certainly they would carry 75 per cent of the representation of the county. He thought it very doubtful that the Loyalist Party would carry Raphoe; but still, whatever the result might be, the object was to give the minority a chance of representation, and this scheme gave them that chance. The hon. and learned Gentleman showed great skill in putting forward all these instances in which he thought his friends were unrepresented; but he had omitted to mention all those cases in which the Loyalists would get no representation at all. It was probable that in all the other three divisions the Loyalists would have no representation. In Armagh, the Party which the hon. Gentleman represented would have a majority of three to one, and therefore he thought he had rather weakened his case by bringing this charge of jerry-mandering and unfair treatment against the Government. Whatever the Commissioners did, the hon. and learned Gentleman and his Friends tried to make out some charge of unfair play against them. But the hon. and learned Member himself, a shrewd politician, showed that he hardly believed those charges. The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), speaking of the Bill, had said that the result of the alterations in the schemes as to the North of Ireland would be that the political Parties opposed to him would retain 23 out of 33 seats; but the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) said now that the Nationalists would hold 83 out of the 103 seats. [Mr. HEALY: I said 83 in Ireland and two or three in England.] He thought he had shown that this scheme with regard to Donegal was adopted by the Commissioners on its merits; he did not believe that any other scheme was practicable; and he was quite sure that to substitute for a scheme which had been considered by a judicial body, a scheme declared by one of its most prominent supporters to be a jerry-mandering scheme, was a proposal to which the Committee would never consent.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, there was very little for him to add. The real contest in Donegal had turned upon whether Boylagh and Raphoe should be thrown together or kept separate. The argument of the noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton) on this subject was a very strong one. Boylagh was admittedly a very poor district, whereas Raphoe was a wealthy district. Boylagh was a district of 160,000 acres, but its rateable value was only £10,000; Raphoe, however, had an acreage of 223,000, and a rateable value of £100,000, 10 times the wealth of Boylagh. He (Sir Charles W. Dilke) was not one of those who believed in distinctions being made with regard to the pursuits of the population; but it was part of the agreement which was made between the Leaders of the two Parties that divisions should proceed on that principle, and therefore he found himself bound to support such distinctions. If regard was had to the pursuits of the population the divisions which had been drawn in the case of Boylagh and Raphoe was a good one. Now, great objection had been raised to the Northern Division of Donegal, on the ground that it was crossed by a lough. Mr. White, the Boundary Commissioner, held the local inquiry, and, in the Report he had laid before Parliament, he stated that he did not attach any serious importance to the fact; and he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) was bound to say, after the most careful examination he had been able to give the matter, that the difficulty of this lough had been greatly exaggerated. In County Down there was a lough which was crossed, and it was much wider than the lough crossed in Donegal. He was sorry that they were obliged, in dealing with these Irish cases, to refer to questions of religion; but as reference to such questions had been made during the debate, it was just as well he should mention the result of the Religious Census in Donegal. The Catholic population of Donegal was 127,000, and the Protestant 47,000. The Roman Catholic population was in a considerable majority in all the divisions, as the divisions had been set out by the Commissioners; and, therefore, if it was true, as stated, that the Nationalist Party were likely to command all the Catholic votes, that Party

would win all the seats in County Donegal. Even in the division in which they had some doubt of carrying the seat there were upwards of 31,000 Catholics and 20,000 and odd Protestants. He was bound to say that those who had published in Nationalist newspapers forecasts of the results of the elections in County Donegal, and also those who had made speeches on the subject, had estimated that all the four seats would be carried by the Nationalist Party. The Catholic Bishop, who took a very active part in the inquiry, and who was the first to take exception to the Commissioners' scheme, had said the Nationalists would carry all the four seats in that county, although, as had been pointed out, the Protestants were more than one-fourth of the population. ["No, no!"] Well, there were 76 per cent of Catholics. There was this security that fairness was done as between religion and religion—namely, that the Commissioner who held the inquiry was himself a Catholic, and that the Chairman of the Commission, to whom the matter was referred in London, was also a Catholic. That being the case, he hardly thought that any unfairness would be done to those who belonged to the Catholic religion. He was sorry that questions of religion were raised in this matter; he certainly was not the first to raise them.

MR. SEXTON said, he could not agree with any man on any subject more heartily than he agreed with the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) in the concluding part of his speech. It was not only disagreeable, but painful in the extreme, whenever he (Mr. Sexton) had, in arguing political questions, to refer to religious differences. He could not conceive why religion ought to prevent men who were born in the same country from acting together. But if the right hon. Baronet did not begin the reference to the differences of creed in Ireland, he (Mr. Sexton) could plead that neither did the Members of the Irish popular Party. [SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I did not say you did.] The reference was begun by the landlord party in the North of Ireland when they raised the cry that the Protestant creed would not have adequate representation under the Bill. The landlord party, it appeared, would not be satisfied unless representation was given to the Protestant population proportionate to their numbers, without regard as to whether the Protestants did or did not live in one part of the county. He did not see any other way in which the claims of the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) could be met than by placing the Protestants of a county in one division, and thus assuring them of a Representative. The right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) amused him very much when he said that the Commissioner who held the inquiry in Donegal was a Catholic, and when he seemed to infer from that fact that any decision arrived at by that gentleman would be or ought to be satisfactory to Catholics. There was nothing more familiar to those acquainted with Ireland than that a Government having the power of the purse and the power of administration in any country could get men to do just what they pleased. He need simply remind the Committee that when the Government found it necessary to attack and insult and defame and injure the Catholic priesthood in Ireland, it was a Catholic Judge, the late Mr. Justice Keogh, who did so. Now, the Commissioners had admitted that they had made certain errors; but they endeavoured to make a point against the Nationalist Party by saying that, whilst they were in favour of uniting in South Donegal two baronies which had an area of the sea between them, in North Donegal they disapproved of a similar state of things. Now, the Bay of Donegal did not run to any considerable extent into South Donegal, or, at least, when it ceased to be a broad inlet it became exceedingly narrow and threw no difficulty in the way of communication. The Bay of Donegal, in respect to width, was not to be compared with Lough Swilly. Lough Swilly ran into the very heart of County Donegal, as far as the town of Letterkenny, and it attained a width of no less than four miles at one part of it. In point of fact, he was assured by a gentleman who well knew the county of Donegal, that there was no communication between the western and eastern sides of the lough. Touching the question of similarity of pursuits, he might say that there was really a fishing industry in South Donegal. He saw by the last Report of the Inspectors of Fisheries

that in and around the town of Donegal there were about 1,000 men and boys engaged in the fisheries; so that if there was any force to be attached to the argument that Donegal Bay had a dividing influence, it was more than compensated for by the fact that the fishing industry was very large. The case was entirely different in Lough Swilly. The noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) made a point at the expense of Mr. Patrick Gallagher, who was reported by a Tory gentleman to have said he did not care for the Instructions of the Government; all he wanted was to jerrymander the division. He (Mr. Sexton) was not aware that Mr. Patrick Gallagher made the observations attributed to him; but, assuming that he did, it appeared to him that Mr. Patrick Gallagher was exceedingly frank. He (Mr. Sexton) did not suppose that any Nationalist in Ireland had any other desire than that the Nationalists should return as many Members as it was possible for them to do; and, on the other hand, he did not suppose that the noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton), or any of his hon. Friends, desired that the number of Tory seats should be diminished if any possible means could secure the retention of the present number. The only difference between the noble Lord and Mr. Patrick Gallagher was that Mr. Patrick Gallagher said what he meant, and the noble Lord abstained from going through that operation. What was the argument of the noble Lord? He stated that one-fourth of the people of Donegal were of the Protestant creed. He (Mr. Sexton) had just pointed out to the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) that they were not. The Catholics of Donegal numbered 157,000, and the Protestants 47,000. It followed there would have to be 4,000 more Protestants in the county to give them one-fourth of the population, and thus entitle them to one seat. But wherever the Catholics were massed together in such numbers as to entitle them to return a Member the Commissioners divided them here and divided them there, even to throwing them over a range of mountains; in fact, everything that was possible was done in order to procure a division in which the natural predominance of the Catholics should be neutralized. What was done in Donegal? The Protestants were nowhere in sufficient numbers to entitle them to a Member; but the Commissioners took the barony in which they existed in the greatest numbers, and disregarding all the conditions of compactness, pursuits of the population, and well-known areas, they sent out scouts in every direction and took in from every quarter of the county such districts as contained large bodies of Protestants in order to swell the total number in the given division. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, in speaking of the creeds in the barony of Raphoe, showed that ignorance of Irish affairs which made it exceedingly difficult to discuss such affairs in the House of Commons. The right hon. Baronet said that the Catholics in Raphoe numbered 31,000, and the Protestants upwards of 20,000. He (Mr. Sexton) thought the figures were incorrect; but, assuming them to be correct, the right hon. Baronet drew from them an unjustifiable inference. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that the political power of the Catholics of Raphoe would be according to those numbers. That was altogether contrary to the fact. The Catholics in Raphoe occupied the position of domestic and farm servants. The land was held by Protestant farmers, who were the inheritors of the policy of plantation, and the descendants of the planters in Ulster. Many of the Catholics were the servant boys and girls whose parents lived in other counties in Ulster; in fact, a very great part of the 30,000 Catholics in that district was made up of those who occupied the position of servants who had not votes. The 30,000 Catholics, therefore, would not exercise political power at all proportionate to their number. The 20,000 Protestants inhabiting the homesteads of the division would count among them a greater number of Parliamentary voters than the 30,000 Catholics, who were accurately described as "hewers of wood and drawers of water." If there was any county in Ireland the natural configuration of which dictated the divisions for Parliamentary purposes, it was the county of Donegal. Let them glance at North Donegal. The promonitory of Inishowen was separated by Lough Swilly from the rest of the county. It

contained within 10,000 of the number of people necessary to form a Parliamentary division itself, and the Commissioners in their first scheme thought it a reasonable and sensible course to regard Inishowen, shut off as it was from the rest of the county, as the basis of the unit, adding to it a part of the barony of Raphoe to bring the population up to the required number. Then with regard to Kilmacrenan. That was a barony which contained the precise number of people to entitle it to a Member. It was a division formed by nature on the western side of Lough Swilly. It was separated from the district of Inishowen by Lough Swilly, and from Boylagh in the South by an almost impassable range of mountains. In the South the baronies of Tirhugh and Banagh were separated from the rest of the county by mountains. Thus there were three natural divisions—Inishowen, Kilmacrenan, and the baronies of Tirhugh and Banagh. It was plain that the Commissioners should have accepted the divisions which Nature had made for them, and then to have added a fourth division in the shape of the baronies of Boylagh and Raphoe. Both of those baronies were agricultural. There was certainly in Raphoe a small flax industry, but agriculture was the chief industry; Boylagh was purely agricultural. The noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) made a great deal of the range of mountains which he said ran between Boylagh and Raphoe. There was a range of mountains there, but it was a range which had passes through it. Between Boylagh and Kilmacrenan, however, there was an impassible range of mountains; no one ever passed over it except occasionally at one remote point where there was a footroad. There was no practical thoroughfare between the baronies of Boylagh and Kilmacrenan, which the Commissioners had put in one division; so that when the noble Lord spoke of a range of mountains as a very good reason for shutting off a division which had many Catholics in it, he should bear in mind that there was a bigger range of mountains separating Boylagh and Kilmacrenan baronies, which the Commissioners had linked together. Instead of taking the divisions formed by Nature, the Commissioners started with the barony of Raphoe, making that the unit. The barony of Raphoe was the ground of the old plantation of Ulster. It was divided between the people of the imported and favourite creed, and the Catholics were driven to the outskirts of the mountains of Inishowen and Kilmacrenan. The Commissioners had added to the barony of Raphoe those parts of the baronies of Inishowen and Kilmacrenan which contained the Protestant population. They had actually pursued in 1885 the policy of the old plantation of 200 years ago; they had shut off the Catholic population, and had taken into the barony of Raphoe all those parts of other baronies where a majority of Protestants could be found, without having any regard to the well-known boundaries of baronies, or the natural configuration of the country. To such an extent had the Commissioners carried out that policy that the chief town of Kilmacrenan was actually taken away from that barony and added to the barony of Raphoe. The inhabitants of Boylagh knew as little of Kilmacrenan as they knew of the most distant parts of Ireland. Mr. White, the learned Commissioner, in endeavouring to account for the union of places upon both sides of Lough Swilly, had delivered himself of a very extraordinary argument. Mr. White said he did not place any serious importance to the fact that Lough Swilly ran in through the Northern Division; that fact was counterbalanced by the consideration that the riparian inhabitants on both sides were of a homogeneous class. He (Mr. Sexton) might say, in passing, that he had always understood that riparian inhabitants were persons living on the side of a river. Lough Swilly was not a river, but an arm of the sea, four or five miles wide. Now, was it a fact that there was any intercourse between the inhabitants of both shores of Lough Swilly? The fact was this—that Lough Swilly formed as absolute a division between Kilmacrenan and Inishowen as the Atlantic Ocean formed between Ireland and America. Lough Swilly was four miles wide, it was an inlet of the sea, even visited by storms, and the only means of safe transit across it was one ferry. They were told that the people had to cross Lough Swilly because they had fishing occupations. Now, some of the parishes which had

been cut off from Kilmacrenan and added to Inishowen were parishes not bordering on the lough at all; they were parishes in which there were no fish, and consequently where there were no fishermen. And with reference to the parishes beside the lake, he said that the fishing industry was more active upon the western side than upon the eastern side. And if the fishing industry were to be considered at all, it would be better served by allowing the inhabitants to go over to the western side of the lough. Again, it was true that the people along the shores of the lough spoke the Irish language; but they spoke the English language also, and therefore there was no peculiarity established in that regard. The fact was, that in the barony of Kilmacrenan and along the shore there was a considerable number of people who spoke the Irish language alone. Therefore, if there was any force in the argument of the Commissioners with regard to uniting the Irish-speaking populations of this part of the county, it was a force which told against their own decision. Now, when they found officials driven to such extremes as these in order to find a colourable reason for a scandalous division of the county, he thought it was time to say that all argument was at an end. The more he looked at the question, the more clear it appeared to him that the Commissioners, who had at first made a tolerably honest scheme, and who only departed from it when they found there was perfect unity with regard to it, had violated every one of the Instructions given them by the Government—the Instructions as to compactness of boundary and similarity of pursuits—and that, in order to justify their scheme, they set up an illusive argument as to the identity of pursuits of the people which had no foundation. The county of Donegal was agricultural; there was no independent industry, and no extensive fishing population, the number of those who fished being only about 3,000. The argument of identity of pursuits had, therefore, no application to Donegal except in the Southern Division, where, perhaps, the main part of the fishing industry, slight as it was, would be found. No; the Commissioners started from the areas in which English Kings, 200 years ago, founded Colonies for the benefit of Protestants, and they cast out from the divisions the Catholics, and added to them as many Protestants as they could. They scorned the Instructions given to them by the Government, and they exerted themselves to form a scheme which would enable a member of the house of Hamilton to find a seat for the county. That was the object they had in view. But he did not believe that a member of that family would sit for Donegal, because the people at the next General Election would have learnt that their interest did not lie in returning a Tory to Parliament. Finally, he said that, for the purpose of preventing a political result in Donegal which both they and the Government desired to avoid, the Commissioners had violated all the Instructions distinctly laid down for their guidance in respect of this Bill.

Amendment *negatived.*

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; Committee counted, and 40 Members found being present,

Mr. SMALL said, it was difficult to understand why, if the Commissioners had kept in view the conformation of the County Down, they should have given to the four divisions the designations which appeared on the Schedule. He thought it would be more correct to call the 2nd Division the North-West Division, or it should be called the West Down Division; that No. 3 should be called the East Down, and No. 4 the South Down Division; and, therefore, he would move to leave out the word "The" from line 4.

Amendment proposed, in page 96, line 4, to leave out the word "The."—(*Mr. Small.*)

Amendment *negatived.*

Mr. SMALL said, at the inquiry a large body of evidence was given before the Commissioners to show that the inhabitants of Upper Ards were much more closely connected with the people of No. 3 Division than they were with Lower Ardo and Castlereagh Upper. The proposed arrangement of the Government was most inconvenient, and the suggestion he made would render more equal the populations of the different divisions of the county—that was to say, that the entire of Upper Ards, with the exception of one parish, should be joined to the 3rd Division.

[*Sixteenth Night.*]

Amendment proposed, in page 96, line 7, to leave out the words "Upper Ards."—(*Mr. Small.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'Upper Ards' stand part of the Schedule."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that the proposal of the hon. Member appeared to be one of the proposals made at the inquiry, respecting which the Commissioners reported to the effect that there was no ground in favour of it. It had not been shown that there was any advantage in the arrangement proposed; and, in view of the Report, he could not agree to the Amendment.

MR. HEALY said, that the proposal of his hon. Friend was in no sense a political one, and, therefore, he thought that the right hon. Baronet would do well to consider the matter. The Party to which he belonged had got all they could extract out of County Down; that was to say, they had one seat—namely, for the Lower Division; and they would have had that in any case, even if the Commissioners had not changed their original plan. He did not think that the right hon. Baronet quite appreciated the local feeling in regard to Lower Ards. He found that at the time there was only one individual who opposed the plan put forward by his hon. Friend; and the fact that the Tory Party had shown no opposition whatever with regard to the change now proposed was a proof that the Tory Party were better served in County Down than anywhere else in Ireland. Their representative, Mr. Finigan, was a gentleman who possessed a good deal of the *suaviter in modo*, and he remained perfectly silent throughout the proceedings, and, as he had said before, only one gentleman opposed the arrangement suggested. He did not agree with the right hon. Baronet that it would have the effect of unshaping the entire county. If he looked at the map he would see that it was not so. On the other hand, the feeling at Upper Ards was very strongly opposed to the Government proposal; the inhabitants had to go to Downpatrick on business connected with the Police, Poor Law, and County Court, as they were in the Downpatrick Union, and, therefore, they found it hard to be divorced from the district with which they were familiar. He hoped the right hon. Baronet would reconsider this reasonable proposal of his hon. Friend. He would point out also that the entire population of Lower Ards were engaged in market-gardening, and only went to Belfast with their goods; whereas he had shown that the people of Upper Ards all went to Downpatrick, and, therefore, there was no connection between them. As a politician, he assured the right hon. Baronet that the Nationalists could not gain anything by this proposal.

MR. PLUNKET said, he was disposed to agree with the finding of the Commissioners in this case unless some stronger arguments were forthcoming than those yet brought forward. He accepted the statement of the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) that there was no political object underlying the Amendment; but, as the matter now stood, he should certainly vote in favour of the conclusion arrived at by the Commissioners, which appeared to offer the most satisfactory mode of settlement.

MR. BIGGAR said, he should support the Amendment of his hon. Friend, on the ground that they would probably have a Government Bill in a short time dealing with local matters; and he thought it desirable that the centres of localities should be, as far as possible, the centres of the Poor Law Unions.

MR. HEALY said, that whatever were the arguments which he and his hon. Friends brought forward, they received no consideration from the Government. The opinions of the Commissioners, who spent half-an-hour in these places, were more important in the eyes of the Government than the opinions of Irish Members who had been in them all their lives; the Commissioners went down by one train and returned by another, and their opinion was regarded by the Government as final. If they had had the County Government Bill, it would have dealt with the county in the way his hon. Friend proposed; but this scheme of the Commissioners absolutely wrenched the people asunder, so far as concerned the natural boundaries, and he was really surprised that the right hon. Baronet was unwilling to give Irish Members satisfaction on this matter. Under the circumstances, he thought they were justified in dividing the Committee, although, whatever they

might do, he knew that they could get nothing whatever from the Government in respect of these arrangements.

MR. KENNY said, the Amendment before the Committee would have the effect of making the population of the division equal, and generally of covering the main points on which the Government had instructed the Commissioners. He thought the right hon. Baronet would admit that the Amendment of his hon. Friend had much to recommend it in the fact that it was not due to any political motive. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket) had recommended his hon. Friend not to go to a division, but to raise the question again on the Report.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 51; Noes 23: Majority 28.—(Div. List, No. 111.)

MR. SMALL moved to leave out lines 12 to 15, inclusive, in order that they might be inserted after line 21.

Amendment proposed, in page 96, to leave out lines 12 to 15, inclusive.—(*Mr. Small.*)

MR. HEALY said, the proposal was of a kind that would affect a good many counties besides County Down, and he would suggest that the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) should consider the matter between now and the Report, and endeavour to arrange the different parts of the divisions in a more orderly manner.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he should be glad to do what was suggested, if that were thought the best way; but he did not think it would matter whether they took that course or dealt with the question at once. He was quite willing to allow the alteration now proposed, and as the Committee had already agreed to make certain alterations in regard to this county, perhaps it would be better to take the Amendments in order, and deal with them now.

MR. SMALL said, as he understood the right hon. Gentleman did not offer any opposition to his proposal to alter the order in which parts of the divisions were placed in the Schedule, he would ask the Chairman to put his Amendment.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I do not object.

Amendment *agreed to.*

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, line 16 came next, and he supposed the hon. Member (Mr. Small) would propose to leave out the figure 3 in that line.

On the Motion of Mr. SMALL, the following Amendment made:—Page 96, line 16, leave out 3, insert 2.

On the Motion of Mr. SEXTON, the following Amendment made:—Page 96, line 16, leave out "Mid Down," insert "East Down."

On the Motion of Mr. HEALY, the following Amendment made:—Page 96, leave out lines 20 and 21, insert "No. 3, West Down."

MR. HEALY wished to call the attention of the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) to the fact that, in all the divisions of the Schedule, there were dashes running on the paragraphs, which was a mere printer's mode of setting out the lines. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he would not have those dashes omitted?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Yes, Sir.

On the Motion of Mr. HEALY, the following Amendment made:—Page 96, line 22, leave out "South West Down," insert "South Down."

Amendment proposed,

In page 97, line 4, to leave out the word "Ballbriggan," and insert the words "North Dublin."—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'Balbriggan' stand part of the Schedule."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE desired to call the hon. Member's attention to the fact that the proposed alteration of the title of the 1st Division of County Dublin might tend to create confusion as between the divisions of Dublin City and Dublin County.

MR. SEXTON said, it would be in the recollection of the right hon. Baronet that at a previous stage of the Bill he had proposed to amend the divisions of the City of Dublin, as recommended by the Commissioners and as fixed in the Schedule defining the borough divisions, by calling them after the

historic sites or areas of the city, and one of the reasons he then gave was that he was desirous of preventing confusion, and of having the points of the compass inserted as the titles of the county divisions.

MR. HEALY said, they had the advantage of the presence of the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the County of Dublin (Colonel King-Harman); perhaps he would favour the Committee with his views on this proposal?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said, he had not the slightest objection to it.

Amendment *agreed to.*

MR. SEXTON said, he had now to move the next Amendment. He desired to express the extremely strong objections felt by himself and his hon. Friends to the division of the county of Dublin proposed by the final scheme of the Boundary Commissioners. This was another case in which they were obliged to appeal from the Commissioners to the Commissioners themselves. The first scheme proposed by the Commissioners was just as satisfactory to the public as the second scheme was faulty and objectionable. In other cases, it could be alleged that the Boundary Commissioners had discharged their duties in the most thorough manner, although they had not very much time for consideration; and it might also be said of them that, in preparing their first schemes, they had to deal with matters with which they were not perhaps very well acquainted, and that, therefore, they fell into certain errors, which they were obliged to correct when they were called upon to frame their final schemes. But with regard to the county of Dublin, he had no hesitation in saying that the Commissioners had had plenty of time to consider their original scheme, and that two of the Commissioners permananently resided in Dublin, and were therefore dealing with a county and a population with the circumstances and pursuits of which they were perfectly well acquainted. The first scheme the Commissioners had presented met with the complete approval of the Representatives of the National Party, as expressed at the public inquiry; but he had to note, as a very extraordinary fact, that whenever the Representatives of the National Party in Ireland offered any objection to a particular scheme, the points objected to were sure to be upheld against them; while, on the other hand, whenever the Representatives of that Party agreed to the general features of a scheme framed by the Boundary Commissioners and declared it a satisfactory one, the chances were that the scheme was sure to be so altered as to render it unsatisfactory in almost all those respects wherein it had received their approval. He wished to point out that the first scheme of the Commissioners in relation to the division of Dublin County was a convenient one, and one which satisfied the Instructions given by the Government for the guidance of the Commissioners. For instance, it fully satisfied the Instruction that they should have regard to the principle of equality of population, because in the Northern Division of the county of Dublin—the Malahide Division—the population was put down as 73,100, while the population of the Southern Division was estimated at 72,400; so that the Commissioners had divided a county with a population of 145,500 into two divisions so equally that the disparity between the two was only 700. This result was accepted as a satisfactory discharge of the obligations imposed on the Commissioners by the Instructions of the Government that they were to have due regard to equality of population. He had next to inquire whether the first scheme suggested by the Commissioners satisfied the Instructions they had received with regard to compactness of area and with respect to the preservation, as far as possible, of well-known existing boundaries? The map which he then held in his hand offered a view of the four divisions of the county as recommended by the Commissioners before their scheme had come under the influence of the agents of the Tory Party. A glance at that map would suffice to show that in the first division the Commissioners proposed to take four baronies also to the North of the city, and to add to them five parishes to the North of the city, and form them into the Northern Division of the county, the Southern Division being formed of the whole of the remaining area. Under that scheme the county was divided into two nearly equal parts; the baronial boundaries were respected and preserved intact with the exception only of five parishes, and

in the fixing of these equal areas security was taken in regard to the future increase of population; for it was obvious that when large equal areas were included in divisions the fluctuations of population would in all probability be equalized, not only with regard to the present time but in time to come. The first of the Commissioners' schemes having been one of so satisfactory a character in regard to equality of population and compactness of areas, it might be asked how had it come to pass that the Commissioners had been induced to alter the scheme? The alteration they had made was one which might have been satisfactory to the Commissioners themselves, but it certainly failed to satisfy the people. He was sure the Committee would be puzzled to imagine any reason why the Commissioners, having formulated a scheme such as he had just described, should afterwards have departed from their original plan in so fundamental and objectionable a manner. Upon this point he should like to quote a few expressions of public opinion in reference to the second scheme of the Commissioners. The Kingstown branch of the National Association had characterized the proposal of the Government as a flagrant departure from the Instructions they had given to the Commissioners, and as an attempt to deprive the National Party of their legitimate share of the representation. The Rathmines branch of the Association had described the proposed division under the second scheme as most absurd and unfair, and a palpable concession to the Conservative minority. Other branches of the Association had characterized the scheme as utterly at variance with every principle of justice, as well as with the Instructions given by the Government, and had asserted that the Commissioners had in the most degrading manner abrogated their functions. The Committee had already had the opportunity of seeing that the two divisions of the county as proposed by the first of the Commissioners' schemes were equal. Let them now glance at the divisions recommended by the Commissioners in their second scheme. One of those divisions was formed from a small segment of the county, which in point of area was only 1-20th of the whole, while the other division contained the remaining 19-20ths of the county area. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) seemed to think that examples of a similar kind could be found elsewhere; but he (Mr. Sexton) should be very glad if the right hon. Gentleman would point out to him a single instance in which, where there were only two divisions, one of them occupied an area of 19-20ths, while the other contained only the remaining 1-20th. The solicitor to the Emergency Association had appeared before the Commissioners at Rathmines. He had represented that Rathmines was an urban district, and ought not to be thrown into the county.

MR. ION HAMILTON asked who was the solicitor referred to?

MR. SEXTON said, the solicitors to the Emergency Association were Messrs. Dudgeon and Emerson.

MR. ION HAMILTON asked who was the counsel?

MR. SEXTON replied, that the counsel was Mr. John Gibson. Their objection to the first scheme, which had been shown to be so rational and convenient, was that part of Rathmines was taken into the North of the county of Dublin, and that it was an urban district and ought to be formed into an urban division. He should not greatly object to the inclusion of Rathmines in an urban division, if it could be shown that that object could be really effected, or that that purpose was really held in view by those who advanced the plea. But it was a very strange fact that while the Commissioners of Rathmines refused to have the place attached to the City of Dublin and strove to show that it was of a rural character, they also urged that it was an urban district. When they wanted to utilize all the Tory votes it was an urban district; but when they wanted to escape the taxes of the city it was a rural district. It was true that in the Southern Division of the county of Dublin the townships of Blackrock, Kingstown, Killiney, and Bray were included, and the villaholders of Blackrock were to be found in the same division with the quarrymen and farmers of Tallaght. That was not an urban district at all. It included a large proportion of the agricultural population, and it shut out the urban population of all the seaboard towns from Balbriggan in the North down to the City of Dublin. The whole arrangement of this

scheme rested upon a sham and a pretence. The Commissioners had acted on the suggestion of the Marquess of Salisbury that they should divide the counties in a spirit favourable to the Tory Party. They had taken three or four townships chiefly inhabited by persons who were supposed to have Tory predilections and proclivities, and had thrown them into one division, and all the rest into another. The divisions were different in point of area, in regard to boundary, and in regard to the probable increase of population; and the Commissioners had entitled themselves to be branded with the imputation of gross partiality. He asked the Committee to assent to the first scheme of the Commissioners, which would still include a great portion of the urban population, which would have regard to the baronial baronies, and which would give an equal population. He could not imagine what argument could be advanced against it.

Amendment proposed,

In page 97, to leave out from the words "Balrothery West," in line 6, to the words "herein described," in line 15, inclusive, and insert the words,—

"Barony of Nethercross,
Barony of Coolock,
Barony of Uppercross (parishes of Saint Catherine's, Saint James's, Saint Jude's, and St. Peter's),
Barony of Rathdown (parish of Rathfarnham.)"—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'Castlenock, Coolock, Nethercross, and Newcastle' stand part of the Schedule."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the case of the county of Dublin had been raised on more than one occasion. It was said that what was proposed for that county did not follow any of the precedents, and he had been asked by the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken to produce precedents. The hon. Gentleman had now narrowed his question to the case of counties with two Members; but even when thus narrowed, there were other cases very similar to this. One was the case of the area around Newcastle, where the division was extremely small. That was a very striking case to which no objection had been taken. Other cases were those of Perth and Renfrew, where the Liberal Party had raised just the same objection as was raised here. The counties of Perth and Renfrew were counties with two Members, divided into one very large and one very small division—the small, a populous division; the large, a rural division. In the present case there was a very dense population in one part of the county, and a thin population elsewhere. Of course, the Commissioners had endeavoured to put the dense population together and the scattered population together, and if he had been the Commissioners, acting under the Instructions which were given to them, he should have taken the very same course. The question was whether, given that course, the Commissioners had acted rightly, and there might be more doubt about that, owing to the fact that there were urban districts not included in the small division, but included in the agricultural division. But that objection applied more to the first scheme of the Commissioners than to the present one. If it was an objection to the scheme, it had been greatly diminished indeed, if not removed, by the later changes in the scheme. If the Commissioners had tried to make the urban division contain the whole of the urban population, they would have made a district in the form of a ring right round Dublin. He was not going to argue that they might not have taken that course. It had been taken, in the case of the Bootle Divisions, right round Liverpool; but it had not been very successful, so far as local feeling went, and there had been considerable opposition to that narrow strip around the town. He was not sure whether it was not wise to adopt a more concentrated form. He thought the Commissioners had interpreted their Instructions rightly in forming one very small and one very large division in the county of Dublin, and with less certainty he imagined that they were probably right in forming the divisions in this particular way; but, as to that, he should not like to speak positively.

MR. ION HAMILTON said, that when the Commissioners were sitting, there was a very strong feeling, and all the parties interested were in favour of some scheme like that now adopted by the Commissioners. He himself had representations from people representing all classes—not merely his own Party, but others—in favour of the scheme. There was not a doubt that when the scheme

was first proposed by the Commissioners on going to Dublin, it was one which startled a great many persons, for it brought together a great many people who were thoroughly inharmonious, and who could not have established any concert at all. But, by the present arrangement, it was evidently intended that the agricultural population should be left to itself, and the urban population to itself. He thought the Commissioners had acted with discretion. He certainly did feel that the Metropolitan county ought to have had an addition to its representation—he should have liked to have seen it with a third Member. But taking things as they were, he thought no better apportionment of the population could have been made; and he trusted the Government would adhere to the last scheme of the Commissioners.

MR. HEALY said, he did not care a straw about this division one way or the other. He was only sorry that the Tory Party had been played upon with such false hopes, for they would not carry either division—they would not come within a mile of it. His only regret was that the Government were giving them double votes—one in the City of Dublin, where they carried on business, and one in the country where they lived. But they might jerrymander as much as they pleased—they could not carry the county of Dublin if they jerrymandered ten times worse than they had done. It was a sad thing that the Committee should now be taking almost its last look at Gentlemen, the Tory Members for the county of Dublin, who had so distinguished themselves in Church and State. Their complaint about the Dublin boundaries was that a resident in Rathmines, which was part of the city, was technically in the county, and thereby acquired a double vote because he carried on business in the city. He did not think it was a proper thing that those people should have this advantage, for they had no superior claims, and were not entitled to more consideration than anybody else. They were just ordinary mortals like other people, and it was hardly fair to imbue them with this tremendous political preponderance. Although the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board had declared that it was not unusual to pick out bits of urban population and form them into separate divisions, so far as Ireland was concerned, this was the only case in the entire country in which it had been done. On reference to the English maps, it would be found that the case of Tyneside showed no parity whatever. He knew the Tyneside Division perhaps better than the right hon. Baronet. But Northumberland possessed 10 Members for the county, and that entirely destroyed the possibility of jerrymandering the divisions in the way which had been done here, for it became absolutely necessary to pick out the suburban districts from the rest. But the case of Dublin was quite different. There were these little bits of villa areas which had been treated by themselves without any necessity or excuse whatever, and this was the only case in the whole country in which the thing had been done. How had it been done? He knew the hon. Member for Dublin County (Mr. Ion Hamilton) was at the county inquiry; but was he at the city inquiry? [MR. ION HAMILTON dissented.] The hon. Gentleman was not present, so he (Mr. Healy) would ask his attention and that of the right hon. Baronet to what occurred. At the inquiry for the county of Dublin, where he (Mr. Healy) represented the National Party, there was not one word about this present proposal; but next day, when they were holding the inquiry into the case, not of the county, but of the city, a very distinguished and able lawyer—Mr. Jackson—representing the Emergency people, came in and held up a map, and said to the Commissioners—"I was too late yesterday. I did not get my map prepared in time." (He Mr. Healy) would not pledge himself to the exact excuse made, but it was some excuse of that kind. Mr. Jackson went on—"Would you kindly look at this map?" Everybody in Court roared, it seemed so extraordinary a proposal. But that was the proposal of the Government. No chance was even given for debating it, and he thought it was most unfair that it should have been adopted by the Commissioners. It was not a fair thing to propose that scheme on a day when nobody knew that it would come on, and to adopt it without discussion. It was never supposed that the city inquiry would take up the county scheme; and when the map was handed in, nobody ever dreamed that it would receive any attention — the thing seemed so idiotic.

MR. ION HAMILTON said, that was the first time he had heard of the circumstances described by the hon. and learned Gentleman.

MR. HEALY said, everything had occurred just as he had stated it; and he asked, when Mr. Jackson handed in the scheme—"Is that the scheme of the Emergency Association?" In other words, he made a joke of it, for he did not think for a moment that it could be adopted. But the Government had adopted it; and by so doing they had put another nail into the coffin of ascendancy in Ireland, because those things always impressed the minds of the people better than anything else. The Government were playing the game of the Nationalists—they could not do it better—for they were making the people believe that they could have no fair play on any subject whatsoever. Let the Government appoint a Commission on any subject whatever, and the Nationalists were bound to get no show upon it. The loss of three seats was a small matter compared with the fact which would be fixed on the hearts of the people who were to be crucified under these divisions—that, so far as the Government could manage it, they had been cheated of their rights. This was a matter of very great importance to have fixed upon the minds of the people; and he was sure that every man in the Kingstown Division would believe that he was being unjustly treated—every man in the Northern Division would believe that he had been juggled. He congratulated the Government on the way in which they had played into the hands of the Nationalists. The loss of three or four seats was a small matter when compared with the hatred and contempt which would be stored up in the minds of the people of Ireland by their conduct on the Seats Bill.

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN wished for some explanation of a curious and remarkable fact. How in the world had it happened that the Tory propositions in every borough, whenever they had made any proposal to amend the original scheme of the Commissioners, had been adopted? How had it happened that the moment the Tory and Orange Party placed before the Commissioners their arguments, schemes, and facts, the Commissioners were converted, and all that was proposed was done? If that had happened in only one or two cases it might be supposed that it was the superior merits of the Tory scheme that went home to the hearts of the Commissioners; but when it was found that the same thing had happened all along the line the matter really required an explanation. The simple facts, which were patent to every man who looked calmly at them, were these—that the first schemes of the Commissioners were made and drawn up irrespective of Party considerations, because the Commissioners did not know the lines and locations of the political Parties in Ireland. But no sooner were they informed by the agents of the Tory Party than they gave way to them. He had heard no defence to that, and he wished hon. Members would take the trouble to look at a map of the county of Dublin, and at the original and the present scheme of the Commissioners, and they would find that there was nothing elsewhere to compare with the jerrymandering which had been going on in that county. The first proposal made a somewhat equal division of the county, which was apparent on the face of the map; but no sooner did the Tory gentlemen go before the Commissioners and open their eyes and show where the Party advantage lay than the whole scheme was withdrawn, and another one forming a little Tory preserve in a corner of the county was constructed. That was manifestly unfair; and not only there, but all over Ireland, North and South, had the Commissioners yielded to the Tory representations, except in those parts where the Tories had nothing whatever to represent, because their case was hopeless. Wherever they could, by any trick or stratagem, add to the advantage of the Tories they had done so. They had gone North, South, East, and West to pick up bits and scraps of territory wherever it would suit the purposes of the Tory Party, and had yielded to the representations made to them in this unfair, irregular, and improper manner. He had heard the Tory Party jocosely spoken of as the stupid Party; but in this matter they had shown themselves a very wide-awake Party indeed. No doubt it was very right and proper on their part so to do; but what right had the Commissioners or the Government to play into the hands of those gentlemen, and to make them-

selves political partizans? They had a certain line of instructions; but they evaded them and did not abide by them, and they had strained everything in order to concede all that those Tory gentlemen could possibly demand. There was only one instance in Ireland in which they had not conceded everything that the Orange and Tory Party asked for. But the whole of this debate was a sham. What was the use of argument? All that the Nationalist Party could do was to make a protest. As to any effect upon this Committee, they did not expect to produce any. The Committee were nominally free to do as they liked, but practically the whole thing had been settled—the bargain had been made, and he and his Friends were only talking to the empty air, because freedom of discussion in this instance was only a sham and a farce. Nothing was to be had from it except the gratification of showing that they understood the game, and complained of it to the people of Ireland, who also understood the whole matter, and who would, at the General Election, show their appreciation of the scandalous way in which they had been treated.

MR. PLUNKET said, he thought it only fair, after what had been said by the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down about this being an attempt to play into the hands of the Tories and Orangemen, that he should say a word or two upon that charge. He could speak of one gentleman who took a principal part in this inquiry—Mr. Piers White, one of the most distinguished Queen's Counsel at present at the Irish Bar, a Roman Catholic in religion, and a gentleman who had been all his life a decided Liberal in politics. [Several hon. MEMBERS: No, no!] He begged pardon of hon. Members who denied that statement. He was sorry to say that his public life had been much longer than that of some of them; and he could state of his own knowledge that Mr. Piers White had always been a decided Liberal in politics as well as a Roman Catholic. Therefore, he said that, so far as he was concerned, it was absurd to charge against him any connection with the Orange Tory faction. He had lived at Kingstown all his life, and knew every inch of the district as well as he knew the interior of that House, and he would state to the Committee what was really the condition of the problem. It was perfectly true that if they looked at the map of the county as it had been left by the decision of the Commissioners, they would see that the Kingstown Division, or, as it was to be called in the future, the Southern Division of the county, was contained within very narrow limits. That was true. It was the South-Eastern corner of the county. It contained a population of 72,000, and the division, so far as the rest of the county was concerned, was exactly equal; but it was almost impossible for the Commissioners to avoid making one a very small division and the other a large one. It would have been impossible to avoid some such division as that which had been chosen. Why was it that the Commissioners had chosen this particular way of producing the inequality of population? It was because they were instructed, rightly or wrongly, to have regard to the pursuits of the people. All those who lived in the South-Eastern District had the same pursuits. [MR. SEXTON: What are they?] A certain number of them were professional men, some were landlords, and some were merchants. At any rate, they were all of the same avenue of life, so to speak. With regard to the rest of the county, it had a much more rural population. He knew there would be some voters in the South-Eastern District who would be what they might call thoroughly agricultural people—rural people, in the ordinary sense—just as in Youghal or Balbriggan they would have a certain number of urban residents. It was obvious to everyone who knew the county that, in the course the Commissioners had adopted, they had done their best to carry out their Instructions. It was true that the Balbriggan District was much larger and much more sparsely populated. He should not have thought it necessary to intrude in the debate if it had not been for the charge of partizanship advanced against the Commissioners, which, so far as the gentleman of whom he had been speaking was concerned, was as baseless as it could be.

MR. JOHN REDMOND said, that he must say he failed to see the applicability of the remarks of the right hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down with reference to one of these Commissioners. After all, what did the

statement of the right hon. and learned Gentleman amount to? He told them that Mr. Piers White was an intimate friend of his own. That was, no doubt, a testimony to the character of Mr. White; but it did not affect the question at all. Then the right hon. and learned Gentleman told them that Mr. Piers White was a Roman Catholic and a Liberal. How, in the name of goodness, did that contravene the contention of the Irish Members? Their contention was that this jerrymandering had been carried on with the consent of the Liberal Government as a part of a bargain which they had made with the Tories. [*A laugh.*] The right hon. and learned Gentleman laughed. It was easy to do that; but no one knew better than he did what the full extent of that bargain between the two great English Parties really was. No one knew better than he that a large part of that bargain was based upon a certain arrangement being made in Ireland, so as to facilitate the return of Tory Members in certain cases where, if the rules of fairness had been observed, those Members would have had no chance. So that the fact of Mr. Piers White being a Liberal in no way exonerated him from the blame which the Irish Members justly attached to him for carrying on a policy of conceding what he could to the demands of the Liberal Party. The excuse which had been repeatedly put forward for the Commissioners, that they had made their division in order to keep together as far as possible those engaged in the same pursuits, did not, to his mind, apply to this case at all. It was absurd to talk of one of those divisions, the smaller one, as being in an urban part of the county, and the other being in an agricultural part. The Northern Division was not an agricultural division. As had been pointed out, it included a number of suburban districts, such as Malahide, Swords, and Skerries, to the North of Dublin. That was no more agricultural in reality than the Southern District. This was almost the first time that he (Mr. J. Redmond) had taken part in any of these discussions. He had listened most attentively to almost all of them, and had certainly brought to bear upon the subject a thoroughly impartial mind. He had been impressed night after night, more and more, with the conviction that these Commissioners had acted unfairly in forming these divisions in Ireland, and that they had acted unfairly with deliberation. He agreed with what had fallen from the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) when he said that after all, though the Nationalists might lose some seats through this jerrymandering, they would yet have substantial consolation in the knowledge that the more such jerrymandering went on, and the more instances were recorded of the influence upon popular representation of the English Government in Ireland, the stronger would the National cause become, and the more inevitable would be the failure of that power which had been from the very commencement, and which was that day in Ireland, founded on injustice and trickery.

Colonel KING-HARMAN said, that what the hon. Gentleman had just said showed the tone that had been adopted by hon. Members below the Gangway. The hon. Member presumed upon a geographical ignorance on the part of English Members when he tried to impress upon them that a large population had been included in the Northern Division. The hon. Member said that the Balbriggan Division was not a rural constituency at all, and that it included such important places as Skerries and Swords. Well, he (Colonel King-Harman) should like to ask how many people were included in that way? Those places were nothing but wretched villages, as the hon. Member well knew——

Mr. JOHN REDMOND said, he mentioned other instances. He did not mention those two alone.

Colonel KING-HARMAN said, that Malahide was the other—a town which in the summer season contained a certain population who went down for the sea-bathing. At other times the place could hardly be called a town at all, certainly not a town of any importance. With regard to other towns which had been mentioned in the course of the debate, they could be easily disposed of. The first Amendment moved as to County Dublin constituency was moved by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), who preferred that the name "North Dublin" should be used instead of Balbriggan, and yet he wished to see a part of the county included in the Southern Division.

MR. SEXTON said, he had never made any attempt of that kind at all.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said, he did not say that the hon. Member had made any attempt in the matter; but he had moved that Balbriggan should be called North Dublin, and the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) had complained that townships included in the North should be included in the South Dublin Division. It was impossible to separate the language of one hon. Member from that of the other. Then the hon. Member for Westmeath (Mr. T. D. Sullivan), in common with other hon. Members, spoke a great deal about the Orange Tory Party. They had spoken about the collapse of the Government, and of the surrender of the Government to the Tory Party. It was said that these demands were made by the Orange Tory Party, and no one but the Orange Tory Party, whoever those unfortunate people were, had anything to do with it, and that a shrinking and trembling English Government had had to give in to that Party. The remarks to which he was referring were equally correct with the statement which he was sure was not made with an intention to mislead the Committee, but which would mislead the Committee—namely, that a certain scheme had been put forward by the solicitor to the Emergency Committee. Hon. Members would lead the Committee to imagine that this Emergency Committee was a body of men banded together for the suppression of all Ireland; and certain hon. Members below the Gangway especially would have it thought that those people had employed some diabolic firebrand for the purpose of blowing from the breach certain gentlemen, and misleading the Commissioners, and bringing in some dreadful scheme. But it happened that the Emergency Committee had nothing whatever to do with the county of Dublin as a political body, and nothing whatever to do with any of the schemes which had been put before the Commission. He was absent from Ireland at the time, but he believed it was a fact that the solicitors to the Emergency Committee did instruct, on behalf of certain ratepayers who were not in any way connected with the Committee, and who, to the best of his belief, were not subscribers to the Committee, and never had been—did instruct Mr. Jackson to bring in a certain scheme; but the fact that he happened to be a solicitor to the Emergency Committee was taken hold of by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, and the scheme was put before the Committee as being that of the Emergency Committee, whereas that Committee had had nothing whatever to do with it. That was an instance of the manner in which hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway strove by innuendo to mislead the Committee as to what was being done by the Orange Tory Party and the Emergency Committee—Gentlemen who did not happen to agree with him (Colonel King-Harman) in politics. He did not think that the statements of those hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway deserved much reply, because their statements were not arguments. He merely wished to point out that their innuendoes about the Orange Tory Party were a sort of bluster, to give the Committee a wrong idea, to impress upon the Committee that the Commissioners had either been Orange Tories themselves, or fools enough to be misled or coerced by them. He knew something about the solicitors to the Emergency Committee, and he was aware that they had submitted a scheme totally different from the one propounded by Mr. Jackson, and who would have brought before the Commissioners a scheme to which he (Colonel King-Harman) could have consented. [MR. HEALY: What was it?] It was one that would not have improved his (Colonel King-Harman's) position in the county of Dublin.

MR. GRAY said, that he did not think that, under all the circumstances, even the indignation of the hon. and gallant Gentleman who had just sat down would have supported his position in the county of Dublin very materially. That position was so strong and so unassailable at present that it did not require that to strengthen it. He took it that if any doubt existed in the minds of the Committee as to the connection between the Orange Tory Party and the scheme which was put forward by Mr. Jackson, solicitor to the Emergency Committee, and adopted by the Commissioners, that the speech of the hon. and gallant Member had completely set all doubt in that respect at rest.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I never saw the scheme in my life until now.

MR. GRAY: The hon. and gallant Member has satisfied us on that head, and has told us what the scheme is.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I did not.

MR. HEALY: What do you know about it?

MR. GRAY: He told us that an original scheme had been propounded.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I rise to explain. What I said was, that I knew, as a matter of fact, what the scheme propounded by the two gentlemen, the solicitors to the Emergency Committee, happened to be. Whether they propounded that scheme or not before the Commissioners I cannot say. I do not know whether that was the original scheme, and I never saw it before two days ago.

MR. GRAY: That was what I said.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: You said the original scheme.

MR. GRAY: That is now one of the amended schemes that they adopted on further consideration.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: No.

MR. GRAY said, that the hon. and gallant Member acknowledged that they were the same people; but his contention was that their two capacities had no connection whatever. He (Mr. Gray) took it that innuendo was not required under any circumstances, and that assertion must take the place of innuendo. He was satisfied that those hon. Gentlemen who had listened to the speech of the hon. and gallant Member had had all the doubts in their minds now set at rest. The senior Member for the county of Dublin (Mr. Ion Hamilton) in his speech had said that he was sorry that three Members had not been given to the county of Dublin; and he (Mr. Gray) quite agreed with the hon. Member that in view of the population very nearly approaching to the number which would have secured three seats in the scheme, and in view of the character of the Metropolitan county, that three Members might very well have been given to it. But what was the nature of the scheme as it stood? The real effect of it was to give to the county only one Member. The arrangement which had now been adopted for the Southern Division—what was called the Kingstown Division—he did not know what its ultimate name would be—did not look like a division of the county at all. It was simply a group of boroughs. The Committee had decided that they would not adopt the system of grouping boroughs, the Government having said that their experience of it led them to conclude that it was not desirable. The Committee were of opinion that it was an arrangement they should not attempt to adopt; but in the present case they had grouped certain boroughs under the name of a county constituency, and given to Dublin County one Member. No one could contend for a moment that the Kingstown Division, with Blackrock and Rathmines included in it—no one could conclude that the legitimate and proper name for such a division could be other than "Kingstown," "Blackrock," or "Rathmines." It was not a county division at all. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket) had said that, in order to comply with the requirements of the directions given to the Commissioners to secure equal population, it was almost impossible to adopt any scheme but that which was now before the Committee. Well, how was it that the Commissioners had, as a matter of fact, adopted a totally different scheme? Remember, they were not promulgating a scheme of their own. They said that the original scheme of the Commissioners was the better of the two—namely, the scheme which divided the county—he did not say into absolutely equal divisions, but into practically equal divisions. It would have given two constituencies to the county of Dublin. What the hon. and gallant Gentleman thought was out of the question in regard to forming two equal divisions was actually done until this solicitor—whether he was a Tory solicitor or a solicitor for the hon. and gallant Gentleman did not matter — came in with his pet scheme. When this pet scheme was brought forward the Commissioners adopted it right off. He (Mr. Gray) felt the hopelessness of arguing this question. They all knew, of course, that the Government were not going to modify the scheme in any way; but let them, at any rate, have the effects of it put plainly before the Committee. What it would really do was this—No matter what the political character of hon. Gentlemen who were returned to that House for the Kingstown Division might be,

he would not in any sense be a County Member. He would be a Metropolitan Member. This division, with its large number of inhabitants, would, to all intents and purposes, have a single County Member representing it. If the Government had intended to do that it would have been better to have made this division the borough of Kingstown. He could then have understood what it meant. If it had been proposed to associate a Member with Kingstown—Kingstown having certain townships added to it to bring the population up to the required number—everything would have been above-board; but if that had been done it would have then been impossible to resist the claim of Dublin County for another Member. He thought the scheme of the Government was objectionable, and that if the Committee were left to form a free decision upon the matter, they would be likely to go back to the original scheme of the Commissioners. He would urge all who could possibly do so to protest against the proposal of the Government. It was only necessary to glance at the matter to see its absurdity; and it only required the slightest knowledge of the neighbourhood and of the character of the constituency to convince anyone that what he (Mr. Gray) stated was really a fact. The Government had practically manufactured a borough constituency out of one corner of Dublin County; and anyone who had the slightest knowledge of the neighbourhood could see that the scheme practically left only one County Member for Dublin.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he was sure, from the character of the speech they had heard from the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the county of Dublin (Colonel King-Harman), it would be easily understood with what joy they all welcomed his coming amongst them in that House. The hon. and gallant Member had spoken with a certain amount of heat. In fact, to say that he had spoken was to imply that he had spoken with a certain amount of heat. With regard to the statement made as to the Emergency men, the hon. and gallant Member had thought it necessary to repudiate it very warmly. Surely the hon. and gallant Member represented the whole of the Irish people on this matter. He (Mr. O'Connor) had listened with great interest to the speech of the senior Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket); and he was sure no better case could be made out for the proposal of the Commissioners than had been made out in that speech. The case was a bad one; but to his mind it had been made out by the right hon. and learned Gentleman as well as it was possible to make it out. What did the case amount to? The right hon. and learned Gentleman had said that the people in this Kingstown Division were all of similar pursuits. Well, the hon. Gentleman the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), who had rather a Socratic method of dealing with fallacies, had interjected a question to the right hon. and learned Gentleman as to what were the similarities of pursuit, and the right hon. and learned Gentleman had said—"Oh, some are professional men, some are landlords, and some are merchants." Well, he (Mr. O'Connor) had yet to learn that in Ireland persons who belonged to the trading classes were persons in a similar class of life to the landed aristocracy. He knew that in England nothing would be more resented by the county families than the insinuation that they belonged to the same class as the unfortunate wretches who got their living by trade. If a clear distinction between the county gentry and tradespeople had been distinctly kept in England, *à fortiori* it had been maintained with much greater clearness in Ireland, where the landed aristocracy had such a high regard for the privileges of caste. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had meant, no doubt, that there were large classes of persons who had their business or occupation in other parts of the county, and went out to Kingstown for private residence. But let them examine that statement for a moment. He knew very well that it was a habit of very many people in Dublin who pursued their trades in the city to spend their nights outside the city. In fact, when an unfortunate person like himself went over to Dublin, the first thing he noticed was the facility which the people of Dublin enjoyed for getting out of the smoke and turmoil of the city, by paying a small fare and taking a short railway journey to the sea or into the country. He would call the attention of those familiar with the county of Dublin, or that part immediately adjacent to Dublin, to the fact

that Kingstown was only one of many places outside Dublin which the citizens resorted to for their residences. Some went to Clontarf, some to Drumcondra, some to Howth. In fact, Kingstown, Blackrock, and Bray were only some three, with a dozen or score of health and seaside and country resorts, to which the citizens of Dublin were accustomed to go for their residences. Another argument of the right hon. and learned Gentleman was that the populations of the two divisions were closely alike in numbers. So they were. In the Balbriggan Division there were 72,992, while in the Kingstown Division there were 72,636. No doubt, as far as the equalization of the population was concerned, the present scheme was as good a one as could be devised; but the right hon. and learned Gentleman forgot to inform the Committee of the most important fact that the original scheme of the Boundary Commissioners approached as nearly as this final scheme of theirs to that desirable and necessary equalization of population. The fact that the Boundary Commissioners themselves put forward the original scheme showed that they thought that an equalization of population was fairly reached. He had not the exact numbers by him at the present moment; but his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) informed him that the difference between the populations of the two districts in the original scheme was only 700. The difference in the population in the present scheme was 354; in other words the two schemes were alike in this—that the Boundary Commissioners were able to reach a degree of equalization in population which was unparalleled in any of the divisions of any other county in any of the three countries. Now, wherein did the old scheme differ from the new one? His hon. Friend the Member for County Carlow (Mr. Gray), whose acquaintance with County Dublin was not surpassed by any Member of the Committee, had pointed out the very important fact that the scheme with which they were now dealing was one not for giving two county Members to the county of Dublin, but practically one for the enfranchisement of the town of Kingstown. The enfranchisement of Kingstown might or might not be a desirable proposal; if the proposal were put to the Committee the Committee would deal with it on its merits, and he had no doubt hon. Members sitting above the Gangway would find many good reasons in favour of it. But it was not exactly the enfranchisement of Kingstown that had been secured by this scheme, because Rathmines had been torn from the bosom of the city to which it belonged, and had been, so to speak, pitchforked to Kingstown. Rathmines had a greater population than Kingstown, and therefore the present scheme might fairly be described as one for the enfranchisement of the town of Kingstown, which might be called Rathmines-cum-Kingstown. That, again, he maintained was a proposition which could have been fairly discussed on its merits. Some of them would have objected to the ugliness of the name, and some of them would say that Rathmines, which to all intents and purposes belonged to Dublin, should not be separated from that city, and be hung on to another town which was seven miles distant. The present proposal was one for the enfranchisement of a constituency which he would call Rathmines-cum-Kingstown; in other words it was a proposal for the grouping of boroughs of different character, a system to which all the Members of the Government concerned in this Bill had declared their inveterate hostility. In one of the first speeches which the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) made upon the Bill, the right hon. Gentleman declared that the Government were distinctly unfavourable to the principle of grouping of boroughs; he said that the plan had been tried in former Redistribution Bills, and it had not been very successful in its results, and that while the Government might be disposed under the stress of circumstances to permit existing groups to remain, they had no intention whatever to make additions to that anomalous and unsatisfactory state of things. When the right hon. Gentleman said that he had not the case of County Dublin in his mind, he could scarcely have contemplated being called upon at a later period of the Bill to stand up and defend a scheme which really amounted to a grouping of different boroughs in one constituency. No doubt, he (Mr. O'Connor) and his hon. Friends were speaking against a foregone conclusion; but they might

console themselves with the reflection that they had obtained a moral victory.

MR. HEALY said, that this was a matter in which the Tory Party were quite as much interested as he and his hon. Friends. He asked the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) to consider for a moment the figures in this case. Armagh, as he had said, was the only constituency in Ireland which was to have three Members. In 1841, Armagh had a population of 231,000; in 1861, 180,000; in 1871, 179,000; and in 1881, 160,000—a sinking population all the time. What was the case with regard to Dublin? In 1841, Dublin County had a population of 140,000; in 1861, 155,000; in 1871, 158,000; and in 1881, 170,000—a rising population all the time. Now, that was a very important fact; and he asked the Government whether, as the Armagh population was always falling and it had three Representatives, and the Dublin population was always rising and it had only two Members, he and his hon. Friends were not entitled to some reconsideration of the matter? Of course, if the Bill passed in its present cast-iron form they would be unable to get redress when the population of one county very much exceeded that of the other. The Tories were interested in this matter, for he imagined that out of the three Members they would certainly be entitled to one, whereas out of the two Members they would not get one. When the Irish Land Act was under consideration the Government were willing to accept a proposal that at the end of seven years a Commission should issue for the purpose of taking facts into consideration as to the continuance of the Land Commission; and he thought it would be well on Report, if the Government were unable to do so now, to consider whether a Commission should issue in five or six years' time to re-adjust the relative representation of the counties of Armagh and Dublin. This was not a small matter. The population of the Metropolitan county in any country would always rise, whereas a rustic population like that of Armagh would in Ireland be found to decrease. There was more emigration from Ulster than from any other Province in Ireland. The population of County Dublin had increased 30 or 40 per cent in the same number of years. Now, if this Bill was to last for 20 or 30 years, the population of County Dublin would in all probability by the end of that time have reached 250,000. The population of Armagh, however, would have sunk to perhaps 120,000 or 130,000; and still, by reason of the fact that there was no adjustable principle in the Bill, Armagh would have three Members and Dublin would only have two. An additional reason why a reconsideration in this matter should take place was that Dublin City had been very badly treated. He would be quite content to leave it to the Lord Lieutenant to say that when Armagh had sank to a lower population than Dublin a Commission should issue to adjust the representation. This was not a matter upon which there could be any political feeling, because he had no doubt that in course of time the Nationalists would be able to win two of the three seats in Armagh. Catholics were gradually gaining the North of Ireland, and in a short time they would equal, if not exceed, the Protestants. Anyone who knew the North of Ireland knew that in certain counties when there was a farm for sale a Catholic always stepped in and bought it, while the emigration amongst Protestants was a higher percentage. In consequence of that there would, in course of time, be a much larger Catholic population than there was now. He hoped the Postmaster General would be able to see his way to provide that in a given time there should be a reconsideration of the representation allotted to the counties of Armagh and Dublin.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that the question of a third Member for County Dublin had been discussed several times.

MR. HEALY: Not in relation to this particular point.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: No; in relation to the general subject. But it had never been stated where the additional Member was to come from.

MR. HEALY said, that the right hon. Gentleman had not understood him properly. What he asked was that a provision should be put in the Bill by which, when the population of Armagh sank below that of Dublin, the Lord Lieutenant should have power by Commission to allot the third Member from Armagh to Dublin.

[*Sixteenth Night.*]

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he quite understood the hon. and learned Member. The proposal was that the Lord Lieutenant or some other authority should have the power when, as it was expected it would, the population of the county of Dublin became greater than that of the county of Armagh, to give to County Dublin the third Member now allotted to County Armagh. Such a proposal seemed to him (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) to introduce a very extraordinary principle, one which, if adopted in the case of Dublin, would be claimed for a great many other constituencies with an increasing population. The principle was one which he was persuaded the Committee would not accede to. The fact was that the Members had been allotted to the various counties upon the Census of 1881, and quite irrespective of the question whether the population was an increasing or decreasing one. After a certain number of years there would, no doubt, be a disproportion between the various constituencies—the population of some would be lower and that of some higher; but that was a matter which would have to be determined some 10 or 20 years hence, when the question of redistribution came up again for consideration. The immediate question before the Committee was whether the boundaries now determined upon were proper ones or not; whether the determinations of the Commissioners were or were not in conformity with their Instructions. That was a question which really laid in a nut-shell. In his opinion, anybody who looked at the map, and at the condition of the population, and at the Instructions given to the Commissioners, would admit that the conclusions come to were just and proper.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 70; Noes 19: Majority 51.—(Div. List, No. 112.)

MR. HEALY said, that before they left the county of Dublin he should like to ask the right hon. Baronet opposite why Ballyrobe was omitted, and what precautions were being taken to prevent mistakes?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that every precaution was being taken which could be taken. The Irish part of the Schedule, as the hon. and learned Member would notice, had not been printed with the same care as the Scotch and English portions. That was owing to the fact of their having been delayed in their Irish work. The Scotch work had been very light; but the Irish work had been very heavy, like the English. The Irish Schedules had been printed in a great hurry; but every care had been taken to amend them as they had been going along.

MR. HEALY said, he should like to say a word by way of caution. It would be well for the right hon. Baronet not to rely too much on discovering mistakes in connection with the Irish divisions through the agency of the Irish Members in the House, because the Irish Members had been directing their attention to the political aspect of the matter; whereas in regard to the English part of the Bill hon. Members had been looking as much after names as after political matter. In that way many glaring mistakes might have escaped the Irish Members. He would, therefore, ask that the right hon. Baronet would pay especial attention to this point, in the endeavour to be accurate, and to make the Bill so. He hoped that before Report the right hon. Baronet would put in train all the inquiries he could in order to make the measure as perfect as possible.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, that his noble Friend (Viscount Crichton), who had an Amendment on the Paper, had been called away; and he (Lord George Hamilton) was not able to make the proposal, as he was not sufficiently acquainted with the localities. He would, however, give Notice that his noble Friend would move an Amendment on Report.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: And I give Notice that I shall be obliged to oppose it.

MR. KENNY said, he had a Notice on the Paper to move, in page 98, line 4, to leave out "Connemara" Division, and to insert "West Galway" Division. There were two slightly conflicting Amendments on the Paper in the name of the hon. and gallant Member for the county of Galway (Colonel Nolan); but he might say that he substantially agreed with the hon. and gallant Gentleman's proposals, and that he would therefore modify his own original Amendment, and would, in place of it,

move, in line 4, to leave out the word "The," and let the word "Connemara" stand.

Amendment proposed, in page 98, line 4, to leave out the word "The."—(*Mr. Kenny.*)

MR. KENNY said, he wished to move to leave out "The Tuam Division," in order to insert "The North Galway Division."

Amendment *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in page 98, line 7, to leave out the words "The Tuam Division," in order to insert the words "The North Galway Division."—(*Mr. Kenny.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'The Tuam Division' stand part of the Schedule."

MR. JOHN REDMOND said, that before the Amendment was put he thought it only fair that it should be stated that the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Galway County (Colonel Nolan) felt very strongly upon these points. He had asked him (Mr. Redmond) to take the opportunity of mentioning the fact. The hon. and gallant Member had not asked him to press his Amendment, especially as there was a difference of opinion amonst the Irish Members with regard to it. But he had asked him to state his opinion, which was entertained by a large part of the people of the district, that the name of "Tuam" should remain. It was unnecessary to state the reasons which lay at the bottom of that opinion. Tuam was the name of a very ancient place, the seat of an Archbishopric, and one that was well known and respected. He thought it should be retained. However, he was fulfilling his duty by mentioning the objection the hon. and gallant Member entertained to the Amendment. No doubt, on Report, the hon. and gallant Member would bring forward an Amendment.

Amendment *agreed to.*

MR. HEALY said, that he would now move that the Chairman report Progress, and ask leave to sit again. It would be understood that they had only got to line 20, and that, of course, saved his Amendment. When they came to line 20 they would take the Northern Division of Londonderry, and they would have to alter the title. He should like to ask the right hon. Baronet, in order that they might know exactly where they stood, when, as they had made very fair progress that night, they might expect the Bill to come on again?

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the Navy Estimates would come on on Monday, and this Bill would be taken on Tuesday, and he hoped it might be finished in reasonable time, judging from the Amendments that were on the Paper on that day. He would propose that the Report should be taken as the first Order on Monday week.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he had heard the statement of the right hon. Baronet with extreme surprise. They had discussed this matter at Question time that day, and the Prime Minister had given them to understand that if the Bill was not finished that night it would be continued on Monday. Everyone knew at that time that there was no chance of the Bill being finished that night. It was one of those open secrets that everyone acquainted with Parliamentary Business was well acquainted with. He knew several Gentlemen who, on going away that night, were going out of town, and had left under the impression that this Bill would come on on Monday. He must express his strong objection to a sudden change of opinion being arrived at at that late hour of the night, and after a statement of a different kind had been made in a full House earlier in the evening.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he had consulted with hon. Gentlemen opposite on the matter, and the arrangement he proposed to carry out had been the result of that communication. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) was anxious that the Navy Estimates should be taken, and the Government had agreed to take them on Monday; because otherwise they did not know when they would be able to bring them on. The Government felt that they could not get to Report of the Bill on Monday, and that if they had put the Bill down for that day they would have lost all oppor-

tunity of taking the Navy Estimates, without gaining anything.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, that he had had a conversation with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith), and his impression of that conversation was opposed to what seemed to be the impression of the right hon. Baronet. The inconvenience of the course proposed was undoubted. It must be inconvenient to all those Members who left the House that evening at 6 o'clock, fully persuaded that this Bill would come on on Monday, and not on Tuesday. He (Mr. Balfour) should feel bound to raise this question again.

MR. HEALY: I hope the hon. Member does not consider that the Irish Members are getting any advantage.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, no!

MR. HEALY: Because, as far as we are concerned, we would far rather that the Bill should come on on Monday.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that he communicated on the subject with the Leader of the Opposition, and had understood from him that the course now proposed would be the most convenient.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, that he agreed with the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. Balfour) that the alteration of the original arrangement would be very inconvenient to Members who were not now in the House; but, on the other hand, he believed there would be a great deal of advantage in the course proposed, because they would all agree that it was desirable to get through the Bill as soon as possible, and that it was desirable to make progress with the Navy Estimates. It was clear that if these were not taken on Monday it would not be possible to go on with the Government Business for some days.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that if they did take the Bill the first thing on Monday it would lead to considerable difficulty, and they would not be able to take the Navy Estimates for a considerable time. The Budget proceedings would occupy a long period.

MR. WHITLEY agreed that the course the Government was proposing was inconvenient. Indeed, this was not the first time arrangements which had been made earlier in the evening in a full House were upset by agreement subsequently entered into. On two or three occasions when the Prime Minister had announced a certain course of proceeding he had observed that later on that course had been altered.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out to hon. Members that this discussion is becoming irregular. The question as to what day the Bill should be deferred to does not come on until I have made my Report to Mr. Speaker. If there is to be a discussion at all, the proper time to raise it would be when a Motion is made to appoint a day for the resumption of the Bill.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, after what had fallen from his noble Friend and the right hon. Baronet opposite he would not press the matter further; but he trusted that the Government would not in future suddenly, and at the close of a Sitting, alter the course of Business arranged in a full House at Question time.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, it was definitely understood that the Committee would be continued on Monday, if not finished at the present Sitting. The Prime Minister was asked when the Navy Estimates would be proceeded with, if not taken on Monday, and he replied that he could not then fix a day for them; and as it was evident to everybody the Committee on the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill would not finish that night, Members interested in the Navy Estimates had gone away with the understanding that the Estimates would not be taken on Monday.

MR. HEALY said, perhaps it might abate the indignation of hon. Gentlemen to know the reason for the change. If the Committee finished on Monday, then Tuesday would be set free for Motions; and it happened that Irish Members had the first place for the Motion impugning the conduct of the Speaker, and that the Government wished to get rid of.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he was a party to the re-arrangement; but he was not aware what Business was down for Tuesday; he was sure the hon. and learned Member would take his word for that.

Motion *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Tuesday* next.

EGYPTIAN LOAN BILL.—[BILL 122.]

(*Sir Arthur Otway, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Hibbert.*)

THIRD READING.

Order for Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."

MR. HEALY said, so far this Bill had proceeded without the intervention of the Irish Party in the debates; but he could not, as an Irish Member, allow it to pass without a protest, and he intended to divide against this stage. He had not intervened, and would not do so now, except to offer a protest against the proposal to grant a loan of an immense amount to a bankrupt Power, while advances for desirable and necessary public works in Ireland were refused. Protesting against this disposal of public money, and that afterwards it might not be said that the Bill passed *nemine contradicente*, he should challenge the question, and take a division.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 42; Noes 17: Majority 25.—(Div. List, No. 113.)

Bill read the third time, and *passed*.

TELEGRAPH ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 121.]

(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre, Mr. Hibbert.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Second Reading be deferred till Monday."—(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre.*)

MR. WARTON said, he noted what was said about this Bill in the afternoon by the Postmaster General—namely, that it would not be taken until it could be reached at a reasonable hour. Now, was there any hope of that opportunity being found on Monday? Why not put the Bill down for Friday, when there would be far more chance of finding a reasonable hour for it?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, it would be better to set down the Bill for Monday. Of course, he should adhere to his undertaking not to bring it on except at a reasonable time; but that time might be found on Monday.

Motion *agreed to*.

Second Reading *deferred* till *Monday* next.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (EXPENSES OF CONFERENCES) BILL.—[BILL 88.]

(*Mr. Leake, Mr. Algernon Egerton, Mr. Agnew, Mr. Arnold.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 10th April.*]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 2 (Expenses of local authorities may be allowed).

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 13, after the word "Board," to insert the words "in that behalf."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. HEALY said, when the Amendment was moved on a previous occasion he expressed a hope that the Government would see their way to the insertion of a clause extending the Bill to Ireland. Since then he had been given to understand the Government had agreed to that suggestion, and perhaps it would be convenient to the Solicitor General for Ireland at that point to state his proposal.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, he saw no objection to the Bill being extended to Ireland, and he had prepared an Amendment in the form of a new clause to come in after Clause 3.

MR. WARTON said, he was willing to do whatever would facilitate progress, and would withdraw his Amendment if the hon. and learned Gentleman wished to introduce words making the clause applicable to the Local Government Board (Ireland). Understanding from the hon. and learned Gentleman's gesture that was not so, he would move the insertion of the words.

Amendment *agreed to*.

Clause, as amended, *agreed to*.

Clause 3 (Interpretation).

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, as consequential upon the clause to follow and to make Clause 3 applicable to England he proposed to put in the words "in England."

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 26, after the word "that," to insert the

words "in England."—(*Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

New Clause (Application of the Act to Ireland,)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

MR. HEALY asked what was the clause?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, it was to the effect that the term Local Government Board should mean the Local Government Board (Ireland), substituting the Act of 1878 for the English Act of 1875, and that the term "Local Authority" should mean Rural Sanitary Authority and Urban Sanitary Authority.

MR. HEALY said, he was not so conversant with the Act as he ought to be. Did the term "Urban Sanitary Authority" include "Town Commissioners?"

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): Yes.

Clause *agreed to.*

Preamble *agreed to.*

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill, as amended, be reported to the House."—(*Mr. Leake.*)

MR. HEALY said, there was a small matter in connection with the Preamble which, perhaps, it was scarcely worth while referring to; but the Preamble set forth that "whereas doubts have arisen," &c. Those doubts, however, never had arisen in connection with the Irish Act, and it would be better to strike out the Preamble. Those Preambles were all humbug, and were generally omitted. Why have a Preamble at all?

THE CHAIRMAN: I must remind the hon. and learned Member that the Committee have agreed to the Preamble. Of course the hon. and learned Member could move to omit the Preamble on Report, and the Bill having been amended there must be a "Report" stage.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered upon *Monday* 27th April, and to be *printed.* [Bill 129.]

MOTIONS.

—o—

MEDICAL ACT (1858) AMENDMENT BILL.

MOTION FOR LEAVE.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend 'The Medical Act, 1858.'"—(*Dr. Lyons.*)

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked, did the hon. Member mean to re-introduce the particular Government Bill of last year?

DR. LYONS said, that was not at all his object. It would be a small Bill having for its object the removal of disabilities of certain practitioners who were Members of the Irish College of Physicians, with reference to certain appointments in England, where it was a condition that candidates should be Members or Fellows of certain Colleges, and also to insert on the Register the title of Master of Obstetrics granted by the University of Dublin.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Dr. LYONS.

CIVIL SERVICE EXPENDITURE.

NOMINATION OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. NOEL be a Member of the Select Committee."—(*Mr. Hibbert.*)

MR. SEXTON said, he thought this Committee was badly nominated. Of the proposed 15 Members only one belonged to the Irish Party, and he, though very competent for the duty, was not now in attendance in the House, nor did he know when his hon. Friend could attend. The subject of the proposed inquiry had particular interest for Irish Members, inasmuch as Ireland contributed more than her share towards the general expenditure, and received much less than her fair proportion in return. Several of the Departments were starved to the disadvantage of Ireland, and the whole system of Civil Service administration in Ireland deserved the serious attention of the House. For instance, in the Board of Works Department it was the custom to prepare inflated Estimates spent in the increase of the pay and allowances of permanent officials, by a system very nearly approaching fraud. He

maintained that a representation of the Irish Party by one Member was altogether inadequate, and whenever his hon. Friend (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) could not attend a meeting they would have no Representative. He would suggest a postponement of the subject, unless the Government would give them something like a real representation. It could not be pretended that a fifteenth was an adequate representation of the Irish Party on a subject in which Ireland had a special and peculiar interest.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he understood that his noble Friend who had charge of the arrangement of these matters had consulted the Representative of hon. Members on the Benches opposite in reference to this Committee.

MR. SEXTON said, yes; but offered only one nomination.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, this was the first intimation of any dissatisfaction with name or number; there had been no suggestion of it, and they were taken quite by surprise. These arrangements were made, as necessarily they must be, by understandings arrived at beforehand.

MR. R. N. FOWLER (LORD MAYOR) said, in reference to the constitution of the Committee, that his hon. Friend the Member for North Lincoln (Mr. Winn) had only nominated five Members; not that he complained of that—no doubt it was a proper arrangement. He was one of those nominated; but owing to a change of circumstances, of which the House was aware, he was afraid he should be unable to give much attention to the proceedings. But what he desired to point out was that this Committee was not struck in the usual way; the object had evidently been very naturally and properly to put upon it Gentlemen selected rather with a view to their acquaintance with the subject of inquiry than with regard to the balance of Parties. He apprehended it was not a question into which political feeling would enter. He only mentioned that to show that Irish Members were only in the same position, as regarded proportion, as the Conservative Party.

MR. SHEIL said, he did not understand that his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) was dissatisfied with the name of the hon. Member (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) on the Committee. He (Mr. Sheil) was responsible for that nomination; but it must not be assumed that when the noble Lord (Lord Richard Grosvenor), coming for a name, received it, that thereupon the Irish Party were necessarily satisfied. It was no part of his duty to point out the faults he might think existed in the constitution of the Committee. So far as his duty was concerned, it was fulfilled by handing in the name of the hon. Member (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) when asked to nominate a Member.

MR. HEALY said, it must be understood, as observed by his hon. Friend, whose zeal and activity was well known, that his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) in no degree desired to cast any slur upon the nomination—quite the contrary. There was some force in the remark of the Home Secretary; and all must feel that in the delicate duty of appointing a Committee it was necessary to have some understanding as to what should take place, to avoid, as far as possible, discussions of a personal character. If the noble Lord had instructions to put in a Member of the Party, of course he would go to his hon. Friend the Irish "Whip" (Mr. Sheil), and so the name would be settled. But in the House the Party had a perfect right to challenge the proportion of their representation. Surely the Home Secretary would see they were entitled to some consideration. Apart from any other considerations, why not treat them fairly in proportion to their numbers? It might be the Committee would not finish its task, and would have to be re-cast after the General Election. Why wrangle over such a point for an hour at such an hour? If the Irish Party had more than their right, would it "set the Thames on fire?" Was there anything of a revolutionary nature to be apprehended from the proceedings of this Committee? Why show such an ungracious grudging spirit? Indeed, they were under an obligation to his hon. Friend for his endeavour to get Ireland properly represented in this matter. He would ask the Government, who demanded 14 Representatives and Ireland one, were Irish Representatives such formidable persons that another could not be trusted on the Committee? Surely they would not pay Irish Members the extravagant compliment of supposing that another of their number would upset the balance?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he might mention that in the nomination of another Committee, a Motion for which was on the Paper, though it would not be moved, were two Members from the Party opposite below the Gangway out of a total of 15—more than the proper portion. He would suggest that it was open to Members to increase the numbers of this Committee.

MR. HEALY asked, would the Government agree to that?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he could not promise that.

MR. HIBBERT said, the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not present; the arrangements for the Committee had been agreed upon with his right hon. Friend, and it would be inconvenient to alter those arrangements in his absence. He (Mr. Hibbert) would suggest that the Committee should be appointed as proposed, and that subsequently a Motion might be made by any hon. Member to increase the number of the Committee by two; one of these might then be a Member from Ireland. He might mention that already there were two Irish Members nominated out of 15.

MR. HEALY said, one was merely a Liberal Member.

MR. HIBBERT: Of course, if two Members were added to the Committee, Ireland would have a fair claim for another Member.

MR. BIGGAR said, the best way of ending the controversy would be to adjourn the debate to Monday, giving the Chancellor of the Exchequer the opportunity of making up his mind. He therefore moved the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Biggar.*)

MR. HEALY said, he would ask the Speaker on a point of Order whether, if this was the first time—as he believed it was—that this Notice of Motion had appeared on the Paper, objection taken was not in itself sufficient to bring the Motion within the operation of the Half-past 12 Rule, and necessitate a postponement?

MR. SPEAKER: The nomination of a Committee is excepted from the Half-past 12 Rule.

MR. HEALY said, he thought it was brought within the Standing Orders.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. and learned Member is referring to a separate paragraph in the Standing Order relating to Standing Committees. The nomination of an ordinary Select Committee is also exempted from the Half-past 12 Rule.

MR. HIBBERT appealed to the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) not to press his Motion. He would certainly use his influence with the Chancellor of the Exchequer to increase the number on the Committee to 17. He was not in a position to promise that that would be done; but he would promise to use his influence in favour of it; and if the number was made 17, two of the whole should be Members of the Irish Party.

MR. SEXTON said, if they were satisfied that this would be done their object would be gained. He did not doubt the goodwill and *bona fides* of the Secretary to the Treasury; but a speech hostile to their desire had been delivered by the Home Secretary. Neither of the Cabinet Ministers present had offered to support the Secretary to the Treasury. If either would promise their aid there would be no objection to the appointment of the Committee.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 14; Noes 36: Majority 22.—(Div. List, No. 114.)

Question again proposed, "That MR. NOEL be a Member of the Committee."

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at a quarter after One o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 20th April, 1885.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Egyptian Loan* (74); Royal Irish Constabulary Redistribution* (75).

Second Reading—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 2)* (64); Honorary Freedom of Boroughs (61).

Committee—Solicitors (Ireland)* (53).

Referred to Select Committee—Poisons (33).

SUPPLY—THE VOTE OF CREDIT.

QUESTION.

The Earl of CARNARVON: My Lords, there was an understanding last week, correctly or incorrectly, on this side of the House, that the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs would be prepared to make some statement to the House to-night preparatory to the statement which is to be made in the House of Commons on the subject of the Vote of Credit. It would be satisfactory to know what the intention of the noble Earl is.

Earl GRANVILLE: It is a fact that a statement is to be made in the House of Commons on the Motion for the Vote of Credit, and I shall make a somewhat similar statement to your Lordships at the same time. I believe the Vote of Credit will be asked for to-morrow, and I shall then avail myself of the opportunity of addressing your Lordships. I may state that a telegraphic despatch was received from Sir Peter Lumsden on Friday, and that the character of that despatch was confirmatory of his own statement of the case, and in contradiction to that which has been put forward by General Komaroff. We are expecting still further details from Sir Peter Lumsden on the subject.

The Earl of CARNARVON: Is the House to expect a further statement from the noble Earl on this important matter?

Earl GRANVILLE: Yes.

HONORARY FREEDOM OF BOROUGHS BILL.—(No 61.)

(*The Marquess of Ripon.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

The Marquess of RIPON, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, explained that its object was to give to all municipal boroughs in England the power of conferring their honorary freedom on distinguished men. Burghs in Scotland possessed the power, as did also the City of London; and he knew of no reason why other important towns in England should not be placed in the same position. His attention had first been drawn to the subject in his capacity of High Steward of Hull. The citizens of that town desired to have the power which the Bill would confer, and he had endeavoured to effect their object by introducing a clause for that purpose in a Private Bill. The noble Earl on the Woolsack, as Chairman of Committees, had, however, objected to that course, and he had consequently introduced the present Bill, which had the approval of the Home Secretary and of the Leader of the Opposition in their Lordships' House.

Motion *agreed to*; Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Monday* next.

MALTA—SALARY OF THE GOVERNOR AND OTHER OFFICIALS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

Viscount SIDMOUTH asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the salary of the Lieutenant-Governor of Malta has been placed on the Civil List of the Island contrary to Her Majesty's instructions of 11th May 1849, to the promises of the Malta Government conveyed to the Elected Members of Council by letters dated 8th February and 1st April 1868, to a Resolution in Council 7th April 1868, and to the despatches of the Duke of Buckingham of 20th March and 16th May 1868; and, whether any instructions on this subject have been given by the present Secretary of State to the Governor for the last occasion on which the matter was brought before the Council? The noble Lord explained that not long ago the noble Earl (the Earl of Derby) proposed that a considerable addition should be made to the salary of the Chief Secretary of Malta, upon whom the title of Lieutenant Governor was conferred, and to the salary of the Chief Justice. Now, ever since 1848 it had been a part of the Constitution of Malta that any proposal to make additions to official salaries should be communicated to and made through the Council of the Island. This practice had not been adhered to in the case to which he wished to draw attention. The Elected Members of Council also complained that the noble Earl's plan was only ratified by the interposition of the Governor, who gave his casting vote in favour of it, their objection being that he ought not to have exercised his right to vote in connection with a matter of local, and not Imperial interest.

THE EARL OF DERBY said, that he had no difficulty in giving the explanation which the noble Viscount asked for, and he thought it would be satisfactory. The question which was brought before the Council of Malta was not one involving an addition to the expenses of the Civil List. It was, in fact, of a contrary nature. According to the arrangement that prevailed two years ago, the Governor received £5,000 a-year, which came entirely from the local Revenues. The Colonial Secretary received £1,000. Some complaints were made that the salary of the Governor was received by him partly in respect of services rendered in his military capacity, and it was argued that such services ought to be paid for out of Imperial instead of local Revenues. Thinking that there was some justice in these complaints, and with the view of relieving the finances of Malta, he made the arrangement which came into operation two years ago. By that arrangement the duty of paying a part of the Governor's salary—namely, £2,000—was transferred to the War Department, and so far the salary became an Imperial instead of a local charge. That set free a sum of £2,000 a-year upon the Civil List; and as in consequence of the arrangement the duties of the Colonial Secretary were considerably increased, it seemed fair that some portion of the sum so set free should be used to increase his salary. He was accordingly given £1,600 a-year instead of £1,000; but the net result of the transaction was to benefit the local finances to the extent of £1,400 annually. As to the question whether the Governor had a right to vote on the occasion referred to, he had to say that he could not agree that questions involving the transfer of part of the Governor's functions and the creation of a Lieutenant Governor could be regarded as exclusively local, and not Imperial.

MALTA—LIST OF THE NOBLES.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH, in asking the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he will cause a list of the Nobles of Malta, whose titles have been recognized by Her Majesty, to be published in *The London Gazette*, as was recently done in the case of a Canadian nobleman? said, that the nobility of Malta was not a mushroom nobility, but had existed for hundreds of years. Many of the titles went back as far as the 13th century, and the rights of the nobility had been over and over again confirmed in Statutes by the Grand Masters; and when Malta was handed over to this country a solemn engagement was given that all their rights and privileges should be respected. It was felt by them as a great grievance that the recognition formerly accorded to them had been taken away by despatches from the Colonial Office. When Queen Adelaide visited the Island he was present, and the nobility occupied the place of precedence. Things went on in the same way until His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales was in the Island. On that occasion the matter was referred to the Governor, and he understood that the Judges somehow or other claimed to take precedence of the nobility contrary to all precedent. The question was referred to Lord Carnarvon, then at the Colonial Office; and though he would be the last person to accuse his noble Friend of neglecting any matter that came before him, he could not help thinking that the noble Earl could have paid but slight attention to the subject, for he wrote back that the precedence always allowed to the nobility should give place to that of the Judges, and in a subsequent despatch he extended the precedence to the Judges' wives. That had created a very unpleasant feeling in Malta. He had been long acquainted with the Island, and he could say that the nobility were strongly attached to the British connection, and that many of them were of considerable wealth, cultivated intelligence, and eminently fitted to adorn the high station they before occupied. They naturally felt grieved that their position and their representations had been persistently ignored by the Colonial Office. The noble Earl was asked on a recent occasion whether he would permit their titles to be published in *The London Gazette*. Unless that was done they would have no status at the English Court. Considering this as a matter of policy, he thought that the claims of the nobility of Malta should be recognized. In India we should not attempt for a moment to refuse their high rank to the Princes and nobles of that country, nor ought we to do it in this case, because

we had no danger to apprehend. What he would ask was whether the noble Earl would allow those titles to be published in *The London Gazette*, so that those gentlemen might take their places at the English Court?

THE EARL OF DERBY said, that there was no intention on his part, and he was sure there had been none on the part of any of his Predecessors, to treat with disrespect or neglect the Maltese nobility. They were a very respectable but not a numerous body, consisting of between 20 and 30 families. When he saw the Question of the noble Viscount on the Paper he referred the matter to Sir Albert Woods, Garter King-at-Arms in Heralds' College, who was the highest authority on such points; and he received an answer the purport of which was that what the noble Viscount proposed—namely, the publication of the list of those nobles in *The London Gazette*, would certainly not have the effect the noble Viscount desired. It would not, he was informed, give the possessors of Maltese titles rank or precedence in England; and, with respect to the rank and precedence they enjoyed in Malta, their status had been fully recognized. What the noble Viscount proposed, therefore, would not alter their status in any respect. The noble Viscount raised another question—that of their precedence as compared with the precedence of official dignitaries in the Island. That was not the Question which the noble Viscount had given Notice of, but referred to an entirely different matter; but he believed it was a general rule in the Colonies and in India, as well as in Malta, that official rank took precedence.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH said, what he wished to state was that the grievance felt most strongly was that the conditions upon which Malta had been annexed to this country had not been observed. It was promised that all the rights of the nobility should be preserved, and that they should enjoy the same position with respect to public functionaries as they had enjoyed at the time of the Grand Masters.

THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH: Perhaps your Lordships will allow me to say a few words on this matter. Your Lordships must be fully aware that the intercourse between the English and Maltese societies does not always run quite smoothly, and I think that if the noble Earl, although he may not be in the position to accord entirely what the noble Viscount's Motion proposes, could yet in some way further recognize the position of the nobles of Malta, it would be a great benefit. There is one point to which I would venture to allude as creating a difficulty between English and Maltese societies, and that is the absolute refusal of the members of the club to receive the Maltese within the club. I think—and I have always expressed myself at Malta in the same sense—that that is the greatest possible mistake, and a great injustice to those high-minded Maltese gentlemen who are so anxious to become members there. I think, perhaps, if the Government could in any way give some further recognition to the position of the nobility in Malta, it might act as a great inducement to the members of the club to elect Maltese to it; and I am certain that the result would be that intercourse there would run far more smoothly, and I am sure would only tend to strengthen British rule in that Island.

THE EARL OF DERBY said, the subject referred to by the illustrious Duke was not within the competence of the Government. He was quite sure the Maltese nobility would feel very grateful for the interest shown in their position by their Lordships' House; and he cordially concurred in what had been said, that it was most desirable that the social relations between the Maltese and the English should be closer and more cordial than hitherto.

POISONS BILL.—(No. 33.)

(*The Lord President.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee, read, and *discharged*.

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL), in moving that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee, said, that the measure was a very necessary attempt to improve the law relating to the registration of poisons. The subject was one of some perplexity and no little difficulty, and he hoped their Lordships would agree to the Motion.

Moved, "That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee."—(*The Lord President.*)

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN, who had given Notice that on the Motion for going into Committee on the Bill he would move — "That the House resolve itself into Committee on the Bill this day six months," said, he felt very strongly that a measure on this subject was necessary, right, and proper. At the same time, however, he was of opinion that the Bill now before their Lordships was not a good one, and that it was extremely likely to harass and hamper legitimate trade. It had been brought forward without any reference to the interests of the trade or to the interests of the public; and on that ground he appealed to the noble Lord some time ago to refer it to a Select Committee. The noble Lord did not at the time see his way to respond to the appeal, but had now done so; and he had no doubt that the inquiry on the subject would prove to be of great value even if the Bill did not pass this Session. He should withdraw his Notice on the Paper, and he hoped the Motion of the noble Lord would be carried.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill *referred* accordingly.

AFRICA (RED SEA COAST) — THE ITALIANS AT MASSOWAH.

QUESTION.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY asked Her Majesty's Government, If it is true that Arab prisoners have been handed over for custody to the Italians at Massowah; and, if so, by what right under the Law of Nations the Italian forces can be asked to become gaolers of these prisoners, since making prisoners of war carried with it the responsibility of feeding them properly, and if these prisoners attempted to escape the Italians would have no right to use force to detain them? He also asked whether it was true that forced labour had been employed on the railway near Wady Halfa, and that these labourers were kept 12 or 13 hours at work, and worked under the lash?

EARL GRANVILLE, in reply, said, that he was unable to give any answer to the first part of the Question of the noble Lord, as Her Majesty's Government had no communication on the subject. As to the second part of the Question, the information of the Government appeared to be contrary to that of the noble Lord; because, so far from the railway being laid by forced labour, it was being constructed by Egyptian soldiers.

House adjourned at Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 20th April, 1885.

MINUTES.] — SELECT COMMITTEE — School Board Elections (Voting), *nominated.*

SUPPLY—*considered in Committee*—NAVY ESTIMATES.

PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*) — *Withdrawn* — Northampton and Banbury and Metropolitan Junction Railway.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Municipal Corporations (Quarter Session Boroughs) * [133]; Registration of Voters (Scotland) * [132].

First Reading—Medical Act (1858) Amendment * [130]; Tramways (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1) * [131].

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

LONDON, BRIGHTON, AND SOUTH COAST RAILWAY (VARIOUS POWERS) BILL.

SIR ARTHUR OTWAY said, he had to make a Motion in regard to this Bill which was almost of a formal character, and had been made on similar occasions in previous years. There was a matter coming before a Select Committee connected with the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway; and, as he was formerly a Director of that Railway, he thought it better that the Bill should be adjudicated upon by some other person than himself. He had consulted the Chairman of the Standing Order Committee, who had been good enough to consent to take this particular Committee; and he, therefore, begged to move, as on previous occasions, under Standing Order No. 109—"That the Chairman of the Committee on Standing Orders be appointed Chairman of the Committee on the Bill."

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Ordered, That the Chairman of the Committee on Standing Orders be appointed Chairman of the Committee on the Bill.

MOTION.

—o—

POST OFFICE SITES [PURCHASE OF LAND AND EXPENSES].

RESOLUTION.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House will, To-morrow, resolve itself into Committee upon Post Office Sites [Purchase of Land and Expenses]."—(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre.*)

MR. HEALY asked if the Government proposed to set up this Bill to-morrow?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: Yes. It is simply a Motion to enable a Bill to be set up in Committee of the Whole House.

MR. HEALY appealed to the Speaker whether the course proposed to be taken was regular?

MR. SPEAKER said, there was nothing irregular in it.

MR. HEALY remarked that if that were so, how was it that the Bill had not been printed?

MR. SPEAKER: I understand that this is the first stage to allow the Bill to be introduced.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: This is merely a formal stage in order to enable a financial Bill to be set up.

MR. HEALY: I understand that this is a Money Bill, and I ask why this stage was not taken in the first instance, instead of waiting until after the Bill had been read a second time? I presume that, this being a Money Bill, the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule would not operate; but really the way in which the measure has been dealt with makes it extremely difficult for the House to understand whether it is a Money Bill or not. I understand, Sir, that you have now ruled that the Bill is a Money Bill, although the Orders of the House have not been complied with, and the measure was not introduced in Committee of the Whole House in the first instance. I think the question is one of some importance to the House generally, or we shall never be able to know whether a Bill is a Money Bill or not; I submit with respect, as the sanction of no Committee has yet been obtained, the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule should operate.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: The Bill was not brought in as a Money Bill, and, as a matter of fact, it was blocked, and could not be brought on after half-past 12 o'clock. At present, the Bill is not a Money Bill.

MR. HEALY: I understand that you, Sir, have ruled this to be a Money Bill. The right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General now says that it is not a Money Bill, and I wish to know which view is correct?

MR. SPEAKER: This is entirely a different proceeding for the purpose of setting up a Bill, and it is necessary to pass a Resolution in Committee for the purpose of sanctioning a Money Clause in a Bill. The Bill itself is not entirely a Money Bill; but it will contain a clause which is a Money Clause, and in order to bring that clause in harmony with the Rules of the House it is necessary to set up the Bill in Committee, so that the Money Clause may be inserted in it.

MR. HEALY: I perfectly understand that point; but if it is not yet a Money Bill it will be perfectly possible to block the measure to-morrow. For the purpose of obtaining your ruling upon the point to-morrow, I propose to block the Bill to-night.

MR. SPEAKER: I understand that the Bill itself is before a Select Committee. When it comes back from that Select Committee it will be in the power of the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) to take the course he has just suggested.

MR. SEXTON: How can a Resolution in Committee set up a Bill which is already before the House, and which has been read a second time?

MR. SPEAKER: The proposal of the right hon. Gentleman has reference only to a clause which it is proposed to insert in an existing Bill. There is no proposal to set up an entire Bill.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Committee thereupon *To-morrow.*

QUESTIONS.

—o—

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS—KILLESHANDRA, CO. CAVAN.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland,

Is he aware that, at the recent election of Poor Law Guardians for the Killeshandra Division of Cavan Union, the voting papers of Captain Beresford for said division were collected and given in to the returning officer with the name of Captain Beresford written thereon, he being in London at the time, and could not possibly have signed the voting paper in person; is he aware that the said voting papers, after being left by the police at the residence of Captain Beresford, were taken away by a young gentleman lately appointed to the Commission of the Peace, and sent back in time for the constabulary collector with the name of Captain Beresford inscribed thereon; whether the action of the Justice of the Peace is justifiable in Law; and, are the said voting papers still in the hands of the returning officer of the Cavan Union?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Returning Officer rejected two voting papers issued to Captain Beresford, as he was of opinion that the signatures to them were not genuine. He has no knowledge of what occurred between the issue of the papers and their return to him after collection; but if the name of the gentleman who is accused of taking them away is furnished further inquiry on the subject can be made. The papers are in the hands of the Clerk of the Union.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—NORTH DUBLIN BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the Irish Local Government Board have withdrawn, or resolved to withdraw, their veto against the resolution of the North Dublin Board of Guardians, appointing the Hibernian Bank their treasurer?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: This matter has been fully inquired into. It appears that the Bank of Ireland, on full knowledge of the circumstances, is willing to lend the Guardians the money required for building purposes; and as no reasonable complaint can be made of the manner in which that Bank acts towards the Guardians in regard to temporary overdrafts, there are no grounds for depriving it of the treasurership of the Union. A communication explaining the decision of the Local Government Board will be before the Guardians at their next meeting.

MR. HEALY: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if the Bank of Ireland is willing to lend money at the same rate of interest?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not know that that is the point.

MR. HEALY: Yes; that is exactly the point.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—DUNFANAGHY UNION—REFUSAL OF A CONVEYANCE.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, on the 17th ult., the wife of Charles M'Sweeney, of Lunniaghmore, Gweedore, county Donegal, went, by direction of Dr. Thomas Finlay, Medical Officer, Gweedore Dispensary District, Dunfanaghy Union, to apply to Shane O'Donnell, Relieving Officer at Falcurragh, ten miles distant from her home, for an order for a car to convey her son, John M'Sweeney, to the county Donegal infirmary at Lifford; whether Shane O'Donnell, three days later, replied that he would give a conveyance to Dunfanaghy Workhouse Hospital, but not to the county infirmary; whether the ticket to admit John M'Sweeney to the county infirmary was issued on the 26th ult.; whether, on the 30th ult., John M'Sweeney himself applied to Shane O'Donnell at Bunbeg to grant him the conveyance, as he was not able to go on foot, when O'Donnell asked him "Isn't your father a National Land Leaguer," and refused to give the conveyance; whether the ticket of admission issued on the 26th ult. is still unused, the invalid being unable to go to Lifford, and the relieving officer still refusing to have him taken there; and, what order the Local Government Board will make?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: A relieving officer has no authority to provide conveyance to a county infirmary, nor to any place other than a workhouse or fever hospital of a Union. In this case the relieving officer was away from home when the application was made; but he wrote by first post pointing out what his powers were, and offering a conveyance to the workhouse. He denies that John M'Sweeney applied to him personally.

MR. SEXTON: Is not this power given to the Union for a conveyance if necessary?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: That I do not know.

MR. SEXTON: I will put a further Question on the subject.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS—DUNFANAGHY UNION.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Rev. James M'Fadden, P.P. Gweedore, county Donegal, was, on the 24th ultimo, during the scrutiny of the votes in the Poor Law election for the Dunfanaghy Union, expelled from the board room of the returning officer; whether the Rev. James M'Fadden had not a legal right to be present; whether, after the expulsion of the Rev. Mr. M'Fadden, the returning officer allowed Captain Murphy, Dunfanaghy, Mr. Beattie, Crossroads, and other persons who were not concerned in the elections, either as proposers or candidates, to remain in the board room; what notice will be taken of the conduct of the officials; whether illegalities and irregularities affecting the elections for the divisions of Magheraclogher, Meenacladdy, and Dunlewey have been reported to the Local Government Board; and, what decisions they have given, especially as to claims to vote which have been made by occupiers whose valuation is under £4 per annum, but is higher than their rent, and who are liable to pay Poor Rate on the difference between the rent and the valuation, and are not entitled by Law to deduct the Poor Rate on the amount of such difference from the rent?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Mr. M'Fadden was allowed to be present at the counting of the votes for the division for which he nominated a candidate; but he had no right to be present at the counting for other divisions. The Returning Officer states that Captain Murphy and Mr Beattie were not admitted until their divisions were called, and that there were no persons not concerned admitted during the day. The Local Government Board have received complaints and objections from Mr. M'Fadden in reference to the recent elections for five divisions of this Union, and they are in correspondence with him on the subject.

MR. SEXTON: Is it not a fact that Father M'Fadden was entitled to be present?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, that the proposers were entitled only to be present during the scrutiny of their own division.

ARMY—THE CAMERON HIGHLANDERS.

COLONEL O'BEIRNE asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the 79th Cameron Highlanders is the only Line Regiment without a linked Battalion available for Foreign service; if it is a fact that this regiment has been in Egypt since 1882; and, if it is contemplated to add a second Battalion to this Regiment in view of the probable augmentation of the Army?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The Cameron Highlanders are the only regiment with but one Line battalion. They have been in Egypt since 1882. There is no present intention of proposing to give it a second Line battalion.

CHINA—PROPOSED OPIUM CONVENTION.

MR. CROPPER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can give the House some information respecting the terms of the contemplated agreement with the Chinese Government in respect to opium, and when he expects to be able to lay the Papers upon the Table of the House; whether, in the Treaty negotiations now pending with China, there is any understanding come to between the two Governments on the subject of Likin; whether, in the Treaty negotiations with China, there is embraced any provision on the subject of taxation on Native opium, direct or indirect; and, whether any of the Clauses of the Chefoo Convention, hitherto unratified by the British Government, are embraced in the new Treaty?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The negotiations on this subject are still in progress, and I cannot, therefore, state what the precise result of them will be. Information on the subject will be given to the House as soon as it can properly be made public. The Chinese Government has lately been in circumstances of great difficulty.

MR. CROPPER: Has the noble Lord any idea when the information will be laid on the Table of the House?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No, Sir; I am afraid I cannot say. It depends, not so much on Her Majesty's Government, as on the Government of China.

LOCAL OPTION—LEGISLATION.

MR. WHITWORTH asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, When he proposes to introduce the measure for carrying out the Resolution passed by the House, and supported by the Government, which declared that entrusting the inhabitants of localities with a legal power of restraining the issue or renewal of licences for the sale of intoxicating liquors was required in the best interests of the Nation?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I am afraid that I am not able at the present time to fix any date.

NAVY—NAVAL ARTILLERY VOLUNTEERS.

MR. GOURLEY asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to recommend that the Naval Artillery Volunteers shall be allowed a capitation grant, similar in amount to that which is now paid to the Volunteer Auxiliaries; and, whether it is intended that they shall be transferred from Admiralty control to that of the War Office?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: I much regret that I cannot yet announce any decision on this subject. The Admiralty highly appreciate the services of the Volunteers, and they have received with much gratification satisfactory reports as to their efficiency, both in their drills and when serving afloat.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—PROMOTION.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in November 1882, three junior Head Constables of the Royal Irish Constabulary were promoted over the heads of others who were quite as suitable for the rank of District Inspector, also one other was promoted who was five years over the prescribed age; and that since then no promotions have been made from the ranks of the force to that of District Inspector, while there have been thirty-six Cadets, chiefly Englishmen, appointed during the period in addition to three who have passed examination in January last, a total of thirty-nine, since any Head Constable attained to the position of District Inspector; how many vacancies are now due to Head Constables, and why the appointments, which he stated in December last were due to them, have not since been made, though an examination for Cadetships was held subsequently; and, whether the Head Constables of the force generally have expressed their dissatisfaction at this treatment?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The three head constables of the Irish Constabulary who were promoted in 1882 were the men who obtained the highest places in a competition among several men of their rank. One head constable, who was two years over the ordinary limit of age, was promoted on special grounds. Of the 36 cadets who have been since appointed, only 12 are Englishmen. The competition held in January last was among officers' sons, who are much behind head constables in their share of the appointments due to the force. It is intended to promote three eligible head constables as soon as vacancies arise for officers; but there are no such vacancies at present. The Inspector General has not heard of any dissatisfaction among the head constables on this subject.

MR. HEALY: Has the right hon. Gentleman any objection to giving a Return setting forth the way promotions have been made?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Setting forth what?

MR. HEALY: How many head constables have been promoted, and how many nominations of Englishmen as cadets have been made into the Constabulary?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I should think that to a Return of facts there would be no objection.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS—RESULTS' FEES.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Commissioners of National Education (Ireland) have recently, in several cases, deprived teachers of all results fees obtainable for passes in

extra subjects under note xiii. (b) on Extra Subjects Programme, when the number of passes fell as low as twenty per cent.; and, what is the minimum per-centage of passes for which the Commissioners will award fees in such cases?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: There is no hard-and-fast rule on this subject. Each case is decided on its merits; but those cited by the hon. and learned Member, where the number of passes fell as low as 20 per cent—in other words, where only one child in five could make satisfactory answers—were obviously cases in which the Commissioners should refuse to make a grant.

MR. HEALY: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman, will the Commissioners make a hard-and-fast rule, for the teachers complain very much of the doubt on the subject?

[No reply.]

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—CASE OF BIGGAR AND CARUTH.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the case of James Biggar, disposed of at the last County of Antrim Assizes, held in Belfast; is it true that Biggar received wounds that caused him to be detained for some weeks in the Belfast Royal Hospital; was a man named James Caruth arrested, charged with inflicting the injuries on Biggar; were Biggar's dying declarations taken; was Caruth, at the instance of the police, sent for trial to the Assizes for causing the injury to Biggar; did the Attorney General for Ireland refuse to carry on the prosecution against Caruth; was Caruth's prosecution carried on by the police up till the Assizes, when the Attorney General directed them to abandon Biggar; what was the reason for giving up the prosecution against Caruth; did Mr. Justice Johnson permit Biggar to send a bill to the grand jury against Caruth; did the grand jury return a true bill, and was Caruth convicted and sentenced for the assault on Biggar; is it true that, in the same case, the Attorney General ordered an indictment to be preferred against Biggar, and if it is true that Caruth's charge against Biggar was a private prosecution, and why the Attorney General took up that case, and abandoned the charge made by the police against Caruth for assaulting Biggar; is it true that Caruth got Biggar prosecuted at the expense of the Crown, and that Biggar had to bear the expense of prosecuting Caruth; will the Government pay Biggar's expenses in taking up the case and successfully prosecuting Caruth, and will he direct such expenses to be paid; will the Government lay upon the Table all letters and telegrams addressed to the Attorney General in this case; and, did the Attorney General, when Biggar had gone to the expense of instructing counsel to prosecute the bill found by the grand jury against Caruth, assume the prosecution, and prevented Biggar's counsel from interfering, and by what authority the Attorney General so acted?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The two men Biggar and Caruth quarrelled when under the influence of drink. Both sustained injuries. There was no dying declaration, for neither died. Biggar, who appeared to be most to blame, was prosecuted at the Assizes and convicted. Subsequently Biggar—as he was entitled—sent up a bill against Caruth for assault; and, it having appeared on Biggar's trial that Caruth was also to blame, the Crown counsel, by direction of the Attorney General, without any objection being made, took up the prosecution in this case also. Caruth was convicted. Both men were fined. No application has been made by Biggar with regard to his expenses in the case; but if made it will be considered. It is not necessary to lay any Papers on the Table.

CHARITABLE BEQUESTS (IRELAND)—BEQUEST OF CATHERINE EATON, WICKLOW.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If anything has been done in the direction indicated in his reply to a Question on the 3rd November, with regard to the bequest of Catherine Eaton, who, as stated in the last Report of the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests, left the residue of her property, by will made in 1793, "for the foundation and support of a Woolling Manufactory in the parish of Wick-

low;" and, whether, as the Commissioners state the fund has remained so long in Court unused and unclaimed, some steps will be forthwith taken to fulfil the intentions of the testatrix for the benefit of her native town?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): The subject referred to in this Question has been before the Law Officers. The sum consists of a legacy left by the will to the Gardner family, of Seathly, in Cheshire, and which was not claimed by them, and has consequently accumulated. If any one of that family survived the deceased it would seem the residuary clause did not come into operation. In 1805 the Attorney General of that day advised that the residuary gift mentioned in the Question was not a valid charitable one. If this view be correct—and I think it will be difficult to dispute it—the persons probably entitled in default of the Gardner family would be either the next-of-kin of deceased, or the Crown if next-of-kin could not be traced. Inquiries and proceedings have been directed with the view to having ascertained and decided the questions of law and fact I have referred to, including the validity of the supposed charitable gift.

EGYPT (AFFAIRS IN THE SOUDAN)—FORCED LABOUR AT DONGOLA AND ESNEH.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the 2,000 forced labourers collected last August by the Mudir of Dongola, and who were placed under the orders of Colonel Grant, and the 2,000 forced labourers collected at the same date by the Mudir of Esneh, and placed under the orders of Colonel Inglefield, have now been released; whether he is aware that the courbash was employed in regard to these labourers, that they were forced by its use to work for about twelve hours per diem, and that those who attempted to escape were brought back in chains; and, whether there is now any forced labour being employed between Wady Halfa and Dongola; and, if so, whether the same means are being used to oblige them to work?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I have no knowledge of the facts to which my hon. Friend alludes; but a copy of his Question will be sent to Sir Evelyn Baring to-day.

EGYPT (AFFAIRS OF THE SOUDAN)—TREATMENT OF PRISONERS.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been called to a statement in a Letter published by *The Roma*, an Italian newspaper, from Massowah, asserting that 500 prisoners have arrived there from Suakin, and that they are now in the custody of the Italian authorities; whether this statement is correct; whether there are any women and children amongst them, and what is to be their fate; whether he has observed a telegram from Sir G. Graham to the Secretary of War, dated 15th April, in which it is stated that the mounted infantry have brought in 40 prisoners, including women and children, who were "evidently on their way to Osman Digna," together with 12 camels and 500 sheep, although there was "no fighting;" whether these men, women, and children are being detained in custody, after their property has been confiscated; and, whether it is in accordance with the usages of civilised war that non-combatants, including women and children, should be taken prisoners, and that they should be deprived of their flocks and herds?

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true (as circumstantially stated in the public prints), that Natives taken prisoners in the Suakin Country are transported to Massowah in the steamers of the Egyptian Government, loaded with irons, and treated as felons?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: In reply to these Questions I may state that Her Majesty's Government have no knowledge of the despatch of any prisoners to Massowah. With regard to the second Question of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), I am informed by the War Office that in a telegram from General Graham, which appears in this day's papers, he reports that the prisoners referred to in his telegram of the 15th have been released, but the cattle kept, the flocks and herds having been supplies on their way to the camp of Osman Digna. I may add that these Questions would more

properly have been addressed to the War Office.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (SCOTLAND)—FEES OF RETURNING OFFICERS.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL asked the Lord Advocate, Whether he has considered the fact that, in Scotland, the expenses of Parliamentary candidates are now strictly limited by Act of Parliament, except in respect of the costs chargeable by returning officers, who are in the habit of employing advocates from Edinburgh as presiding officers, at a fee of £3 3*s.* each per diem (which, allowing one day for going and another for returning, amounts to £9 9*s.* for each presiding officer, with their travelling expenses in addition); and, whether, considering the additional expense entailed upon Parliamentary candidates by the increase in the number of polling stations, rendered necessary by the extended franchise, he will take into consideration whether sheriffs of counties may be directed to obtain competent presiding officers from sources which do not entail such heavy travelling expenses, and three days' remuneration of gentlemen for one day's work?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): The fees of presiding officers are limited by Section 16, Sub-section 5, of the Ballot Act of 1872, which provides that the fee to be paid to each presiding officer shall in no case exceed the sum of three guineas per day. I am under the impression that in some cases in which sheriffs employ gentlemen belonging to the locality to act as presiding officers complaint was made that they were connected with one or other of the political Parties there, and that it was suggested that it would be desirable to have for presiding officers gentlemen not having such local connection. I shall, however, communicate with the sheriffs on the subject, and I shall also be glad to learn from hon. Members from Scotland whether they consider that any further restriction could be placed upon the employment and payment of presiding officers consistently with obtaining the services of independent and duly-qualified men. It is to be kept in view that the extension of the hours of polling will make it more difficult than before for presiding officers to return to their homes at any considerable distance on the day of election.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION TO SUAKIN)—THE INDIAN CAMP FOLLOWERS.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the Secretary of State or the Government of India have any communication with the Brigadier General of the Indian Army at Suakin and the Transport Officers regarding the treatment of the Indian camp followers attached to the expedition, the losses sustained by them, and the circumstances under which they were surprised and cut up; or, if not, whether the Secretary of State will procure Reports on the subject from the Indian Officers? The hon. Member also asked the Secretary of State for War, whether he has yet received any reports of the losses sustained by the Indian and Native camp followers attached to the Suakin Expedition, especially on Sunday March 22nd, and full explanations of the causes which led to the surprise of that date; and, whether there will be an inquiry into the conduct and management of Generals Graham and M'Neill, and full opportunity for hearing any complaints regarding the management which led to great losses and sufferings among the camp followers?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: In reply to the Question addressed to my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for India, I may say that it would be a most unusual course to call upon a Brigadier General for any such Report as that suggested by the hon. Member. The Commander of the Expedition is responsible for all such matters. I have no reason to suppose that the treatment of these camp followers was not what it should have been. Their losses were 43 killed, 120 missing, and 19 wounded. As to the second Question which the hon. Member has addressed to me, I have referred to Sir Gerald Graham's despatches giving an account of the operations in question to Lord Wolseley, who is in chief command of all the Forces in Egypt and the Soudan, for his opinion whether proper dispositions of the troops were made, and whether due caution was exercised.

WAYS AND MEANS—INLAND REVENUE —RECEIPTS FROM INCOME TAX, 1881-4.

MR. ROLLS asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the figures at pages 8 and 9 of the Statistical Abstract from 1869 to 1883 are correct in showing the amount received for Income Tax during the four years ending March 31st 1884 as exceeding that for the four years ending March 31st 1880 by the aggregate sum of fourteen millions one hundred and seventy-three thousand pounds?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Yes, Sir; the hon. Member's figures are quite correct.

CEMETERIES—LEGISLATION.

MR. RICHARD asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is the intention of the Government, in accordance with the promise given last Session, to bring in a Bill dealing with the question of Cemeteries?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, it was the intention of the Government to bring in a Bill on that subject. The Bill was already drafted, and he hoped that before long it would be introduced by the Judge Advocate General.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—DELAY IN GRANTING BAIL.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the complaints, as published in *The Belfast Morning News* of 13th April inst., made about the difficulties prisoners labour under in getting out on bail when the magistrates have ordered bail to be taken; and, will an officer in future be attached to the Court to facilitate bail being taken and prevent unconvicted prisoners being kept for two days in gaol?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Resident Magistrates assure me that no more delay than is absolutely necessary occurs in these cases, and no cause is shown for the appointment of a special officer to deal with them.

MR. BIGGAR: Might I be allowed to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether or not prisoners bailed out lie in cells sometimes for 48 hours?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not think that can be so.

PUBLIC HEALTH (METROPOLIS)—THE METROPOLITAN ASYLUM DISTRICT —THE EASTERN HOSPITALS.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether the Metropolitan Asylums Board, and several Boards of Guardians in the Metropolis, have requested the Local Government Board to institute an inquiry into the expenditure of the eastern hospitals of the Metropolitan Asylums District; whether such inquiry has been intrusted to Mr. Hedley, Dr. Bridges, and Mr. G. Taylor; and, whether the Local Government Board have declined to appoint a person experienced and skilled in the taking of evidence, and in determining the value of conflicting statements, and competent to conduct the inquiry in question, as provided by section 22 of the Act 10 and 11 Vic. c. 109; and, if so, on what grounds?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: We have been asked by the Metropolitan Asylums Board and several Boards of Guardians to institute an inquiry into the expenditure of the Eastern Hospitals, and the inquiry has been intrusted to three of the Board's Inspectors, Mr. Hedley, Dr. Bridges, and Mr. George Taylor. These gentlemen have all had much experience in taking evidence. Since the arrangements for the inquiry were completed we have been informed by one of the Metropolitan Boards of Guardians that they have passed a resolution in favour of the appointment of a special Inspector for the purpose, and that they have forwarded a copy of it to the several Boards of Guardians in the Metropolis, and asked them to pass similar resolutions. We believe that three Boards of Guardians have expressed concurrence in their view. The Board, however, see no reason whatever for making any alteration in the arrangements as to the Inspectors by whom the inquiry is to be held.

LORD ALGERNON PERCY asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether the Local Government Board has appointed Inspectors to inquire into the expenditure of the Eastern Hospitals of the Metropolitan Asylums District; and, whether it will be the duty of the Inspectors to discover the

evidence necessary to elicit the facts in respect of such expenditure, or how otherwise the evidence is to be obtained, and by whom the necessary witnesses will be examined, in order that the facts of the case may be established?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: It will devolve on the Inspectors to summon such witnesses as they deem necessary for the purpose of the inquiry, and the witnesses will be examined by the Inspectors on oath.

NAVY—PAYMASTERS.

MR. GABBETT asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether every officer promoted to Chief Engineer in the Royal Navy becomes at once senior to upwards of eighty Paymasters to whom he was previously junior, and whether this seniority injuriously affects the latter officers as to their accommodation whilst on passage in transports and troopships; and, whether the relative rank of Paymasters and Assistant Paymasters will be considered by their Lordships at the same time as that of Engineer Officers?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: A chief engineer on promotion takes rank above paymasters of less than eight years' seniority, and would then necessarily pass over many paymasters. This question of relative rank, however, is extremely complicated; and it is quite possible that the chief engineer, whose promotion is slower than that of the accountant officer, is senior in the Service, having become an assistant engineer before the accountant officer became an assistant paymaster.

METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENTS—COLONNADE OF OLD BURLINGTON HOUSE.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL asked the junior Member for Leeds, If he is aware that the carved stones which have now for some years laid exposed to wind, weather, and wanton mischief on the river bank at Battersea are the disjecta membra of that Colonnade of which Horace Walpole wrote—

"At daybreak, looking out of window to see the sun rise, I was surprised with the vision of the Colonnade that fronted me. It seemed one of those edifices that are raised by genii in a night time,"

and of which Sir William Chambers spoke as "one of the finest pieces of architecture in Europe;" and, what is the intention of Her Majesty's Government as to their destination?

MR. HERBERT GLADSTONE: I am aware of the history of the *disjecta membra* of the Colonnade now lying in Battersea Park. Hitherto the Government has not been able to make use of them, and no suitable site for their re-erection has as yet been even suggested.

POST OFFICE—POSTMASTERS AND PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS.

MR. BUSZARD asked the Postmaster General, with reference to the political action of Postmasters, Whether the latest instructions to Head Postmasters are dated in 1873; whether the restrictions therein imposed on officers of the Post Office as to elections were founded on stat. 9 Anne, c. 10, s. 44; whether that statute was repealed in 1874 by stat. 37 and 38 Vic. c. 22; whether Rule 77, of Rules for Sub-Postmasters 1884, does not expressly recognise that "the former disabilities in regard to officers of the Post Office voting at elections and taking part therein have been removed;" and, whether he will state upon what grounds he has imposed, by the replies referred to, restrictions upon the political action of Postmasters not sanctioned by Act of Parliament?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: The instructions of 1873 are out of date, the law having since been altered. But although Postmasters and other Post Office servants are now relieved from the political disabilities which formerly attached to them, it by no means follows that they should be allowed to act as political partizans. Indeed, at the time the law was altered it was distinctly contemplated by Parliament, as a reference to *Hansard* will show, that some regulations might be necessary to control the conduct of Post Office servants in political matters. The right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon, who had charge of the Bill, spoke as follows:—

"It was clearly undesirable that officers of certain branches, at all events, of the Public Service should take an active part in electioneering contests. And, therefore, although he quite agreed . . . that the law should be altered, and that old, obsolete, and inconvenient restrictions should be removed, he thought the House should do nothing to restrain the Executive Government from taking such steps as they

might find necessary for preventing any unseemly or inconvenient interference of their own officials in electioneering contests."—(3 *Hansard*, [219] 799.)

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION) BILL—TOWN CLERKS OF IRISH BOROUGHS.

MR. JOHN REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has received a Memorial, addressed to him by the town clerks of nineteen of the Irish boroughs merged under the Seats Bill, praying for compensation for the loss which will be entailed upon them by superseding them in the duties, at present imposed on them by Law, in connection with preparing voters' lists; and, what answer he has sent to this Memorial?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have received the Memorial referred to, and have acknowledged its receipt. The claim does not appear to me to be one that could be admitted, except in the extremely improbable event of its being recognized in England.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION) BILL.

MR. WARTON asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he would have any objection, before the Report Stage of the Seats Bill be taken, to grant the Return relating to Counties at large which have been divided by the Boundary Commission?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I should not feel justified in granting a Return to the effect suggested until the boundaries have been definitely settled by both Houses, as the preparation and printing of the Return would necessarily be expensive, and it would be liable to mislead if all necessary corrections were not previously made. I think that a Return giving in full the contents of each division, both of boroughs and counties, as finally settled, would be found very useful; and I will lay such a Return on the Table as soon as the Bill becomes law. This Return might not be in the precise form suggested by the hon. and learned Member; but I will take care that it shall supply all the information which I believe it is his desire to obtain.

MR. HEALY asked, whether care would be taken that the revised edition of the maps should be issued giving the correct names of the divisions as settled by the House?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The maps will be very costly. The Return will be a very full one.

MR. SEXTON asked the right hon. Baronet whether, in the interval between the Committee and the Report stage, the Bill would be reprinted, so that the House might be able to understand it?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: It is being reprinted now as far as we have gone.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—RUSSIAN OCCUPATION OF BALA MURGHAB AND KHUSHK.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Afghan Forces still hold Bala Murghab and Khushk; whether General Komaroff, who has inspected the "positions" from which the Afghans have been driven, has established a provisional government in the country up to the Paropamisus Hills; and, whether it is true that the following proclamation has been circulated by the Russians throughout Northern Afghanistan:—

"You will have learned that your deceased master, Shir Ali, not only was the true friend of Russia, but also frequently admonished the Sultan of Turkey in letters to solicit the Czar's favour. You know, further, that the people of Merv voluntarily submitted to the Czar, whose power none can withstand, and under whose wings the faithful and the unbelievers alike find protection, justice, and clemency. God has even permitted that the holy town of Samarcand, with its mosques and sacred graves, should fall into Russian hands. Therefore, Afghans, keep good friendship with the Russians, assist them, and avoid their adversaries, for you too cannot escape the fate of the Turcomans, Yomuds, and others?"

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The Foreign Office have not been informed that the Afghans have evacuated Bala Murghab and Khushk, or that General Komaroff has established a provisional Government up to the Paropamisus Mountains, or that the Russians have circulated the Proclamation mentioned through Afghanistan.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (SUB-COMMISSIONERS)—MR. EDWARD GREER.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland,

Whether Mr. Edward Greer, Sub-Commissioner, was, until his appointment, partner with Mr. R. A. Mullan, Solicitor, Newry; whether on the door the words "Greer and Mullan, Solicitors," still appears, and cheques are still issued on the Newry Branch of the Bank of Ireland in the name of Greer and Mullan; and, whether there is an agreement between these gentlemen that on the cessation of Mr. Greer's employment as a Commissioner he is to resume his place in the firm?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Land Commissioners have received Mr. Greer's assurance that, neither directly or indirectly, has he any connection with the business of his late partner, Mr. Mullan; and they do not think it necessary to inquire as to the other matters referred to in this Question.

EGYPT (AFFAIRS OF THE SOUDAN)—GENERAL GRAHAM'S PROCLAMATION.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the proclamation reported to have been issued by General Graham will be communicated to the House before the discussion upon the Vote of Credit; whether Lord Wolseley having reported that he has no fear for his communications on the Nile, the alleged necessity for operations at Suakin has passed away; and, whether, in the circumstances, Her Majesty's Government intend to pursue the policy of the proclamation entrusted by the Khedive to General Gordon, which called upon all persons in arms to lay them down, to endeavour by peaceable means to form independent governments, and to do their best for their own prosperity?

MR. GLADSTONE: In regard to the first portion of this Question, on inquiry of the Secretary of State for War, I find that what the hon. Gentleman describes as a Proclamation was not a Proclamation, but a letter from Osman Digna to the officer in command, and a reply from General Graham. That being so, there will be no objection to its being laid on the Table if moved for. In regard to the other portion of the Question, I would recommend my hon. Friend to wait till after the statement which will be made in submitting the Vote of Credit to-morrow.

LONDON GOVERNMENT—LEGISLATION.

MR. FIRTH asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Government propose during the present Session to introduce any Bills for the purpose of establishing a Representative Municipal Government in London; of carrying into effect the Report of the City Guilds Commission; and of taking steps either by supporting the amendments to the Water Bill now before Parliament, or otherwise to prevent the vested interests of the London Water Companies being increased by two millions sterling by reason of the new assessments shortly to come into force?

COLONEL MAKINS said, that before the right hon. Gentleman replied, he would ask whether he was aware that the Water Companies' charges were not based upon the poor rate assessment at all; and whether the hypothetical two millions alluded to were merely the product of the hon. Member for Chelsea's vigorous imagination?

MR. COOPE also asked the Home Secretary if he was aware that the figures in the Question were founded upon a misconception?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I can hardly answer the Questions which have been addressed to me, nor can I give any definite statement with reference to these Bills. As my hon. Friend is aware, a temporary measure dealing with corporate property is already before the House. With reference to the other and larger measures, I am not in a position at present to state what steps will be taken.

EGYPT—SEIZURE OF THE "BOSPHORE EGYPTIEN."

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish to ask, Whether Her Majesty's Government have received any notice from the Egyptian Government with reference to the demands of the Government of France relating to the suppression of *The Bosphore Egyptien*, and what advice they have offered to the Egyptian Government; and whether they have had any direct communication with the French Government on the subject?

MR. GLADSTONE: It is quite true that the Egyptian Government have received certain demands from the Government of France in relation to

matters of importance connected with the suppression of *The Bosphore Egyptien*. There is a correspondence going on between ourselves and both Governments upon the subject. I may say that I cannot enter into particulars. Our desire is that the Egyptian Government should act in strict conformity with the provisions of the law; and, of course, it may be that in a case like this the provisions of the law are apt to touch upon considerations of International Law. That is the only desire we entertain, and we have no reason to believe that the Egyptian Government have any other views.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—THE RUSSIAN ADVANCE.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT, who had the following Question on the Paper:—

"To ask the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether Her Majesty's Ministers have fixed any limit beyond which the advance of the Russian Forces will not be tolerated; and, whether the Czar's Government have undertaken not to seize Herat?"

said, that he would postpone the Question until he heard the reply of the Prime Minister to the Leader of the Opposition.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish to ask the Prime Minister a Question with regard to the position of affairs on the Frontier of Afghanistan; Whether the right hon. Gentleman will be prepared in presenting the Estimates for the Vote of Credit to make a statement upon that subject; and whether the Ameer has made any representations to the Government of India on the matter; and, if so, with what result? I had understood that the Estimate of the Vote of Credit was to be presented to-day; but I have now learnt that it will not be presented till to-morrow.

MR. GLADSTONE: There is no difficulty, Sir, in answering the Question. It was stated that the Vote of Credit would be presented either to-day or to-morrow, and it will be presented to-morrow. On the presentation of the Vote of Credit my intention has been, on the part of the Government, to limit myself to a very concise statement, having no other view, in fact, than that the Vote of Credit should be thoroughly understood. I shall not proceed to enter into considerations of policy to-morrow. Those, no doubt, will come up upon the debate on the Vote of Credit; but it will be premature, I think, to attempt to state them to-morrow. With regard to the Frontier of Afghanistan, we have, in point of fact, little to add to what has been said on former occasions. On Friday I stated that a telegram had been received from Sir Peter Lumsden, and that if it were found to contain anything of a very important character interesting to the House which could properly be communicated, I would not fail to take the first moment to make it known to the House. But that was stated under the belief that the telegram, which was then in course of being deciphered, was in answer to inquiries and instructions despatched to him from this country on the 10th of April. But it was not that answer, and for that answer it will be necessary to wait before I can make any complete statement to the House. I do not mean that the telegram of Sir Peter Lumsden was an unimportant telegram; it was a telegram tending to confirm his previous statements, and certainly it was in apparent conflict with the telegram forwarded to us by the Russian Government as the statement of General Komaroff. The right hon. Gentleman may depend upon it that what I said on Friday with respect to the further information we were expecting still holds good. With respect to the Questions put to me by the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) it is not in my power to answer either of them. I have been obliged to give that answer before, and I am still obliged to give it. Until we can see our way further with regard to essential matters it will not be in my power to give specific answers. The hon. Gentleman asked on a former day as to the date of the arrangement with regard to the non-advance of Russian troops; whether it was correctly described as the arrangement of the 17th of March. The explanation of that, I think, is that the arrangement arrived at was recognized in London by the exchange of telegrams on the 16th of March. The telegram was sent on to Teheran, and was telegraphed thence on the 17th of March, and so it came to be known under the name of the agreement of the 17th of March. There is no doubt about the arrangement intended. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition also asks me whether

the Ameer had made any representation to the Government of India on the subject of the Frontier, and with what result. No doubt the Ameer has made representations to the Viceroy, and the Viceroy has made it an important part of his duty to exchange ideas and views with the Ameer on that subject. I had in view those representations on a former day when I gave, on the part of the Government, an assurance that the communications between Lord Dufferin and the Ameer were of a most satisfactory character.

LORD JOHN MANNERS: I should like to ask a Question of the right hon. Gentleman as to the telegram from Sir Peter Lumsden which he does not desire to communicate to the House. All Europe has been in possession for some days of the Russian version of the transactions at Penjdeh. I understand now that a full telegram has been received from Sir Peter Lumsden containing a version of the transaction. I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman, if that be so, how much longer he thinks it expedient to withhold from the country and the House the version of Sir Peter Lumsden?

MR. GLADSTONE: The Question of the noble Lord contains an argument, which might have been entirely spared, because it is founded on an erroneous supposition. We are not in possession of any complete version, or what we consider a complete version. [*Ironical Opposition laughter.*] Well, I suppose we are entitled to form an opinion. Hon. Gentlemen opposite who laugh appear to think that it is not the duty of the Executive Government to form an opinion. I repeat, we are not in possession of a complete version of the essential circumstances leading to or connected with that engagement, and it is that version for the arrival of which we are looking. When that version has arrived, if we should not be in a position to communicate it, then, I imagine, Questions like that of the noble Lord may be fairly put.

SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE: I do not know whether this would be an unfair Question to put; but, in view of the very grave tension out-of-doors, it would be of great benefit if the right hon. Gentleman will give some approximate date when any Question with regard to these negotiations is likely to lead to a definite reply?

MR. GLADSTONE: If the settlement of these matters depended upon ourselves, it would be my duty to give a distinct answer to that Question; but I am unable to say when we shall receive from Sir Peter Lumsden his version of the affair, after the various incidents that have interrupted the communications with that country. It so happened that the communication which arrived on Friday last came with comparative celerity. But I am not able to say when we shall be in possession of full information upon matters which are material and, indeed, essential to an understanding of this case. In regard to the negotiations between the two Governments, all I can say is that no time will be lost on our part in prosecuting these negotiations to a termination, because we feel how very disadvantageous it is to have so much delay and uncertainty.

MR. ONSLOW: I should like to ask the Prime Minister this Question. The right hon. Gentleman, in his answer the other day, said that the Russians had made an unprovoked assault; and the Viceroy of India, in a public speech, made use of exactly the same language. I wish to ask the Prime Minister a Question which I think it is due to both countries should be answered—namely, whether the Government believe in the version of Sir Peter Lumsden or in the version of General Komaroff?

MR. GLADSTONE: It appears, on reference to what I previously said, that this is no place for the Question put by the hon. Member. The hon. Member has not even taken the trouble to quote with accuracy the words used by me in describing the impressions of the Government in reference to the state of affairs on the Afghan Frontier. I must point out to him that, whatever he may think to the contrary, great accuracy is requisite in these matters; and the House may recollect that when, on the first day, I mentioned the purport of the allegations we had received from our own Agents, I stated that, of course, we gave credence to what proceeded from them. But the hon. Gentleman must remember that we are not dependent entirely upon British Agents; but the British Agents are dependent very considerably on Afghan officers. I have nothing to say against them; but, of course, the case is not the same; and, considering what results may depend

upon precision of language, I will not be driven into any premature or incomplete statement on any points connected with this great question.

EGYPT—SEIZURE OF THE "BOSPHORE EGYPTIEN."

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked, Whether the House was to understand that the action of the Egyptian Government, in suppressing *The Bosphore Egyptien*, was taken on its own responsibility, and entirely without the cognizance and the advice of Sir Evelyn Baring; whether Her Majesty's Government disclaimed all responsibility for that suppression, and was in a position to act as a totally disinterested party in the matter?

MR. GLADSTONE: Before I can undertake to give a definite reply I think I ought to see the Question in print; but at this moment, without taking time for reflection, I should say that the Egyptian Government did not act alone on the matter, and that we are not in a position to disclaim all responsibility. No doubt there are questions of procedure, and many others of a secondary and subsidiary character, which may come up in a matter of this kind; and I should not like to give a final answer; but, speaking generally, I may say that we are not in a position to disclaim, and we do not claim all responsibility.

MR. O'DONNELL inquired whether it was not the case that, a few days ago, the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs stated in this House that the suppression of *The Bosphore Egyptien* had taken place with the sanction of Her Majesty's Government?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I do not see any discrepancy between my statement and what has just fallen from the Prime Minister, though, of course, I should like to refer to the actual terms of my answer.

NAVY—STATE OF THE NAVY—SIR EDWARD REED'S NOTICE OF MOTION.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR asked the hon. Member for Cardiff, What steps he was about to take with regard to his Motion on this subject, and for the discussion of which the Government refused to give a day; whether the hon. Member would move that Motion before going into Committee to-night, or whether the question would be discussed in Committee?

SIR EDWARD J. REED, in reply, said, that as the Prime Minister, in pursuance of his engagement with the Leader of the Opposition, had insisted upon pressing the Redistribution Bill, and likewise the Registration Bills, before giving any facilities to private Members for any purpose whatever, he had thought it desirable to take no further steps until that measure had been disposed of.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—THE RUSSIAN ADVANCE.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked, Whether it was not the fact that the Prime Minister informed the House, on Friday, the 13th of March, that the Russian Government had then entered into an agreement that their force should not advance, and that agreement dated back to the 2nd of March? He would further ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, in the face of that statement, it was possible for him to communicate to the House the substance of Sir Peter Lumsden's telegram on Friday last? He put this Question because statements gravely affecting the character and judgment of British officers with Sir Peter Lumsden had been put forth by the Russian organ in this country, and were still put forth from day to day.

[No reply.]

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked, Whether it was a fact, as stated by the Special Correspondent of *The Daily News* at Krasnovodsk, that the Military Attaché of the British Embassy at St. Petersburg had been refused permission to visit the railway now being made from Krasnovodsk to Sarakhs; and whether any confirmation had been received by Her Majesty's Minister at Teheran of the following statement made by the same Correspondent with respect to the Russo-Persian Frontier:—

"The Russian advance into Turkestan necessitated a more exact delimitation of the Persian frontier from the Caspian to Sarakhs. This work was gone over a year or two ago, and was supposed to have been definitely settled. The boundary was laid down, but now the Russians are taking it upon themselves to determine what had been determined, and to settle where the boundary had been fixed. I understand that one subject of dispute is connected with the Atrak River, near its junction with the Caspian. About forty miles from its mouth this

stream splits in two, and these branches flow separately into the Bay of Hasan Kuli. The Atrak was settled to be the boundary between Persian and Russian soil; but whether the Commissioners forgot to define which branch of that river was to be the frontier or not, I cannot say. Russia now claims the southern fork, and Persia claims the northern. The Russians, I am informed, have taken a very effective means of settling the question; they have constructed, or are constructing, a dam where the northern branch separates, and thus it will cease to exist. The southern branch will thus become the River Atrak, and that has been defined as the frontier."

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: It is quite true that this morning I did receive a letter inclosing a newspaper cutting identical with that which the hon. Gentleman has just read to the House; but owing, no doubt, to the great interest which the hon. Member has taken in foreign affairs, he had forgotten to sign his name to the letter. Under the circumstances, I must ask the hon. Gentleman to give Notice of the Question.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS: I will put it on the Paper.

MOTION.

—o—

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—REGISTRATION OF VOTERS BILLS.—RESOLUTION.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the several stages of any Bills for the Registration of Voters, in England, Scotland, and Ireland, have precedence of all Orders of the Day and Notices of Motions, on every day on which they shall be set down, by the Government, as the first business of the day."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Mr. PARNELL said, that before the Motion was put he wished to ask the Government their intentions with regard to the question of registration in Ireland, which had been left in a most unsatisfactory condition owing to the non-fulfilment by the Government of statements as nearly as possible amounting to pledges made by them so long ago as the end of the Session of 1883. He did not propose in any way to discuss the merits of the three Bills to which it was proposed on the present occasion to give precedence over all other Business. What he desired to know was, what the position of Her Majesty's Government was regarding the pledges given by the Government to assimilate the Registration Law in Ireland to that of England? Regarding this question he thought it was in the first Session of this Parliament that a Bill was brought in by the hon. and learned Member for Kildare (Mr. Meldon) for the assimilation of the registration system of the two countries, and that Bill passed through that House, but was thrown out by the House of Lords. The Bill was considered of such importance that the Chief Secretary for Ireland at that time (Mr. W. E. Forster) used some very strong expressions with regard to the action of the House of Lords, and pledged the Government with regard to it that he would introduce fresh legislation in the following Session. That promise was forgotten and broken in the midst of the exciting events which ensued in the following Session, and it was not until the Session of 1883 that the Bill was re-introduced, with the result that it again passed through all its stages in that House, practically without a division; but it was again thrown out by the House of Lords. Replying to a Question put by him on the 22nd of August, 1883, as to what course the Government proposed to take, the Prime Minister said that Her Majesty's Government viewed with great regret the fact that the Bill did not pass into law. He could not be expected, he said, to give the exact arrangements of the Business for the next Session; but he added that possibly the Bill for Registration in Ireland would form a part of a measure of a more important character, referring, of course, to the Franchise Bill. Well, it did not form part of the Franchise Bill, which had since passed into law. The Bill now before Parliament did not carry out the pledges given by the Prime Minister, as it did not assimilate the law. Therefore, he thought they were entitled to ask, before they gave up the public time to those Registration Bills for England, Ireland, and Scotland, that the Government should redeem its repeated pledges to assimilate the law between England and Ireland. The position in which the Irish Registration Law stood at the present moment was a very serious one. It was one rendering almost entirely nugatory the passage of the Franchise Act, which rendered the extension of that Act to Ireland a fraud and a delusion. That Act was supposed to confer the franchise on between

500,000 and 700,000 persons in Ireland; but in default of legislation assimilating the law these persons would be left at the mercy of a threepenny stamped notice of objection served through the post. He could not think that the Government had designedly shoved them into such a pitfall; and it was, therefore, that he availed himself of this opportunity to urge upon the Prime Minister that, before he dealt with these three Bills, he should first fulfil the pledges of himself and his Government, repeatedly and solemnly expressed, that they would introduce a Bill placing the people of Ireland in the same position regarding registration as the people of England and Scotland. It was rumoured that the understanding with Lord Salisbury would prevent a clause being added to the Registration Bill dealing with the subject; but if this were true a more scandalous breach of faith, whether intentional or not, was never perpetrated by any Government. Until he heard the answer of the Government he could not say what attitude he should adopt with regard to the English and Scotch Bills; but at present he was disposed to think he must oppose them.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he did not question the right of the last speaker to raise the question he had raised; but he wished to make an appeal to the Government. The Prime Minister was again asking private Members to sacrifice the whole of the time at their disposal; and while he did not deny that the occasion justified the present proposal he thought when such a demand was made private Members, in their turn, had a right to demand from the Government a detailed announcement of their legislative programme for the remainder of the Session. It was absolutely impossible, under this system, for a private Member to bring forward any Motion, however important. The case of the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward Reed) was an illustration of this; he could not ask the Government for a day for his Motion on the Navy—a subject which was of national importance, and as to which there was the greatest anxiety out-of-doors, and to attempt to ballot for a day was a farce. He hoped the Prime Minister would grant the hon. Member for Cardiff the time he had demanded, and also lay the programme of the Session before the House.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he should support the protest. The House had been given to understand that when the Redistribution Bill was disposed of they would revert to the normal state of affairs as regards the time of the House. The Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister looked very much like a breach of faith with the House on the part of the Government; and he hoped someone on the Front Opposition Bench would enter a protest against it. Private Members had had their rights absorbed for the last two or three Sessions; whereas if the Government had managed their Business with a little more order and foresight those rights might have been better respected. Let hon. Members consider what was the position of the House. They were refused information upon every subject of importance. The Government were drifting along day after day, and hon. Members had no means of obtaining information. They could get no replies; and the only thing that there was any certainty at all about was that whilst our Government were drifting the Russian Forces were advancing. The House by departing from the old rule, had placed it in the power of Ministers to adopt a most offensive demeanour to hon. Members asking Questions—a tone they would never dared to have assumed under the old *régime*. It was the impunity which Ministers enjoyed in regard to private Members' rights which led them to adopt their offensive tone. There was no sufficient reason for the Motion of the Prime Minister, whose great anxiety seemed to be to hustle forward the General Election sooner than the proper time. The Government were hourly plunging the country into greater dangers abroad; their Expenditure was increasing enormously; whilst an immense Floating Debt was being incurred. Day by day they postponed a statement of the real state of affairs, and tried to stave off the financial crisis. The result would be that if the General Election went against them the Government would throw upon other shoulders the difficulty and responsibility of dealing with the enormous liabilities which they had incurred. All he could do was to enter a protest against the way in which the rights of private Members were being trampled upon by the Government.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he thought he should best consult the convenience of the House by not attempting any reply to the speech they had just heard. The speech of his hon. Friend the Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) reminded him of a duty which he thought was incumbent upon him on the present occasion; and that was to say that in submitting to the free judgment of the House the Motion he now made he was not unmindful of the pledge previously given, which was that when the Government saw their way with regard to the Redistribution of Seats Bill, when they had disposed of the Committee and Report stage of that Bill, they should then have the map, so to speak, of the residue of the Session sufficiently unrolled to make it their duty to state what they proposed to do with regard to other legislation. With regard to the remarks of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), he was not sure that he clearly understood him. The hon. Member for the City of Cork was perfectly justified in the reference he had made to the promise which had been made in 1883; but he must see that the Government had not treated Ireland in this matter differently from England and Scotland. Registration reform was urgently needed in the three countries; but the hon. Member claimed that the Registration Law of Ireland should be proceeded with before Parliamentary Reform generally was carried out. [Mr. Parnell: No; simultaneously with it.] The Registration Law of England was in urgent need of important reform; and although the Government were most anxious to carry out these reforms, they had not as yet attempted to touch them, and his impression was that English Members, who warmly concurred with the Government in desiring that changes should be effected in that law, would be rather indulgent during this Session lest they should prejudice the whole of the legislative changes which they were now endeavouring to effect. That being so, it was certainly no recession from the views of the Irish Government, or the Government at large, if they had felt that the first object of their Registration Bills during the present year was to enable them to complete the great scheme with regard to the Parliamentary representation of the people, and to render an early Election possible. If this Motion were carried by the general support of the House, they should at least get to the subject of English registration, of Scottish registration, and of Irish registration; and whatever the views of the Government might be, whatever the circumstances might be, it would be in the power of any hon. Member to raise, for the free and unbiased consideration of the House, any matter which was relevant to the subject of registration. Consequently this Motion would give the hon. Member for the City of Cork an opportunity, which, without it, he would much less surely enjoy. As to pledges, it would be perfectly impossible for him on this occasion—it would be almost an irregularity for him—to enter into that question. He should only say that while he understood the pathetic laments of the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) and the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett), he felt it difficult to understand any opposition to this Motion on the part of those who thought it an object of paramount importance that the Government should immediately reform the administration of Ireland.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he was afraid it was absolutely necessary, in view of inconvenient precedents in the future, that independent Members below the Gangway should be a little obstinate on this subject. It was perfectly shocking and heartbreaking to him to observe the political torpor into which the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) had sunk on this occasion. That hon. Member used in former times to be the great champion of private Members' rights. The hon. Member had been a sort of Bergen-op-Zoom, a virgin fortress, which no Government could capture; but now he had shrunk into a condition of torpor, and took no interest in the rights of private Members—a melancholy spectacle, on which he would not enlarge further. The argument of the Prime Minister would doubtless have been admissible, and would have been unanswerable, had it come at a different period of the Session. But the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman was premature. There was no reason why the House should be wasting its time in discussing that Motion at that moment. The right hon. Gentleman admitted that the Government were under

a pledge, when the Redistribution Bill was passed through Committee, to lay their programme of legislation before the House. The House naturally desired to know what the object of the Government was in bringing forward this Motion at the present time. The Redistribution Bill had not yet passed through Committee, and the Report stage of that measure would probably take up three or four nights—therefore, it was not an extravagant view to take to assume that the third reading of the Bill would not be finished much before Whitsuntide. There would, therefore, be ample time to make this Motion when the Redistribution Bill was finished. What, then, was the reason which the Government had in advancing this Motion so far before the time it was needed? He was bound to ask the question in the interests of private Members. They were obliged to be suspicious of the motives of Governments; and he was not more suspicious of the intentions of the present Government than he was of those of others, because there was sometimes a Freemasonry, sometimes amounting almost to a conspiracy, between the two Front Benches to give each other as much latitude as they could. The Prime Minister had said that there were going to be very important reforms effected by the Registration Bill.

MR. GLADSTONE: I did not say that; but, at the same time, we desire them.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Of course, the desires of the Government will be carried out.

MR. GLADSTONE: Oh, no!

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: But it is quite obvious that the Registration Bill will effect important reforms.

MR. GLADSTONE: No, no!

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: What! not effect any reforms?

MR. GLADSTONE: Only the reforms which we desire to see carried out in relation to the arrangements for the redistribution of seats.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL remarked, that the Government appeared to occupy a very extraordinary position, for it appeared that they were attempting reforms which they did not purpose to carry out. This was an admirable reason for the Government not taking away the rights of private Members, and tying the hands of the House. He need scarcely point out to the Prime Minister that there were several Orders of pressing importance upon their Notice Paper. Some of these had already been several times postponed, and the Government should at once say what course they intended to pursue with regard to them. If the time had not arrived for the Government to make this statement, as well as a statement with regard to other matters about which the House was expecting information, he certainly thought that the period had not arrived for the House to sacrifice all the time of private Members, and all their opportunities, to the Government. Under these circumstances he should move, and he expected that the Government would assent to the Motion, the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the noble Lord had entirely ignored the fact that there must be an interval between the Committee stage and the Report stage of the Redistribution Bill; and the Government had thought it would be the general desire of the House that that interval should be utilized for the purpose of proceeding as rapidly as possible with measures which were essentially necessary to the early bringing into force of the extended franchise and the Redistribution Bill. A general desire was expressed, before the noble Lord returned from India, to hasten the General Election as much as possible, and there were certain measures which were essential for bringing about that General Election. These were three Registration Bills, which might also involve each another Bill. In face of these facts, the Government had thought the House would desire that Wednesday and Friday next should be given up to these measures rather than to give those days to measures which, under the peculiar circumstances of the present year, would be time wasted. The noble Lord had spoken of the Freemasonry between the two Front Benches; but he could assure the noble Lord that no arrangement had been entered into between the two Front Benches on the subject of these measures; the Bills were those which both Conser-

vative and Liberal Members were anxious to see pass into law. Although it might be open to the House to consider whether it ought not to carry large measures of registration reform, the Bills were not of that character, but simply contained the provisions that were necessary to give effect to the Seats Bill. In answer to the hon. Member for Cork, he might state that neither the freedom of the Government nor that of the House was limited with respect to these Registration Bills. The Government were simply doing their duty in presenting them, as it were, in the naked form of what was necessary to give effect to the legislation of the House. The noble Lord who had moved the adjournment of the debate was under a misapprehension in supposing that the Report stage of the Redistribution Bill was likely to last as long as he had described. From his experience during the Committee stage, he was convinced that the Report stage would not last long, and at its conclusion the Government would be able to make a full statement as to the Business of the Session.

Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE said, he did not remember any Parliament in which the Government of the day had been treated with as great generosity by private Members as this Government had been by this Parliament. There was something that was practical, if not, indeed, unanswerable, in what had been said by the noble Lord. If the argument of the President of the Local Government Board went for anything, the Motion was a very large demand upon private Members for a very small result. They were all left completely in the dark with reference to the proposals of the Government as regarded the remainder of the Session. He supposed the approaching death of this Parliament accounted for the comatose state of private Members; but it was hard upon them all that they should place their political lives and fortunes at the mercy of the Government. Up to Easter great anxiety was displayed as to the position of the Navy, and that anxiety had found a considerable echo out-of-doors. He did not know whether some fairy wand had been passed over the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward Reed), but up to Easter, in his view, there was not an iron-clad in the Navy which was not in danger. Many of them would like to know what pressure had been brought to bear upon the hon. Member to induce him to shut off steam in an abrupt manner. There were many other things with reference to which they would like to have information; and private Members felt that they were not getting any *quid pro quo*. While asking them for these sacrifices Ministers left them completely in the dark as to whether, when the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill and the Registration Bills were passed, a semi-animate House would be asked to indulge in further legislation. He wished to repudiate the suggestion that those who sat on the Front Opposition Bench had no sympathy with the aspirations of private Members.

Mr. RYLANDS said, no doubt in ordinary circumstances private Members ought to look with suspicion upon a union between the two Front Benches to sacrifice the rights of private Members; but the simple question now was whether anyone wished to prolong the agony preceding the General Election by putting it off until the beginning of next year. He was certainly under the impression that the Registration Bills were necessary to expedite the work of legislation, and so facilitate an early Election.

Mr. GORST said, that the Registration Bills had nothing whatever to do with the question of an earlier Election than the 1st of January next. The Bills which the Government were so anxious to obtain precedence for were purely technical Bills, and they merely applied the existing Law of Registration to the newly-enfranchised voters. It did not seem that there was any really practical necessity for this Motion at all. The Bills were not likely to create much controversy in the House, and having passed a Select Committee they might very well be taken at 1 o'clock in the morning. Perhaps some Irish Members might desire to introduce Amendments into the Irish Bill; but, however urgently required they might be in themselves, they had not been introduced into the English Bill. There were several urgent matters awaiting discussion, in particular the Motion of the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward Reed) as to the Navy; and the Government would have saved time if they had devoted to some of these questions as well as to Supply the interval between

the Committee and the Report stages of the Seats Bill.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, the concluding suggestion of the hon. and learned Member was one that was well worthy of consideration. With regard to the Motion of the hon. Member for Cardiff, it seemed to him that that was a fitting opportunity to endeavour to come to some arrangement as to the time when it should be taken, and to obtain from the Government some pledge as to the time that could be devoted to the debate. It was perfectly natural that private Members should look with jealousy on a Motion of this kind; but, at the same time, it ought to be remembered that the particular object which they had in view was to finish up all the Business connected with the Redistribution Bill and the altered representation of the people, and to get it fairly out of the way before they came to the discussion of the other Business of the Session, which, as they could perfectly well see, must take up a great deal of time. There were the financial measures which would have to be taken up, and there would probably be some important discussions on foreign policy and on other measures which were in the minds of all persons, and which they knew would have to be discussed before the end of the Session. It was always inconvenient to have measures which would have to be passed indefinitely standing over. It would probably be more convenient for the House to clear itself of the group of Bills connected with the Franchise Bill at a time when it could do so without a material sacrifice on the part of the House before discussing the Motion of the hon. Member for Cardiff.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, he wished to point out the absolute necessity of proceeding with the English Redistribution Bill without delay. The Bill, as originally drafted, provided that the first step in the new registration should take place on the 15th April. To-day was the 20th, and the Bill had not yet come from the Select Committee. The Committee had altered the Bill so that the first step in registration should take place seven days after the Royal Assent had been given. An entirely new system of registration was to be applied to counties, and a class of officers had to perform important functions, many of whom were entirely inexperienced in their duties. The demand of one and all of these officers was that the Bill should be passed as soon as possible. Quite apart from any political or Party question or the rights of private Members, he could assure the House that if the new registry were to come into force on the 1st of January next year the Bill must be proceeded with without delay.

MR. GREGORY said, he thought that if delay and confusion were to be avoided the Registration Bill must be passed as rapidly as possible. He hoped that the labours of the Select Committee would enable the House to pass the Bill in much the same form as that in which it would come down to them.

MR. BUCHANAN said, that the hon. Member the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department had referred to the great danger of delay in regard to the English Bill. With regard to the Scottish Registration Bill, they had been told that the Scottish registration would be dealt with by clauses inserted in the English Bill. That was not now to be done, and it was only this evening that he saw a Notice on the Paper that the Lord Advocate was to introduce a Bill dealing with the Scottish registration. He would like to have a statement from the Government that they would not take the Scottish Bill during the present week, as it was desirable that the matter should be thoroughly considered.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, it was right that he should give a word of explanation about this. The Scottish Bill was very much simpler than any of the others, because in Scotland they had the valuation rolls, which formed the basis of their voters' list, and accordingly it had been necessary to have a good deal of consultation with those gentlemen who knew best about the working of that roll—he meant county assessors—and the delay in introducing the Bill had arisen from a succession of communications with them, and from their suggestions having been largely taken advantage of, and from having——

MR. SPEAKER reminded the right hon. and learned Gentleman that the scope of the debate had been limited by the Motion of the noble Lord. They were now on the Question that the debate be adjourned.

SIR JOHN HAY pointed out that no reply had been made by the Government Bench to the demand with regard to the Motion of the hon. Member for Cardiff. Unless some definite assurance was given by the Government that an opportunity would be afforded for fully discussing that Motion, he trusted the right hon. Baronet the Leader of the Opposition would resist the Government's proposed interference with the rights of private Members.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, that it was most unfortunate that after the appeal of the right hon. Member for North Devon one Member of the Government after another had left the House. He hoped the hon. Member for Cardiff would bring all possible pressure on the Government to fix a day for his Motion.

SIR EDWARD J. REED said, that he had lost none of the interest in, or zeal on behalf of, the Motion which stood in his name. He had had no communication with the Government on the subject of his Motion, except what had taken place in that House; but the Prime Minister had declared that he would treat the Motion in its original form as a Vote of Censure. He was inclined to consider that the Navy should not be a matter of Party contention—and he heard the statement of the Prime Minister with regret. He hoped he had now brought it out of the region of Party politics, and had modified the terms of his Motion accordingly. Upon the Government must now lie, if they chose to assume it, the responsibility of making it a Vote of Censure. The Government had given no encouragement to anybody to do anything at all but further the passing of the Redistribution Bill; and he thought it was wasting the time of the House to get up and put any further Questions until that Bill was passed. He could only say that the question was one of the most urgent public importance, and he hoped the House would express its opinion upon it as soon as possible without regard to Party politics. He must say that the feeling he was under was that the force, need, and truth of his Motion had been very much enhanced by what had recently occurred.

MR. SPEAKER reminded the hon. Member that he was exceeding the limitation of the Motion of the noble Lord.

SIR EDWARD J. REED said, his remarks were in the nature of a personal explanation. He appealed to the Prime Minister not to make the Motion a subject of Party discussion or Party division.

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, he supported the appeal which had been made by several hon. Members that this important Motion should be considered as soon as possible. It would not be in Order to give reasons for it; but he thought no one could read the papers day by day without feeling that such a Motion, if considered at all by the House, ought to be considered at once.

MR. RAMSAY said, the Government should take care that the Registration Bill for Scotland should be introduced at the very earliest date possible. The simplicity of the measure did not lessen the necessity for its early publication.

MR. PARNELL said, he thought the statement of the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board was a re-assuring one. He would suggest that as the Irish Registration Bill was more likely to give rise to controversy than the Scotch and English Bills it should be brought on first; or, at any rate, the English and Irish Bills should be proceeded with *pari passu*.

LORD JOHN MANNERS said, he understood that the hon. Member for Cardiff had given way to the Government in favour of the different stages of the Redistribution Bill; but now, as that Bill was almost through the House, the circumstances had entirely changed. His right hon. Friend (Sir Stafford Northcote) now asked the Prime Minister to make arrangements by which the hon. Member for Cardiff should not be prejudiced by the introduction of the Registration Bill. If the House consented to give precedence to those Bills he hoped the Prime Minister would take care on an early day to give an opportunity for the discussion of this most important Motion.

MR. TREVELYAN said, the right hon. Gentleman, in arguing for the immediate consideration of the Registration Bills, referred to the extremely important and numerous questions which it was absolutely necessary that the House of Commons should discuss within the next few weeks. But the absolute necessity of these Bills had been questioned in quarters from which

he should have thought no question on the subject could come. It was true that these Bills did not contain any provision for an early Election; but they contained most important and necessary provisions in order that any Election, late or early, might be held. The fact that they did not contain any anticipation of the date of the Dissolution only strengthened the case of the Government, because, as his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board said, that made an additional piece of Business of the same nature which would have to be done either by the insertion of a clause in these Bills, or in the Redistribution Bill on the Report; or, as was most probable, by the introduction of a separate measure. He assured his hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward Reed) and right hon. Gentlemen opposite that the Government considered the discussion of the Motion with regard to the Navy as one of great importance and value, and regretted the postponement of it. The Government would give the earliest consideration they could to the granting of a day for the Motion. [An hon. MEMBER: When?] The moment was not yet. When the complementary Business connected with registration had been disposed of, and the financial Business—which he thought could be transacted more easily than some Members seemed to think—had been concluded, and if hon. Members in different parts of the House should not think it their duty to raise debates on foreign affairs, then the Government would give their very earliest consideration to finding a day for his hon. Friend. That was the very outside pledge that could be given at the present moment. As to the request of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) that the Irish should be placed before the Scotch Bill, he conceived that a Bill which stood for second reading on the Paper had, *ipso facto*, precedence over a Bill which was not yet in existence. The request of the hon. Member, however, was not so much that the Bill should come on in any particular order, as that it should be brought on in such a manner that it could pass, with Amendments, this Session, and before a General Election. To further that end, the hon. Gentleman and his Friends could do nothing better than allow the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister to pass as rapidly as possible.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he thought the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down was very unsatisfactory, for he had not included the state of the Navy among things absolutely necessary to be discussed. One would suppose that the condition of the Navy and the defence of the country were not regarded as of importance. It was notorious that there would be no opposition to the despatch of the English and Scotch Registration Bills; why, then, could not a day be found for the discussion of a subject which by the country and by everybody except the Government was thought to be important? Was that discussion to be delayed until the three Registration Bills were passed? By the postponement of the discussion the time of the House would not be saved, nor the reputation of the Government enhanced. At the present time the Government should endeavour to obtain not only the votes of the House, but the confidence of the country; and he knew of no means by which that confidence could be more effectually estranged than by refusing an opportunity for the discussion of the Motion with regard to the naval defences of the country.

MR. HEALY complained that the reasonable request of the hon. Member for the City of Cork had not been complied with. The Government had sent up one Bill to the Committee practically before any attempt whatever was made to advance the Irish Bill. He thought they had reason to say that before any further stage was taken with any Bill, English or Scotch, that the Irish Bill should be placed in the same position as the English Bill.

MR. GLADSTONE said, the hon. Member must be under some misapprehension, for if the Seats Bill was finished on Tuesday it was intended to take the second reading of the Irish Registration Bill on Wednesday. As to the Motion of the hon. Member for Cardiff on the subject of the Navy, the observations of the right hon. Gentleman opposite were scarcely called for, having regard to the fact that this was not a Motion that had been pressed on the attention of the Government for many weeks past. It was on the Paper among the Motions for which no day had been fixed; but

he thought that in the speech of his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster the Government had shown their disposition to consider what they could do within a reasonable time to give an answer on the subject.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he considered that this was the only way open to the House to protect itself against the demands of the Government on the time of the House. The answer they had received from the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster with regard to the discussion in reference to the Navy was that the time was not yet. If they took that for an answer, the hon. Member for Cardiff might not get his Motion discussed until the Greek Kalends. He (Sir R. Assheton Cross) was quite sure the debates on the Navy Estimates would be materially shortened if that discussion were taken without much delay, and the time of the Government and of the House would in the result be materially saved. The subject was one of great national importance, and ought to be debated at an early day.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE asked the Prime Minister whether he would consider this point as to the hon. Member for Cardiff's Motion, and give a definite answer to-morrow?

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he considered it would be very unwise in the interests of the House to give any answer on the subject until the House had before them the Vote of Credit which the Government proposed to lay on the Table. It would then be seen how far the condition of the Navy might enter into that Vote, and what were all the reasons and considerations connected with it.

Mr. HICKS said, the country would thoroughly understand the refusal of the Government to grant a day for the discussion of a question of national importance. If the day had been given the discussion that evening might have closed long before.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 63; Noes 157: Majority 94.—(Div. List, No. 115.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Ordered, That the several stages of any Bills for the Registration of Voters, in England, Scotland, and Ireland, have precedence of all Orders of the Day and Notices of Motions, on every day on which they shall be set down, by the Government, as the first business of the day.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—o—

SUPPLY—NAVY ESTIMATES.

Supply—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £934,400, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expense of Victuals and Clothing for Seamen and Marines, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886."

Mr. RYLANDS said, that on the last occasion when the Navy Estimates were under discussion the first Vote was taken at a late hour, after a speech delivered by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith); and an understanding was then arrived at that after the personal Vote was taken the general discussion should be continued upon the second Vote. They would all regret that the noble Lord the Member for Chichester (Lord Henry Lennox), who was to have continued the discussion, was unfortunately prevented by ill-health from being present. He (Mr. Rylands) therefore rose to go on with the general discussion upon the Vote for Victuals and Clothing for the Seamen and Marines. The total gross amount which was asked for the Royal Navy and Marines amounted to £13,000,000; or, after making deductions for appropriations, to a sum of £12,700,000. Judging from the statement made by the Prime Minister that night—a statement which must certainly have been anticipated by every Member of the House — in connection with the Vote of Credit, there would be a considerable additional sum proposed for Naval Expenditure. In former years, and up to a very recent period indeed, the decision of the Board of Admiralty in regard to the amount of money required and the means of defence necessary had been accepted as being an authorized and a reliable Estimate. It was very curious that it should have been so, and it tended to prove the tenacity of popular delusions. Year after year the conduct of the Admiralty had been shown to be altogether inefficient and unsatisfactory; and yet the House and the public continued to suppose that whatever judgment was arrived

at by the Admiralty was the judgment which ought to be accepted by the country without question and without doubt. He was disposed to think, however, that the House of Commons and the public at large were gradually opening their eyes to the fallacy of this position, and were awakening from the delusion which formerly existed with regard to the administration of the Admiralty. Attempts had been made from time to time to draw public attention to these matters; and the public had been urged, again and again, not to shut their eyes, or to continue to accept from the Board of Admiralty the conclusions drawn by that Department under the impression that the Board of Admiralty was an infallible institution. About seven years ago it would be recollected—it was in the days of the former Government—that there was a very large amount of public irritation excited, and most important articles appeared in *The Times* condemning very strongly the policy of the Admiralty, and criticizing very severely the Administrative Department of the Dockyards. His hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed) at that time brought his great ability and knowledge to influence public opinion, in a manner which was calculated to induce the people to call in question the administration of the Admiralty, and to demand that there should be an improvement in the system of administration. That was at a time when the Government was in a state of excitement, and there were threatenings of war. The Earl of Beaconsfield, by a vigorous policy which a number of Members on that side of the House denounced, had brought the country into a position which seemed to threaten the probability of a great European convulsion. The country now seemed to be in a somewhat similar position under a professedly peaceful Government, but whose policy, so far as the interests of peace were concerned, was somewhat questionable. Whenever similar circumstances arose public attention was excited and directed to the Navy. First came criticisms and letters in the papers, and then the thunder of *The Times*, with a view, if possible, of stirring up that slumbering body the Board of Admiralty. And what happened? When a period of excitement did occur the Board of Admiralty opened its eyes and began to look around; but no sooner did the excitement and the rumours of war pass away than that Board began to slumber again, and the excited feeling of the country and of the House of Commons was in the same way put to sleep. They appeared to forget that in former times the Admiralty had proved wanting in making adequate provision for that which was required for the exigencies of the country; and the public again fell into the delusion that the Board of Admiralty, so needful for the defence of the country, was infallible. He hoped they were now arriving at a time when this public and popular delusion would be dispelled. What had happened now? The First Lord of the Admiralty got up in the House of Lords and said that there was so great a difference of opinion among naval officers as to the merits of different classes of ships that the difficulty the Admiralty would have to contend with, if Parliament placed at their disposal a sum of £3,000,000 or £4,000,000 to-morrow, for the purpose of adding to the Navy, would be to decide how to spend the money. Some persons thought that in the event of war torpedo boats would be their most powerful weapon of defence, and yet they were singularly destitute of such vessels. When it was remembered that the First Lord of the Admiralty only a very few months ago avowed, in his place in the House of Lords, that if £3,000,000 or £4,000,000 were given to the Board of Admiralty to spend they would not know what to do with it, and when, in the short period which had since elapsed, the Government were coming down to ask for largely increased Estimates, not only in this general Vote, but in the Vote of Credit which would have to follow, surely any reasonable man would see that, if the present First Lord was a fair sample of previous First Lords, he was a sort of person he should not like to trust with the expenditure of any considerable sum of money. Was there anything more preposterous than that the First Lord of the Admiralty should have been so utterly in a mist in regard to the administration of the Department, at the head of which he was supposed to be placed, that he could not possibly form any opinion as to how he was to spend the public money if it were voted by Parliament? Perhaps the Committee would

allow him to say, in passing, that he had the highest regard for his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty (Sir Thomas Brassey), who had made his great qualities still better known since he had assumed the position he now occupied. But he thought it was altogether a most objectionable system which placed the First Lord of the Admiralty in the House of Lords. He maintained that the Heads of both the greatest spending Departments in the country—the Head of the Navy, as well the Head of the War Department—ought to have a seat in the House of Commons, so that he could always be ready to reply to any question that might be put to him, and come, as it were, into touch with public opinion in a way that was not possible if he was a Member of the House of Lords. Notwithstanding the opinion expressed by the Earl of Northbrook a short time ago, that the Board of Admiralty would not know what to do with the money, the Government were now asking for a very large sum of money. He ventured to assert that the Committee had so much lost confidence in the Board of Admiralty — not only in the present Board, but in former Boards—that if this Vote rested simply on their recommendation the House of Commons would be scarcely justified in consenting to it and in voting the money required. Before proceeding further, he ought to say that he, for one, was altogether in favour of the sum of money being granted which was necessary to put the country in a proper state of defence. In that respect he was a follower of Mr. Cobden. With all his desire to keep down the Expenditure of the country, he agreed with Mr. Cobden that if it could be shown that the Navies of Foreign Powers, and more especially the Navy of France, was approaching very nearly to the standard of our own, it would be a reason why the House of Commons ought to be prepared to make great efforts in order to place the Navy of England in the position it ought to hold with regard to the Navies of Foreign Powers. He remembered perfectly well that Mr. Cobden declared that he would be ready to spend £100,000,000 in order to keep up the due proportion of relative strength between the British and the French Navies; and Mr. Cobden also said that he considered the British Navy ought to be about double the strength of the Navy of France. He was disposed to think that Mr. Cobden interpreted the feelings of the English people correctly when he made that statement; but he begged hon. Members to remember this — that the mere fact of voting the money did not necessarily get them their money's worth if the expenditure of that money was not properly administered. In one of Mr. Cobden's speeches—he believed in the very speech in which he gave this expression of opinion — Mr. Cobden quoted the opinion of Mr. Scott Russell, a man whom everybody knew was a great Naval Constructor, and who possessed a considerable amount of technical knowledge in connection with that Department. In 1862 Mr. Scott Russell said that they had, during the previous 30 years, spent £30,000,000 in the construction of a class of ships which were then totally useless. Well, he (Mr. Rylands) maintained that they had still, at any given time, been wasting very large sums of money solely through the mal-administration of the Board of Admiralty. The truth was, as had been admitted again and again, that the Board of Admiralty, as a foreign writer of considerable eminence declared, were always wanting in foresight, and did not even know what was going on at their very doors. It really seemed that, although that might not be absolutely correct, the statement was proved by experience to be founded upon very reasonable grounds. Hon. Members would remember that it was seven years after France had abandoned the construction of the old sailing vessels that the House of Commons, in 1851, forced a similar policy upon the Admiralty. Again, when the iron-clad system came up, the Board of Admiralty continued to build the old three-deckers long after the French Government had abandoned the building of vessels of that obsolete type. His object in adverting to those facts was to emphasize his demand, that when the House of Commons granted money to the Board of Admiralty, they had a right to expect the full worth of their money. No doubt the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith), who was an admirable specimen of an efficient Lord of the Admiralty when he held that Office, would say "Yes" to that view; but

the Board of Admiralty, for a long period of years, so far from noting what was going on, had appeared never to be able to make up their mind what was the proper course to pursue. Hitherto they had been unable to arrive at any rapid decision, and incessant delay occurred in the construction of vessels after it was decided to build them. Now, he believed that when the Board of Admiralty, at any given time, had made up their mind as to the best construction of a ship, they ought at once to proceed to have that ship built in the best and quickest manner possible. It had been stated by the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed), or by some other person at the meeting held recently in the City, that at the present moment there was a capital of no less than £7,000,000 sterling absolutely locked up in incomplete vessels of war; and that £7,000,000, granted in previous years by Parliament, if a war were to break out to-morrow, would not be of the slightest use to the country for the purposes of defence. He ventured to think that in spending the money voted by Parliament, they ought not only to take care that the vessels they built were built quickly—not only that they were good vessels, but that they should not spend more upon them than they were worth. It was pretty certain, in his own mind, that they were spending a great deal more for the war vessels they were constructing than they ought to spend, and more by a great deal than they could purchase the same vessels for. He recollected last year a valuable speech that was made by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. W. H. Smith) in the discussion upon the Navy Estimates. The right hon. Gentleman admitted that vessels built in Her Majesty's Dockyards cost more than those built in private shipbuilding yards, and added that that was, perhaps, not necessarily so. Now, he did not know what the right hon. Gentleman meant by the words "not necessarily so." His (Mr. Rylands) experience was that, in the condition under which the Dockyards were worked, the cost of labour must necessarily be much dearer than in private yards. Hon. Members would not dispute the evidence obtained by the important Committee presided over by the Earl of Ravensworth. He held the Blue Book containing the evidence given before that Committee in his hand. His impression was that the Committee obtained evidence of the most valuable character, and that they had presented a Report in regard to the administration of the Admiralty, which was now on the Table of the House, which contained recommendations of a very important character. He only regretted, upon reading the Report of the Committee, and the valuable evidence they had taken, that the Committee was so narrow in its constitution, and that the Reference was so curtailed, that a great many very important matters, which ought to have come under the purview of the Committee, were withheld from their consideration. Certainly the Committee went to a great extent in the direction of obtaining information, and they heard evidence on the very point he had been alluding to in regard to the comparative cost of constructing ships in the Dockyards and in private yards. The impression he derived from the evidence given before the Committee was that they could have bought the whole of the vessels they now had in the Navy, if they had been purchased in the ordinary shipbuilding yards, at a saving of somewhere between 25 and 40 per cent in the cost of construction. Whenever the Admiralty made a comparison of the cost of shipbuilding in a Dockyard and in a private yard, they unfortunately threw out of view a large number of items which ought necessarily to come into the consideration of the cost of a manufacturing establishment; and consequently their Returns did not fairly give the cost of the work done in the Dockyards, as compared with private shipbuilding yards. But if he took the lowest possible estimate, according to the evidence before the Earl of Ravensworth's Committee, the saving in the private yards was at least 20 per cent; so that there was a loss of 20 per cent incurred by the country in the cost of Dockyard work. That was taking a most favourable view of the matter; and he would appeal to his hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed), who knew so much more of those matters than he did, if it was not the fact that when they laid down a vessel in one of Her Majesty's Dockyards, and the Admiralty had proceeded with its construction up to a certain point, they did not find it necessary to alter the

structure, and accordingly they had a new scheme prepared? Then somebody suggested this alteration, and somebody else suggested that; and the effect of all of this was very materially to increase the cost, and enormously to extend the time required for the building of a vessel. The vessels built in private shipbuilding yards could not only be built at a very much less cost, but they could be built and placed in the possession of the Admiralty, complete, with much greater expedition. He had spoken just now of a slumbering Admiralty; and he might mention, as a matter of fact, that there were vessels now unfinished in the Dockyards which were laid down six years ago. During those six years, the Admiralty seemed to have been reposing comfortably upon a soft pillow, and the Dockyards had been worked by no means under full pressure; so that those vessels were only now approaching completion. What had happened in the meantime? Foreign Powers had purchased from private shipbuilding yards in this country vessels, in some respects, superior to ours, which were turned out in three years. If it took six years to lay down and complete a vessel, he would remind the Committee that the Admiralty could only turn out five vessels in a generation. It seemed perfectly preposterous; and he could hardly imagine how the House of Commons could continue to support a system which produced results like that. He was aware that the Admiralty would say that they did not know at the beginning of the six years what improvements and inventions might arise, and that they wished to have the vessel as perfect as possible. That was a preposterous view; at any rate, they would have had the vessel, even if not quite so perfect, turned out three years ago, and the country would be enjoying the advantage of it now. Unfortunately, the Admiralty were very slow in arriving at a conviction; they were continually raising doubts and difficulties, and the Members of the Board took a great deal longer to arrive at a conclusion than would be taken by any ordinary man of business. And then they wasted a great deal of precious time in experiments. How was that? He would not enter into the controversies which would, no doubt, be fully gone into by his hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed). He would not venture to express an opinion, although he was disposed very much to coincide with the judgment of his hon. Friend, in regard to the construction of vessels. The matter had already been brought before the House of Commons on various points connected with naval construction; and he must say that the ideas of the Admiralty as to the speed that was necessary was altogether condemnatory of their policy. That was a matter which he could understand quite as well as his hon. Friend, and he maintained that the ideas of the Admiralty as to the speed with which a vessel should be furnished were altogether wrong. They were content with a much lower rate of speed than that which prevailed in other countries. Now, when Parliament voted a sum of money for preparing ships for the Navy, what did they require from the Admiralty? First of all, they required from them that they should decide on the best construction of the vessels that existed at the time, to the best of their judgment; and, secondly, that they should carry out the details of the work in the most economical manner, or by purchase, if they could purchase vessels to advantage. It would appear, however, that the Board of Admiralty entirely overlooked those two great points of duty. What was the Board which had to decide on very nice questions respecting the construction of vessels of war? He maintained that the Board of Admirnlty did not necessarily know anything about the best form of construction of vessels of war. After what the First Lord of the Admiralty had stated, only a few months ago, it was quite evident that he knew nothing whatever about the construction of vessels of war. Who, then, was responsible for settling this very serious question — what influence predominated the consideration of what was the best construction of vessels of war? It was the Controller of the Navy, who was at the head of that Department. And what did the Controller know of the matter? Had he had experience? Had he had training? Had he been brought up from the beginning, gradually rising in the scale, and possessing full knowledge of the best mode of construction of these very complicated armoured vessels of war? Not necessarily so at all. He was an Admiral. He had

no wish to speak disrespectfully of an Admiral, especially in the presence of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Wigtown Burghs (Sir John Hay); but the Controller was an Admiral, perhaps, of long experience and naval training, who did not necessarily know anything whatever of the construction of vessels of war. Therefore, he ought not to be entrusted with the responsibility of deciding the designs upon which vessels of war were to be constructed. He ventured to say, in regard to the Controller of the Navy, on whom the important duty was devolved of superintending the designs for the construction of vessels of war, that he ought to be the very best naval engineer they could find in the Three Kingdoms; a man with the greatest training, with the most perfect knowledge, and whose judgment would be really valuable and reliable. Then the question arose whether, in their construction of ships, they adopted in their Dockyards, in carrying out the details of construction, a system that was at all businesslike or economical. Without pretending to have an opinion which would justify him in presuming to say what the best mode of construction or the best design for a ship of war was, he would say that, having had a great deal to do with large industrial occupations, the last thing he would dream of doing would be to place at the head of a manufacturing establishment an Admiral, who knew nothing of manufacturing operations, who knew nothing whatever about business, and who was to be placed there for three years, to be an ornament to the Dockyards, able to walk up and down in full naval uniform as the representative of British power. What he thought was that if they were bound to maintain those Dockyards they ought to be maintained on a system that would secure their being conducted economically and efficiently for the purposes for which they were required. They employed, at the present moment, in the Dockyards something like 18,000 men, and they paid, in addition, very large sums for incidental purposes connected with the Dockyards. The management of the 18,000 men distributed in the several Dockyards cost them in salaries and allowances £224,274 a-year. That seemed to him to be a rather large sum for the clerical management of the Department. Then, again, they could not have those 18,000 men without having a great number of police to look after them. They, therefore, paid £34,000 a-year for a police force to look after the Dockyards. He would not say that the Dockyards did not require some protection; but he considered that amount to be altogether excessive. Then, again, he found that last year a sum of £148,000 was paid to established Dockyard men in the shape of pensions and allowances. One of the gentlemen who gave valuable evidence before the Earl of Ravensworth's Committee was connected with the Dockyards; and he (Mr. Rylands) mentioned the fact to show the unbusinesslike mode in which the Admiralty proceeded; that this gentleman was asked a question about those pensions, and his reply was that the pensions were not taken into account in considering the wages of the men, although they came to nearly 25 per cent of the entire wages paid to the established workmen. The items which he had mentioned in connection with the wages and other charges for maintaining the Dockyards sufficiently showed that the cost of the Royal Dockyards was much greater than the cost of private shipbuilding yards. Therefore, among the recommendations of the Committee on the Navy which he looked upon as most important was that a much larger amount of work should in future be given out to contract. In connection with that matter, he was gratified to be able to say that the evidence as to the character of contract work, and also the indirect evidence as to the character of the ships supplied to Foreign Powers, left in his mind the fullest confidence that the private shipbuilding yards turned out work of an exceptionally good character. That he deemed to be a most satisfactory matter from every point of view. Then, again, the Committee urged that there should be a larger number of vessels given out to be built by contract, and that in connection with such contracts there should be an insistance on the shortness of time for delivery, and they further recommended that repairs should not be given out for contract, but that, as far as possible, they should be done in their own Dockyards. The general conclusion at which the Committee arrived was that the Dockyards should be used for all repairs, and for the con-

struction of experimental ships; but that in regard to the new ships built upon a settled design, they should be contracted for and built in the private shipbuilding yards of the country. He wished to urge upon the Committee how very important it was, in view of the special circumstances of this country, that they should adopt the recommendations of that Committee of the Admiralty. The Committee pointed out that among the advantages of extending the contract work there would be this great advantage—that not only would the resources of the Dockyards be rendered available to a greater extent for repairing vessels and building ships of an experimental type, but that familiarity with the work of building ships of war would be increased throughout the country, and facilities would more readily be given for completing the naval defences of the Empire. As far as he was able to estimate from the Returns, the power of shipbuilding, including both iron and wooden ships in the shipbuilding yards of this country was something like 700,000 tons a-year, and out of that 700,000 tons a-year from 200,000 to 300,000 would be iron-clads. In 1874 the great shipbuilding yards of this country supplied Foreign Governments with no less than 12,877 tons of iron-clad war vessels, and in 1875 they supplied 13,844 tons, making in the two years 26,721 tons; while in those two years the entire tonnage of war vessels produced in the Government Dockyards was 25,300, as against 26,721 tons. Absolutely, in those two years, more tons of iron-clad war vessels were built for Foreign Powers in our large shipbuilding yards than were built by the Admiralty in the Royal Dockyards. What appeared to him to be of the utmost importance in connection with this matter was that they were, or that the country ought to be, in a far better position than any other country in Europe with regard to their available means of defence, and they ought also to be in a far better position for obtaining a more powerful Navy than any other European country. Nevertheless, they were told that they had not got the Navy they ought to have; and so far from keeping up the relative proportion and having twice as large a Navy as France, they were told that although the French Navy was below ours at present, still in the course of four or five years, if the present rate of shipbuilding continued, France would be ahead of us. If that were so, and he did not dispute it for a moment, it was a state of things that ought not to be tolerated, and could not be justified. It was a remarkable thing that while, according to the highest authorities, the French had been making greater progress, and had been gradually approaching us in naval strength—that was to say, if we made a comparison between the French and the English Navy 12 or 15 years ago, it would be found that the proportion in our favour was much larger than it was now, for during the last few years the French Navy had been more rapidly approaching ours than at any former period. The French Naval Authorities had not been content to remain quite as dormant as the Board of Admiralty in this country. How was it that France had done more than we had done during the last few years? It would really seem that the French Government got more than we did out of a given amount of money. France was not spending anything like what we spent, and was not employing the large staff of workmen we were employing. Last year the expenditure of the French Government did not amount to more than £8,000,000 for her Navy, while our Naval Vote amounted to upwards of £11,000,000; and, in point of fact, in the last few years the sums voted for the French Navy was not much more than half what we were spending. For some time past France had certainly been spending 25 per cent less than this country; and although the expenditure of that country amounted to £8,000,000 last year, we had been spending every year a very much larger sum. Well, in the face of that there had been a gradual approach in the relative strength of the Fleets of the two countries. He believed the reason was that they did not make their money go as far as they ought to make it go, and there ought to be such a reform in the administration as would secure greater results in future from the money they expended. His right hon. Friend the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) alluded, when the Navy Estimates were before the Committee on the last occasion, to the promises of the Admiralty, and showed that their undertaking to spend a certain

sum of money and produce a certain result was never absolutely carried out. The right hon. Gentleman gave most striking instances to show where the promises of the Admiralty had failed to be carried out, and the Committee knew that that had been so for years, and that when, year after year, Parliament voted a considerable sum of money for the purpose of constructing a certain weight of tonnage in the Navy, it was found at the end of a few years that a large amount of tonnage had never been built for which the country had paid, or apparently paid. Certainly it was paid for in this sense—that, according to the calculation of the Board of Admiralty, a certain sum of money ought to produce a certain weight of ships, and as that undertaking had not been fulfilled it was evident that the money had been wasted somewhere, or that the cost of the ships was much larger than the original Estimate. He thanked the Committee for having allowed him to make those remarks; and he wished in conclusion to take that opportunity of expressing a hope that Her Majesty's Government would not lose sight of the importance of these questions, but that every effort would be made to secure for the country a more powerful and efficient Navy, and also to provide that the large sums of money which the country were prepared to vote would be so expended as to secure for the country the best possible results.

Mr. GORST said, the hon. Member who had just sat down had made a speech which they had often heard before in Committee of Supply. The burden of the speech of the hon. Member was to induce the Admiralty to spend all the money voted for the Navy in building ships by contract in the mercantile shipbuilding yards of the country; and in order to support his proposition he had thought fit to run down the Dockyards which were supported by the country. He was not going to answer the speech of the hon. Member at any great length, nor to make over again the speeches that had often been made in that House in defence of the Dockyards. He stood in a very much better position than the hon. Member, because in defending the Dockyards it was unnecessary for him in any way to run down the work done in the private shipbuilding yards. That was no part of his case. He was quite aware that ships could be built efficiently and well by contract, and he did not think that in recent years the Admiralty had shown any indisposition to avail themselves, to the full extent, of the advantages which the private established building yards of the country offered. The statement of the hon. Member was not true that in this matter they were very much behind the French, because whereas we had at least 18,000 men employed in their Dockyards, the French employed 26,000, so that, at all events, they employed a great many more men for their Dockyard service than we did. Then, as far as shipbuilding was concerned, last year France spent considerably more than we did in this country. With respect to the use of the Dockyards, it must be apparent, he should have thought even to the hon. Member himself, that a country like this must possess, in a time of war, fortified Dockyards. If they built every ship they required by private contract, it would be necessary and absolutely essential to maintain Her Majesty's Dockyards, in their present state of efficiency, for the purpose of repairing and refitting the Fleet in a time of war. If this country were unhappily at war with a Foreign Power, he presumed that that country would ultimately gain the victory who could most rapidly repair and refit its Fleet. A Fleet could only be repaired in a fortified Dockyard under the protection of batteries such as the Dockyards of Chatham, Portsmouth, and Plymouth possessed.

Mr. RYLANDS said, he thought that the hon. and learned Gentleman had misunderstood him. He had expressly stated that the Dockyards must be retained principally for the repair of ships.

Mr. GORST said, that it was absolutely necessary to keep up the Royal Dockyards in a state of efficiency, and the Committee of the Navy had themselves observed that they must be maintained for the repair of ships. In making that observation they did not recommend that no ships should be built in them while they were so retained. As they must be retained for the repair of ships in a time of war, it became economical to utilize them for the building of ships so far as shipbuilding could be carried on in them. He regretted that those establishments excited so much ire in the

mind of the hon. Gentleman; but the hon. Gentleman's notions were very far from correct. The Admiral Superintendent was not always to be found strutting about the Dockyard in full uniform with his cocked hat on his head. At the same time, it was necessary to have someone to superintend the work. It was also necessary to employ police for the protection of the Dockyards, or anybody who liked would be able to find his way into them with a view of stealing and carrying away the property of the country. As it was necessary to keep the Dockyards in a state of repair, it was economical to use them for shipbuilding. He had no wish to go into the question the hon. Member had so often raised in that House on previous occasions as to the pensions given to the artificers. Those pensions seemed very much to excite the objection of the hon. Gentleman. When the Committee came to Vote No. 6, which dealt specially with the wages of the artificers and labourers in the Dockyards, he (Mr. Gorst) should have a good deal to say upon that subject; but he was far from believing that the Government lost anything by giving the artificers of the Dockyards a portion of their remuneration in the shape of pensions. On the contrary, he would be prepared to show that the Government were great gainers. As the Committee were justified, upon this Vote, in discussing the general question of the condition of the Navy, he desired to make a few practical observations on that subject. The hon. Member stated, and he presumed that many other Members would say the same, that the Admiralty, as at present constituted, had to a certain extent lost the confidence of the country. The aspect of the Committee at that time, and the empty Benches of the House, certainly did not look as if the country were extremely anxious to arraign the Board of Admiralty; for it appeared that the Members of the House would not take the trouble to attend in order to take part in the naval discussions which were raised upon these Votes. It would, therefore, seem that upon the whole they were satisfied with the administration of the Navy, and perfectly willing to leave the Admiralty in charge of it. He believed that the real reason of the growing dislike of the House of Commons to attend the discussions upon the Navy Estimates was because Members were beginning to realize the extremely small influence the House of Commons had over the administration of the Admiralty. That was the explanation of that growing indifference of the House of Commons to the discussion of the Navy Estimates which had been pointed out by the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands). It seemed to him (Mr. Gorst) to be perfectly fatal to the administration of the Navy, according to the Constitution of this country, that the First Lord of the Admiralty should be a Member of the other House of Parliament. The Board of Admiralty was a high Scientific Department, and he supposed that a Member of Parliament, when he became a Member of the Board of Admiralty, found himself as soon as he joined the Board in the presence and in the society of men who had made naval construction and naval administration their study and their business from their boyhood. Of course, in the presence of such men, a Member of Parliament so situated could not have any very great influence upon the deliberations of the Board. The real power which Parliament possessed over such a Board as the Board of Admiralty was in the fact of the presence in that House of the First Lord of the Admiralty. He had influence with his Colleagues only because he was the person charged with the defence of the policy of the Admiralty in the House of Commons. If a great question of naval construction were raised, what influence could the First Lord of the Admiralty—a civilian who had made no particular study of naval construction—have upon the deliberations of the Board? The only reason why he had any power, or influence, or force in the administration of the Board of Admiralty was because he could say to his Colleagues—"I have got to defend your policy in the House of Commons. How am I to defend it? What arguments am I to use? How am I to answer the objections which may be raised?" The fact that the First Lord was the person charged by the Constitution of this country with that duty was the only thing which gave him influence in the Board of Admiralty. He had no wish to say a single word against the Secretary to the Admiralty (Sir Thomas Brassey). He had the highest opinion of the present Secre-

tary to the Admiralty, and also of the Civil Lord (Mr. Caine) who represented the Admiralty in that House, and he was quite sure that those hon. Gentlemen would not understand that the observations he was now making were directed against them. He only wished that the present Secretary was the First Lord of the Admiralty, and if the Government had due regard for the traditions of the Constitution of the country they would make the Secretary to the Admiralty the First Lord, and then they would have a responsible official in that House. But as long as the Admiralty was represented there by Gentlemen who were only subordinate officials of the Department, the House of Commons would have no real voice in the decisions come to by the Department, and could only represent in an exceedingly uninfluential way the views and opinions of the House to the Board of Admiralty. So long as that state of circumstances continued the Board of Admiralty would treat the House of Commons with contempt, and would have no regard for the discussions which took place in Committee of Supply. As had already been the case in the past, the Board would continue in the future to treat the views and decisions of the Committee of Supply with absolute neglect and supreme contempt. Last year, as if to prove to the whole world how perfectly useless the First Lord of the Admiralty, when a Member of the House of Lords, was to the country, the Government thought fit at a very critical moment to send the First Lord to Egypt. He was absent from this country for at least three months, and presumably he occupied his official position and distinctions all that time, and received his salary from the House of Commons, which salary the House of Commons were again asked that night to attach to the Office of First Lord. But the Admiralty went on perfectly well, as far as he knew, without the First Lord. The noble Earl who now filled that Office (the Earl of Northbrook) was never missed at all, and if he had remained up to the present moment in Egypt the Admiralty would have been conducted with quite as great efficiency, and it was perfectly certain that the House of Commons would have had just as much influence over the decisions of the Board of Admiralty as they had now, with the First Lord in "another place." The Admiralty, as at present constituted, was, he presumed, about the most independent Department in the Kingdom. There was absolutely nobody who had any control whatever over it. The only Body who had a certain amount of control over the Board, or who might have, was the Treasury. But the Treasury control consisted simply of checking the amount of money the Admiralty might spend. If they had a Board of Admiralty very much impressed with the dissatisfaction of the country at the present condition of the Navy, with extensive powers for increasing the efficiency of their Fleets, and spending money, the control of the Treasury would become a reality, because the ardour of the Board would be checked by the necessity of really superintending the expenditure of the Department. But as long as the control was not a maximum, but a minimum control, and the Admiralty remained content with the present inefficient condition of the Fleet, and did not ask leave to spend more money, but was content with spending the actual amount which the Treasury placed at its disposal, there was no control on the part of the Treasury whatever. Control was only felt when the Admiralty was anxious to spend, and it was not felt when the Admiralty was content to save. Therefore, notwithstanding the fact that control theoretically existed on the part of the Treasury, he maintained that the Admiralty, at that moment, if it made up its mind to keep within the expenditure which the Treasury allowed, was the most independent and the most untrolled Body in the United Kingdom. He did not want to say too much against the Board. He did not agree with all the strong censure which had been passed upon the Board by the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands). The hon. Member said that the Admiralty knew nothing whatever about naval construction. He supposed that there were Members of the Admiralty Board who, perhaps, did not know much about naval construction; but there were also Members of the Board who were very eminent naval constructors; and the Board had the advantage of possessing *employés* and officials capable of giving them advice, which, at all events, was the advice of instructed and

competent persons, upon any question of construction they might enter into. He did not, however, believe, whatever the Admiralty themselves and their advisers might be, that they rendered more efficient service to the public because they were altogether free from control and criticism. He thought the Admiralty would be much more efficient and effective if it was subjected to the control of the House of Commons, and if the criticisms which found their way into the minds of the public through that House produced a greater effect upon the administration of the Admiralty. If they had the First Lord in the House of Commons that would be so; because, if there were a particular criticism upon any point of construction or other matter which the Admiralty knew to be urgent, and the First Lord wanted advice from his naval constructors as to the progress it was necessary to make, it would be given to him, and the criticisms of the House of Commons would, consequently, have considerable influence over the administration of the Admiralty. To illustrate what he meant he would refer to an incident which occurred in the last Parliament, when his right hon. Friend the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) was First Lord. A Motion was made in that House, either by the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed) or by the noble Lord the Member for Chichester (Lord Henry Lennox), in reference to the construction of Her Majesty's Ship *Inflexible*. At any rate, the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed) spoke in favour of that Motion, and passed some very useful and very favourable criticisms upon the construction of that vessel. He could not say that that debate changed the views of the Admiralty; but, at all events, it had a considerable effect upon them, because, at that time, the First Lord could be instructed upon the subject, the whole matter could be explained to him, and although it was a scientific question, and a question which a layman was not capable of dealing with, yet it was quite certain that that debate had a considerable effect upon the ultimate construction of the *Inflexible*. He was quite certain that if such a debate were raised now, it would have no effect at all. Indeed, he was not certain that it would ever reach the Admiralty. At any rate, it would only reach the Board as far as such Members of the Board might read it in the newspapers who might be anxious to know what any Member who had a technical knowledge of the subject chose to say. Indeed, it would have about the same effect as if the speeches were made in the Society of Arts or in the Kensington Laboratory. Looking at the general necessities of the Empire, the present condition of the Admiralty was deplorable. Notwithstanding all the agitation of the newspapers, all the speeches made in that House, and all the Questions asked of Her Majesty's Government, they all knew the deplorable condition in which the defence of their own seas, and ports, and harbours was left at the present moment. If, unhappily, they were at war with a great Naval Power, even their own harbours in the United Kingdom were not safe against attack. And if that was the state of things here on the spot, where they had their eyes upon the conduct of the Admiralty, what must be the condition of the defences of their Empire in those remote seas to which the view of the House of Commons was seldom, if ever extended? If anybody would inquire into the state of their ports—for instance, those in the Pacific, which were very near an enemy with whom it was not impossible at an early period they might find themselves at war—he believed it would be found that the ports they possessed in the Pacific, and especially the Harbour of Esquimault, were absolutely defenceless; and no attempt whatever had been made by the Admiralty to defend the latter port, although it was the only station they possessed in the Pacific in which their Fleet could anchor, or obtain the coal or provisions which the result of extended operations might render necessary. If inquiries were made as to the condition of many other of their remote Possessions, he believed it would be found that they were in a most lamentable condition and literally defenceless. Now, under those circumstances, he should have thought that the Admiralty, and the Government generally, would have given every possible encouragement to those Colonies which were disposed to undertake the defence at least of their own ports and harbours, because it was not only the defence of the Colonial ports that would be more effi-

ciently discharged by the Colonies themselves, but any Fleet which might be sent into those neighbourhoods would be set free for other enterprizes. Take the Australian Colonies, for instance. If their Fleet was not required for the local defence of the Australian Colonies, the Fleet employed there, in the event of a war, might be used for offensive, instead of defensive, measures.

THE CHAIRMAN pointed out that the hon. and learned Gentleman was going beyond the Question before the Committee, which was the Navy Estimates, and not their Colonial defences.

MR. GORST would apologize if he had committed any irregularity. He was only pointing out how necessary it was for the efficiency of the British Fleet that the duty of defending the Colonies should be intrusted to the Colonies themselves. His point was, that if they were to spend money in clothing and victualling their seamen and Marines, the Fleets they employed must be capable of taking the seas in order to look for the enemy, instead of being obliged to lurk in the harbours along the coast, where they could not act offensively. He would not, however, pursue the matter further if the Chairman thought he was going beyond what was strictly within the order of that Vote. All he desired to point out to the Committee was that the Admiralty was in a most unhappy position at present, because it was relieved, by the conduct of the Government in appointing a First Lord who was not a Member of the House of Commons, from that salutary check which the debates and opinions of the House would exercise over the Admiralty. He was quite sure that, able as the Board of Admiralty might be, and scientific as some of the Members of it were, and earnestly anxious, as he believed all of them were, to discharge their duty to their country and to maintain the Fleets of the country in a condition of efficiency, the Admiralty would never be able to discharge its responsibilities to the country until they were subjected to the criticism of the House of Commons.

SIR EDWARD J. REED said, he would not attempt, after what had passed in the House that night, to offer any large view of the subject. The Committee had no power to increase any Vote whatever. They only enjoyed the power of diminishing the sums which appeared in the Estimates, and the Admiralty had taken good care that there should be very little to diminish or to come under the notice of the Committee in that direction. There was another reason why he should not enter upon any large question that night, and it was to be found in the words which had fallen from the Prime Minister, touching the Vote of Credit to be moved to-morrow. He thought that as they had a naval debate in view, and as a large proposal of the Government was about to come before them, they would be in a better position to-morrow than they were in at present to discuss the naval armaments of the country. It seemed to him that the Admiralty itself had lately been endeavouring to show to the world that all and more than all which had been stated about the deplorable condition of the British Navy was true. It was said that they were in the possible presence of a war with a powerful European nation, but only a third-rate Naval Power; and no sooner did they come within the presence of that possibility than they found the Admiralty bringing forward in the Dockyards everything they could possibly lay their hands upon, and casting about, among the Mercantile Marine, for colossal ships, altogether unfit for warlike purposes, and without a particle of defence, although they might be fit to perform auxiliary services in connection with the Royal Navy. Recently the Admiralty refused to build, from designs supplied to them by a very eminent builder on the Clyde, a ship of great speed, because it was a ship with a very small amount of armour protection—the Admiralty refused to undertake to build her on the ground that they ought not to construct a ship of so large a size with so little armour. He quite sympathized with them in that feeling; but they told the country now that they were purchasing still larger ships without any armour at all. They were told that the Admiralty were, in point of fact, purchasing passenger steamers of 12,000 tons of the most costly character ever built, but which were not eligible for war steamers, and were not expected to be used for warlike purposes when constructed. He mentioned that to show that the Admiralty were demonstrating one of two propositions—either that they were prepared to spend money recklessly for purposes for which they

had refused to spend money wisely and economically, or that the Government was in such a condition that they were driven to this last resource. He maintained that there was no escape from one or other of those conclusions. He desired now to make a few remarks upon the Return which had lately been presented to the House by his hon. Friend below him (Sir Thomas Brassey). It would be in the recollection of the Committee that a few weeks ago he had called attention to a Return laid before the House of armoured and unarmoured vessels, laid down to be built in Her Majesty's Dockyards and by contract, in 1880 or since the present Government came into Office, showing the cost and the progress made with them. He had observed in that Return a large number of unarmoured vessels put down as armoured vessels. On calling the attention of his hon. Friend to the fact, his hon. Friend was good enough at once to acknowledge the error. He spoke of it as a clerical error, and proposed to amend it and substitute an accurate Return. The right hon. and gallant Admiral the Member for the Wigtown Burghs (Sir John Hay) drew attention to another point, and his hon. Friend, with an amount of confidence in the people upon whom he had to depend for information which he thought his hon. Friend would lose in the course of time, said he would undertake that the new Return should be correct in every particular. No one in the House would doubt for a moment that his hon. Friend desired and intended that every document he produced in the House should be strictly accurate. It would, however, be his (Sir Edward J. Reed's) business to take exception to this Return even in its amended form, and to call the attention of his hon. Friend to it. In the first place, he would refer to the diagram to which the right hon. and gallant Baronet (Sir John Hay) on the other side of the House had made allusion. This diagram had been amended, and it now showed, in an almost picturesque form, the rate at which the present Government claimed to have added armoured and unarmoured ships to Her Majesty's Navy. He had gone carefully over the figures, and he was bound to say that every year the additions which were claimed to have been made to the Navy by the present Board of Admiralty were exaggerated and untrue. There was only one year in which they were approximately correct; but in the other years they were very much exaggerated, and there was not a single year in which, as far as he could find out —and he had taken a great deal of pains in going through the matter—the figures were truthfully and correctly given. In saying that, he would wish to guard the Committee against an observation which might possibly be made by his hon Friend below him, that he was referring to the fact that, generally speaking, the tons of ships built, or professed to be built, by the Admiralty could only be indicated, while a vessel was in course of construction, by speaking of the estimated tons completed. But when that mode of expression was used for the purpose of indicating the additions made to the Navy, the Returns were misleading to Parliament and the public. This appeared to be the principle adopted—supposing 5,000 tons weight of hull were to cost £500,000, and the Admiralty spent £600,000. Thereupon they stated not that they had overspent to the extent of £100,000, but that they had added 1,000 tons to the Navy, whereas they had only built the same ship. On that ground he naturally took exception to any Return prepared upon that principle. It might be said, and had been said, that that was a conventional mode of expressing the work done by the Admiralty, and that there was no more convenient form of expressing the progress made with regard to a ship. That was a point he would not discuss that night; but what he did wish to discuss was this. When they passed out of the region of the ships in progress, and laid before the House a Return of the tonnage of ships completed, and gave a diagram declaring that in 1880, 1881, 1882, 1883, and 1884 so many thousand tons were added to the Navy, that Return ought to be an accurate account of the tonnage of ships built. But the Return presented by his hon. Friend was nothing of the kind. It gave the fictitious and not the real tonnage. A Return in this form passed all the bounds of reason, and entirely misled the country. That was not all. What he found to be the fact was this—but he did not wish to speak with the same positiveness upon this matter, because, having a great many

figures to go over, he might have lost sight of something—all he would say was that he had taken a gread deal of pains in going through the Return, and he found that the tons built, according to the diagram, were 12,864 in the year 1883-4; but he could not find, upon the most careful examination, that the Admiralty had in reality built more than 11,000 tons. He was quite sure that the Return was largely inaccurate in all the years mentioned, except in regard to the year 1881-2, when his figures and those of the Admiralty very closely approximated. This was the first complaint he had to make of the Return, and he appealed to the Government to supply the House with a Return which would express how many tons had been added to the Navy in each year—how many real tons—tons weight of hull, taken in a literal and proper sense, and not in a way in which not one in fifty of the Members of that House could be expected to understand. He would now ask the Committee to allow him to draw their attention to some other figures. The Return professed to show the cost of hull, inclusive of fittings. He would have thought that any Member of the House, taking this Return into his hands and finding a ship in it recorded as complete, with the cost of fittings in connection with the hull and of fittings in connection with the engines expressly included, would infer that the total cost of the ship was given. There was, however, not a single case in which the Returns were, in that sense, accurate and complete—not one, although a great many were given. Again, the Return showed that the present Board of Admiralty had not completed a single ship of over 1,500 tons which they had themselves begun. This paralysis was the more remarkable, because when the Board of Admiralty undertook to conduct the affairs of the Navy, they declared, as their programme, that they would build quickly and turn out ships rapidly. That was the under taking of the Government, and, unfortunately, the country believed them. Not only in that House, but also before his constituents, he had said he believed they were going to do what they had promised; but the Return showed that this confidence had been misplaced. If any hon. Member would take this Return in hand, he would see that directly he laid his finger on a ship of more than 1,420 tons, he found her incomplete. He was bound, however, to admit that there were one or two unarmoured vessels expected to be completed at the end of last month which were possibly complete. But he believed he was correct in stating that these were still in the hands of the Dockyards. The statement which he made, that the cost of every ship was incorrectly given, and given below the actual cost, was a very serious one. He thought if he were in the position of his hon. Friend, and were made the vehicle for conveying to Parliament a document so deficient in this essential and important particular, he should feel a very great amount of dissatisfaction, to say the least of it. He had taken out a list of five vessels. The *Satellite* was put down as having cost £62,720. He did not hesitate to say, and he challenged the contradiction of his hon. Friend below him, that the cost of that ship was as near to £70,000 as it was to £60,000. The next ship, the *Hyacinthe*, was put down at £70,000, and he was sure she had cost £73,000. The *Heroine*, the cost of which was stated to be £66,889, he was satisfied had cost over £73,000. The *Rapid* was put down at £68,000; he declared that she had cost over £72,000. The *Royalist* was stated at £67,000, whereas he declared that she cost over £70,000. These increases were not arrived at by taking into account whatever incidental charges went to make up the cost of the ships, although they ought in strictness to have been included. The Admiralty had received tenders during the last few days for the construction of ships by private builders. Did the Admiralty suppose that those builders had left out of their calculations the cost of fuel, furnace labour, and many other incidental charges in connection with the construction of ships? Of course, any builder who did that would come to grief very quickly; and when Returns were made showing the cost of ships, there should be excluded from them altogether the expenditure incurred in this way on the ships themselves was more than he could understand. Of course, in such calculations a fair amount of incidental charges ought to be added. The result of his investigations with reference to those five ships was that when the allowances which the Accountant

General was in the habit of bringing against ships in the Dockyards were taken into account, the ships which were put down in the Return of his hon. Friend as having cost £332,000 had actually cost £112,000 more than that sum—that was to say, instead of costing £332,000, they had cost £444,000. That was the actual cost, as he made it out, taking the Accountant General's Returns, inclusive of incidental charges. The estimate might be open to correction; but whether it was or not, a very large portion of the additional charge ought to be taken into account, and some intimation ought to be given in the Returns made to that House of the exact cost of the ships to the country. Now, he had made a few days ago a statement in another place, which excited a great deal of attention, and he thought it right to repeat that statement on the present occasion for the information of the Committee. The expenditure of the present Board of Admiralty he made out to have been as follows:—In the first year of Office, 1880-1, they expended a total of £1,426,360 upon new ships. Out of that they spent £1,165,800 upon ships which had been finished, a large application of which they, of course, made to ships which they found unfinished on taking Office. Only £261,500 had been spent on unfinished ships, and that he regarded as an excellent sign. In the next year the amount on finished ships fell to £489,500, and the amount on unfinished ships rose from £260,000 to £705,000. Then, in 1883-4, the amounts were £351,000 only on finished ships, and £1,500,000 on unfinished ships. He made out that up to the 31st March last the Government had expended £8,855,000 in the Dockyards on new ships, out of which £3,259,000 had been expended on finished ships, including, of course, several ships begun by their Predecessors, leaving £5,596,000 as expended on ships lying unfinished at the present moment. Now, if they added to that the incidental charges, which ought to be added, they arrived at the fact that out of the aggregate sum spent about £6,500,000 was invested money, which, at the present moment, was quite unavailable for national purposes. There was another small but curious point in this Return to which he desired to draw the attention of the Committee. His hon. Friend, as he had already stated, had said that the insertion of some unarmoured ships as iron-clads was the result of a clerical error; but everyone familiar with the Admiralty knew that there had been a strong tendency of late to slip in ships as armoured which were unarmoured, in order to make an extraordinary show in that respect; and that many devices had been resorted to in order to produce the impression that ships were protected, the essential characteristics of which ships being that they had no protection whatever; they had some protection over their machinery, but, as a matter of fact, they themselves were utterly devoid of any protection whatever in the proper sense of the term. Not a single 6*d.* had been expended on their protection, and nothing could be more extraordinary than that they should have been returned as protected vessels. Again, in the Return, there was a column with the heading "Thickness of armour-plate," and he found in that column astonishing entries for the new *Scout* torpedo boats. Those vessels had not the slightest pretension to any armour-plating whatever. It was said that the "thickness of armour-plate" in the case of the new *Scout* meant a thin water-tight deck. He confessed that he could not understand that. He hoped his hon. Friend would use his influence to get the Returns rendered in a clear form to the House, and free from those falsifications—that was to say, as far as it was possible for a man, with heroic determination working against the Department, to get them presented in a truthful shape. It must not be understood by the Committee, from what he was saying, that the Admiralty intentionally made low estimates of the cost of building in their own Dockyards. His own impression was that they tried to make fair estimates, and he believed that they proceeded very much in the same way as private shipbuilders in that respect. But the difference was that the estimates of a private firm were obliged to be adhered to, whereas the estimates of the Admiralty were merely taken as a point of departure from which they could go in all directions. There was a small ship at Chatham called the *Conqueror*. From the fact of her being comparatively small and an iron-clad of moderate armament, all other conditions correspond-

ing, there was no reason that her estimated cost should not have been adhered to if the calculations had been correctly made. Now, the estimate for that ship was as follows:—for hull, £246,450; machinery, £52,500; the total estimated cost being £298,950. But what was the actual cost of the vessel? It was £380,000; or an excess of £81,050 upon a comparatively small ship. But then he found brought against this ship by the Accountant General an establishment charge of £67,000, because she had been a long time in course of completion; and that brought up the total cost to £447,000. If the Committee were inclined to think, notwithstanding what he said, that there was some novelty or complications or some unexpected element of cost involved in this case which human intelligence could not have foreseen—in other words, if that were an experimental ship—then he would give an instance of what happened a few years ago in a real case of experimental shipbuilding. The late gallant officer Admiral Sartorius, who really put the spirit into this country to resort to the ram, came to him some time before the *Polyphemus* was begun, and asked him to design a good sort of ship of the ram class. He said—"I am anxious to have my idea carried out; will you design a ship under my advice?" He (Sir Edward J. Reed) undertook to do so, and, having got that promise from him, the Admiral went to the Admiralty, and they undertook to design the ship themselves. They designed the *Polyphemus*. She was proposed to Parliament, and the cost of the vessel was to be £84,000—that was to say, £42,000 for materials, and £42,000 for labour. He said nothing about the machinery of the ship, because the greater part of that turned out to be an entire failure; and he was not disposed to complain in this case, because the Admiralty had made an experiment which he thought ought to have been made with reference to boilers. He, therefore, confined his observations to the hull alone, and that cost £159,000—that was to say, there was an excess of no less than £75,000 on a ship which was estimated to cost £84,000. And, then, if they added to that the incidental charges—well, he thought he had better not say what the vessel would have cost. He would like to refer to another vessel—namely, the *Edinburgh*. That ship was commenced two years before the present Government acceded to Office, but, on various pretexts, she had been under construction until the present time, and was likely to remain so for some time longer. The story of the vessel was this. She was to have cost £450,000, and her machinery £82,000. On the 31st of March last year there had already been spent on her, exclusive of incidental charges, £4,000 more than the estimate—that was to say, she had then cost £536,000 instead of £532,000. Well, the Admiralty said if the House would grant £14,460 for labour only they would make progress with her; they had obtained that money, and now they came down to ask for a further sum of £59,000 to complete the ship. She had been six or eight years building, and the delay that had taken place was so detrimental to the interests of the country that he could not understand any man of sense allowing the construction of a ship to be prolonged over the period he had mentioned; and he would say, in passing, that he regretted to observe in that House the tendency to accept excuses on such grounds as that the difficulty of getting guns had occasioned the delay. He said that the time had come when the House should tell the First Lord of the Admiralty that they could not listen to such excuses at all, but that he must have the guns ready for the ships, and that if he were unequal to the work he should give up his Office and make way for someone more capable of doing what was necessary for the interests of the country in respect to the Navy. He was convinced that if the country became involved in war with any Power or Powers of naval consequence this language would be used towards those men who had failed in these great particulars, unless they retired of their own accord and saved themselves from the censure they deserved. He knew that the Admiralty groaned under the delay in getting guns; but they should insist on having them, and he was convinced that that House would back up any Minister who resisted a system which would not enable them to have the guns of the Navy constructed in their own way. Let the Admiralty free themselves from a system under which the Navy of the country was made

to depend on the rapidity with which guns could be manufactured in Woolwich Arsenal. Would the Admiralty tell the Committee that if they granted the additional £59,000 they would actually finish the *Edinburgh?* Without any charge for material during the last 12 months, they had advanced from £532,000 to £610,000 in the cost of this ship. Before concluding, he would like to observe that he should not be satisfied if his hon. Friend, in reply to this statement, harped on the old string of the experimental character of the ships, and the delay involved by changes in machinery and appliances for loading large guns. He should not be satisfied with that, because the same thing went on with regard to ships which were admittedly not experimental. The same excessive cost and the same unreasonable delay occurred in the case of unarmoured vessels which had none of those appliances, and therefore he should not consider himself in any way answered by being told that the ships were experimental, and that unforeseen difficulties had been discovered. He would not trouble the Committee further than to say that the only course open to hon. Members, when imperfect Returns were placed before them, was to ask Questions and probably to receive snubs at the hands of Ministers; and therefore he trusted that the Returns in the case of the Navy would henceforward be placed before them in a correct form. He hoped that his hon. Friend would not fall back on the gun argument; that he would receive this statement as seriously as he (Sir Edward J. Reed) made it; and that he would be able to explain how it was that ships which had cost so much money had been put down in the Returns as costing so much less, and how it was that the Admiralty claimed to have constructed an amount of tonnage largely in excess of what they had actually turned out. They had lately had a new Accountant General appointed to the Admiralty by the Earl of Northbrook; he understood that that gentleman had no connection with the Department, and that he was stated to be a very able and competent man. He would express, but hesitatingly, the hope that this gentleman would not fall into one error of which the late Accountant General was guilty. Amongst the accounts laid before that House there was the annual Return from the Accountant General. Now, the Accountant General was purely a financial Minister, and it was no part of his duty to take up the position of apologist for, and expounder of, all the irregularities in the Admiralty accounts. It was not for the Accountant General to explain why this large waste of public money went on; he was not a competent authority in the matter, inasmuch as he proceeded upon second or third-hand information, and could only repeat what he was told. The House had already had enough of that sort of information. It was, indeed, a paralyzing fact that answers given to Questions in the House on Admiralty matters were inspired answers, and that hon. Members had to direct their attacks against Gentlemen in that House whose only responsibility was that they had consented to be made the channel through which those inspired answers were conveyed.

Mr. A. F. EGERTON: Sir, the Committee has listened to a very able speech from the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed). I do not propose to go into all the particulars to which he referred; but I should like to make one or two remarks upon the main portion of his speech, which was an attack upon the amended Return of the Navy Estimates that has been recently issued from the Admiralty. I came to the conclusion that he had shown that that Return, unintentionally, amounts almost to a falsification of accounts, because it takes the additional tonnage that has been added to the Navy solely from the Note which is to be found on page 196 of the Navy Estimates, which gives a peculiar calculation of tonnage. It certainly does not show, and would not show under any circumstances, how the tonnage was added to the Navy, but simply how much money was expended upon ships, and the amount of each man's labour upon the ships. Well, I do not know what answer the hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Thomas Brassey) has to give to the hon. Gentleman's (Sir Edward J. Reed's) remarks upon that statement; but I must say that it appeared to me, at the time that I heard it, to be perfectly conclusive, and to be hardly susceptible of any answer at all. Then the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cardiff referred to one matter of very

great importance, and that is the manner in which the Estimates are constantly exceeded in the Dockyards in the matter of expenditure on ships. Well, I suppose every Board of Admiralty has suffered from that; and it appears to me to arise in the main from the constant cross references backwards and forwards between the Admiralty and the Dockyards. What happens is this. The Dockyards propose some improvements —and, as far as practice goes, I believe that these proposals come from the Executive officers at the Dockyards, and not from the Civil officers—these proposals are referred to the Admiralty, the Admiralty refers them back again to the Dockyards, after they have been seen by the Constructors' Department, and thus there is a constant communication between the Admiralty and the Dockyards, and the consequence is that, whether rightly or wrongly, there is always a great excess upon the Estimates for ships before they are finished, or anything like finished. I hope that, after the recommendations of the Committee on Shipbuilding have been carefully considered at the Admiralty and the Dockyards, some remedy may be found for this state of things, and that for the future we may have something resembling the state of things that prevails when a private firm gives an order for a ship to a firm of shipbuilders. When a private firm gives such an order the ship is built and delivered out of hand without alteration or delay with these cross references. That is a state of things which, to my mind, ought, as far as possible, to exist at our Dockyards; and I hope that in the future, at any rate, we may see this state of things prevail. But I did not rise to remark so much upon what the hon. Member for Cardiff has said in his very able speech; but I desire to say a few words upon the general principle which I think underlies everything connected with the administration of the Navy. The real question for us to consider, to my mind, is what our requirements are with regard to the Navy, and whether we have anything approaching to a fulfilment of those requirements. Now, it appears to me that the subject of the Navy, both as to defence and as to attack, divides itself under two heads. In the first place, we have the defence of our shores, which implies the power of attack; and, in the second place, we have the defence of our trade, implying the defence of our foreign coaling stations. The real fact for us to consider in the House of Commons is whether the present Administration, not to speak of past Administrations, are doing all in their power to supply these requirements. Now, I would like to make a remark upon something that fell from the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands). In his speech he said, with some truth, that the Admiralty for years —that all Admiralties for years past have been asleep. I think there is a certain amount of truth in that; but I will supplement the observation by saying that if the Admiralty has been asleep, the House of Commons has been asleep also, and the nation behind the House of Commons has likewise been asleep. But he proceeded to say that all Admiralties have neglected the requirements of the country. That is, to a certain extent, true; but, for a moment, compare the state of things that exists now with the state of things which existed under the previous, or under the two previous, Boards of Admiralty. I do not say that the Administration with which I was connected supplied all the requirements of the country; very far from it. I have no doubt that the right hon. Gentleman the late First Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. W. H. Smith) and his Predecessor, the late Mr. Ward Hunt, would have been very glad if they could have persuaded the Chancellor of the Exchequer to give them a much larger sum for the Navy than it was possible for him to allow. Looking at present circumstances, I have no hesitation in saying that the Admiralty to-day is under far more favourable conditions, as far as our naval requirements are concerned, than any past Administration has been. When we left Office our Navy, relatively to the Navies of Foreign Powers, was in a far stronger position than it has been since. I say that without fear of contradiction. From the year 1877 to the year 1880 there was nothing afloat anywhere completed that was at all equal to four of the ships that we had at that time completed and afloat—I mean the *Devastation*, the *Inflexible*, the *Thunderer*, and the *Dreadnought*. Therefore, we may say, and I think with perfect truth, that from 1878 to 1880 we were in a

far stronger position than any Foreign Navy; and let me also remind the Committee that at that time torpedo warfare was hardly developed at all; no one knew at that time what that might be in the future. The late Government did take certain steps to procure torpedoes; but it has been since 1880—between that and the present year—that that weapon and the modes of using it have been so greatly developed. I only say that in passing, and I do not wish further to refer to what took place under any previous Administration. What I wish to inquire into very briefly, if the Committee will allow me, is, what is the present state of affairs? Now, I do not wish to go into details; there are other Gentlemen, including the hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Edward J. Reed), who are far more capable of going into details on the state of the Navy than I am; but I wish to give a broad view of the subject. What is the state of the case with regard to the Iron-clad Fleets of foreign countries? If the Returns I have are correct, England at this time has 48 efficient iron-clads of every sort and description, including three Colonial ships. If we compare that with the Fleets of foreign nations, we shall find that France at this time has 46 efficient iron-clads; Italy has nine; Russia has 13—there is some doubt about the exact number that there are in Russia in these Returns—and that Germany has 23. Well, nobody could say fairly, with these figures before them, that England was in a sufficiently pre-eminent position with regard to iron-clad ships. But, besides that, it must be remembered that there are iron-clads in the Pacific, that Chili has a certain number, that Brazil has some, also Japan; and without going into particulars I may say broadly that the iron-clad Fleet of England is immensely overweighted by the number, and, I may say also, the power of the iron-clads of foreign countries. Now, take the condition of the Iron-clad Fleet of Italy at this time. Italy has four ships, every one of which the Italians think—and I have no doubt correctly—is perfectly equal to our strongest ship; and at present they have in them four guns of greater weight than any that we have in our ships. It is true that in the near future we are promised some 100-ton guns for our iron-clads; but so far as I know at present there is not one of our ships armed with that weapon; and judging from the procrastination that seems to prevail, I am afraid, in the Department of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, the Surveyor General of Ordnance (Mr. Brand), as well as at the Admiralty, upon my word I do not know when these guns will be placed in the ships. I hope the hon. Gentleman will be able to tell us. I think I have shown that we are in a minority, as far as the first class of vessels is concerned, compared with Foreign Powers. But now I should like to go a little further, and assuming that a war with two first-class Powers was declared at this moment, I should like to ask what we should have to provide in the first instance? That is the serious test of the power of the Navy—the power of opening a war with effect. Now, what should we have to provide in the first instance in case we were at war with two first-class Powers? We should want a Channel Fleet to begin with, probably with head-quarters in the Downs, and we should unquestionably want a North Sea Fleet. We should want a Fleet to guard the shores of Ireland and St. George's Channel; we should want ships in the Mediterranean; and we should want—I am speaking merely of iron-clads — also a certain number of ships in the Pacific, on the China Stations, and on the Australian Stations. Now, without going into the particulars of the strength of each squadron, I may say that from the best information I can procure we should want at least 33 first-class ships under the Admiralty classification—with which the hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Thomas Brassey) is so familiar—and at least six second-class ships. Besides that, if we were to provide properly for the commencement of a war, we should have also to provide for the possibility of relieving these ships. I have said that for the squadrons in action we should want from 39 to 40 ships, and for these 39 or 40 ships the reliefs we should require—in this matter I speak subject to correction by naval officers present—would be at least 15 first-class and three second-class iron-clads fit for sea in harbour. But taking it at a lower figure than that, I do not believe that any Naval First Lord, in the case of a war of the description I

have mentioned, would be satisfied with less than 10 or 12 ships for purposes of relief. Taking the larger figure, I say the total requirements under the circumstances I have mentioned would be 48 first-class and nine second-class iron-clads. Of course, I am not going into the question, which will be discussed hereafter, as to whether these ships should be *barbette* or broadside ships. That is a question which experts may better decide than I can pretend to do. But what I would impress upon the Committee is, that out of these 58 ships, at least 48 of them ought to be classified under the Admiralty classification as first-class ships heavily armed. Well, to meet these requirements what have we got in this present year 1885 ready for sea? We have got of first-class iron-clads under the Admiralty classification 12 ready for sea and at sea, and we have nine building, adding to the original programme those which are to be built under the sum which has been recently added to the Navy Estimates. Of ships of the second class we have got 13, some of them good ships, some of them bad; but, whatever they may be, there they are afloat and ready to take action at any moment; and we have got five building. Of course, the five building will be better than many of the 13 existing old ships. Well, of these second-class iron-clads five ships, like the *Orion* and *Belle Isle*, mount guns of 25 tons; and, therefore, if necessary, to my mind, they might take their place in line of battle with first-class ships, of which I have mentioned how many we should want. We may have then, within a few months, I may say, 25 heavily-armed ships to meet the demand above indicated of 33 first-class ships; and of that class of ship we shall then have no reserve whatever. I do not say that these requirements are to be met by any Admiralty at once—that would be impossible; but I think that every First Lord of the Admiralty who considers the subject with care and attention, as all First Lords should do, must work up to a programme of that sort. He must see that in course of time the Fleet of this country must necessarily be far stronger than it is at present. I have no doubt that First Lords bear all these things in their heads, and that they do work out problems of that kind; and I venture to think that it is of some importance that not only should the First Lord carry in his head the programme that he is working up to, but that the House of Commons and the nation generally should have some idea of the requirements of a first-class Power as to their Naval Service. Well, Sir, these are the remarks which I principally desired to make to the Committee. There are many other subjects of very great importance—of the greatest possible importance—which I am afraid have been, up to the present time, rather neglected—I will not say only by the present Admiralty, but by all Admiralties — and amongst these subjects the most important is the fortification of our coaling stations, which has been referred to by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) in the earlier part of this debate. So far as I know at the present time there are half-a-dozen coaling stations that are almost entirely without defence. Take Hong Kong for instance. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) told us the other day, in answer to a Question, that something was to be done there; but, so far as our information goes from Hong Kong itself, it seems that the inhabitants are very far from satisfied with the operations that are being carried on. They do not think that they are in a proper state of defence.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must remind the hon. Gentleman that the remark I made to the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) applies to the observations he is now making. The question of fortifications is irrelevant on this Vote, and that with regard to the Colonies he can only refer to such subjects as come under this Vote.

MR. A. F. EGERTON: Then I will not refer to this matter any further; I will only say that with fixed fortifications the Admiralty has nothing to do, and that it is connected more with the War Office than with any other Department. But there are other subjects which are of the greatest importance and with which the Admiralty is very greatly concerned; and one of these questions is that of torpedo defence for our ports. I have some reason, I think, to fear that the Admiralty are not sufficiently alive to the necessity of speedily building torpedo boats. There is one

point which probably it will be better to discuss under Vote 10, Section 2; but still it has reference to money for providing torpedo boats, and, so far as I can make out, I do not think the Admiralty have proposed a sufficient sum to provide for this class of boat. But, as I have said, this subject will come up again in detail under Vote 10, Section 2, and I will then take the liberty of making a few remarks upon it. But I would point out that it is of the greatest importance that the whole system of torpedo defence and attack should be most seriously taken in hand by the Admiralty, and that the leeway we have made should be compensated for as speedily as possible. At present, there is no doubt we are far behind, not only Russia, but also Germany and France, in our supply of torpedo boats, and in the kind of torpedo boats we possess. I venture to hope that whatever the Admiralty do with a new sum, which it is reported will be charged for this service within the next few days, that at any rate this question of torpedo defence and attack will have their most serious attention.

MR. CAINE: The hon. Member who has just spoken stated that from 1878 to 1880 we enjoyed a far stronger position than any Navy in the world, and he went on to state that our Navy to-day is in a position of inferiority compared with the position it was in during that period. Well, much as I deprecate these continual comparisons with other nations, if they are forced upon us, we must meet them, and in meeting this I do not hesitate to say that to-day we are relatively in as strong a position as regards any other Navy as we were in the years to which the hon. Member has referred. I have with me a list of the battle ships of European nations in 1884—ships built and building. I have put these ships into the first and second class. The first class consists of ships of over 8,500 tons displacement, and the second class of ships of 8,500 tons displacement and under, the minimum thickness of armour being in every case not less than seven inches. I omit the purely coast defence vessels. Without going into detail as to the ships of the first and second class, built and building, I may say that, exclusive of the recent shipbuilding programme laid down in September last, we had last year 37 battle ships with a total displacement of 296,430 tons, while France had, built or building at the same time, 35 vessels with a displacement of only 247,848 tons. When we have completed our shipbuilding programme we shall have 46 first and second-class vessels with a total displacement of 361,430 tons, against a condition of things in France almost exactly as that which exists to-day. Italy has nine first and second-class ships, built and building, with a total displacement of 91,603 tons. Germany has 10 first and second-class ships, built and building, with a displacement of 72,557 tons. Russia has nine first and second-class ships, built and building, with a displacement of 70,312 tons, and Austria has seven first and second-class ships, built and building, with a displacement of 37,600 tons. Turkey has five first and second class ships, built and building, with a displacement of 25,810 tons. That is our information with regard to the Navies of the world. Now, it has often been urged that our Navy ought to be equal to the Navies of any two or three other Powers. I am not prepared to agree with that statement; but, as a matter of fact, when we have completed our shipbuilding programme which is now laid down, we shall be stronger than any other two Navies in the world, for we shall then have 46 ships, with a total displacement of 361,430 tons. France and Italy, combined, will have 44 ships, with a total displacement of 339,451 tons; France and Germany will have 45 ships, with a total displacement of 320,405 tons; and France and Russia will have 44 ships, with a total displacement of 318,160 tons. Taking three Fleets combined, France, Italy, and Germany would have 54 ships, with a displacement of 412,008 tons; France, Italy, and Russia would have 53 ships, with a displacement of 409,763 tons; France, Italy, and Turkey would have 49 ships, with a displacement of 365,261 tons; and France, Germany, and Russia would have 54 ships, with a displacement of 390,717 tons. I think that these figures conclusively prove that our Navy to-day is, at any rate, in as good a position as compared with the Navies of Foreign Powers, as it was in 1880, and that it has completely kept up its efficiency. Now, I do not suppose that the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed)

will expect us to reply categorically to all the mass of affairs he brought before us to-day? I can only promise him that when the day comes—and I, equally with himself, hope it will come soon—when he brings his Motion before us, that we shall be prepared to deal with his figures on the Shipbuilding Vote. The hon. Gentleman has criticized, with that severity which generally characterizes his criticism, the Return of ships, built and building, which has been laid on the Table of the House. He told us that the figures every year were exaggerated and untrue—that they were wilfully misleading. [Sir EDWARD J. REED: No, no.] I took the hon. Member's words down at the time, and I am glad that my hon. Friend withdraws them. He used the word misleading at any rate. He said that not one of the costs of ships was accurately stated; and he certainly made the remark that devices had been resorted to in making up the Return in question.

SIR EDWARD J. REED: I beg pardon; I do not wish to be misrepresented. What I said was that the Return had been framed so as to make as good a show of ships as possible.

MR. CAINE: Well, I will not press the matter. The hon. Member has made his remarks solely on his own authority. This Return has been very carefully drawn by the Admiralty; and until the hon. Gentleman sustains the charge which he has made against it, I must ask the Committee to accept it as correct, and to believe that the Department is as well able to make as correct a Return of facts and figures concerning its Office as the hon. Gentleman. The hon. Gentleman has made some observations with regard to the watertight decks of vessels of the *Scout* class. It is true that these vessels have watertight decks. The deck is what it is represented to be, and we do not claim that it is anything else. My hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) spoke at some length about the time taken in shipbuilding, and my hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed) commented rather severely upon the same subject. The latter Gentleman spoke of six or eight years being occupied in building iron-clads in our own yards. It is quite true it takes five or six years to build a first-class iron-clad; but that is considerably less time than that taken by other nations. The average time taken to build a first-class iron-clad in France is seven years and five months; but in England the average time is only five years and three months. My hon. Friend the Member for Burnley also made some severe strictures on the composition of the Board of Admiralty. He asked whether the Board of Admiralty knew anything about the construction of vessels of war; and he asked further who were the advisers of the Board. The hon. Gentleman expressed the opinion that the Board ought to include one of the greatest engineers who could be found in the Kingdom. My own impression is that the hon. Member does not know what the composition of the Board is, or he would know that we enjoy the privilege of having, as one of our Colleagues, one of the greatest engineers in matters connected with shipbuilding—namely, Mr. Rendel. I think that is a conclusive answer to the hostile criticism which was made by my hon. Friend as to the composition of the Board of Admiralty. When these Estimates were last before the Committee the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) raised several points of interest and importance. The right hon. Gentleman was anxious on the torpedo question, and he recommended an increase in the number of officers and gunners, and also an increase of the training facilities. Last Friday the Treasury sanctioned an increase in the aggregate authorized number of gunners and boatswains on the active list of from 680 to 728. This, I may inform my right hon Friend, is entirely to meet the increasing demands of the torpedo service. Then, we have recently increased the facility for training and instruction. We have, within the last few months, had fitted as additional torpedo schools, the *Defiance* at Plymouth and the *Donegal* at Portsmouth. A new torpedo range has been fitted at Malta, and we have decided to proceed with the fitting of a thoroughly complete torpedo range at Portsmouth. In this respect, therefore, I think our arrangements are satisfactory. The right hon. Gentleman expressed anxiety about the number of ships ready and the time in which they could be manned. He feared we were short of stokers and artificers, and he asked if we could readily avail our-

selves of our Reserves for the purpose of manning. We have not as many blue-jackets as we could wish considering the large number who are always under instruction in gunnery and in the use of the torpedo. If we are short on an emergency it will be due to the great reduction of the boys which was made by the Administration of my right hon. Friend (Mr. W. H. Smith). We have always looked to the Merchant Service and to private trade for our reserve of stokers and artificers, and recent experience has fully justified our confidence. Nothing can be more satisfactory than the manner in which the ships have been got ready in the last few weeks. At no time has the Admiralty been better off for stokers. The arrangements for engine-room artificers are quite satisfactory. Some other classes of artificers, not so important as engine-room artificers, are rather short; but we should have no difficulty at all in filling up all requirements from private trade, in case of emergency. Our London recruiting station is besieged by men of this class seeking employment. It is an interesting fact that large numbers of these men are in employment, but seem anxious to offer their services to Her Majesty. My right hon. Friend stated, in the course of his speech a few nights ago, that we could not man the first reserve of ships at Portsmouth in three weeks. We could have 7,000 or 8,000 men ready for sea in a week without calling out the Naval Reserve. With the Naval Reserve we could depend upon 20,000. A Return, recently published, shows the number of men in the Reserve. It is estimated that in the coasting trade and at home there are in the first class 7,829, and in the second class 7,593, or a total in the two classes of 15,422. Of these, 2,496 are on long and short voyages; but nearly 1,200 are expected home within the next two months. The right hon. Gentleman asks how many completed ships are ready, and in how many days these ships could be manned. We have ready to-day 10 iron-clads—the *Devastation*, *Ajax*, *Thunderer*, *Hotspur*, *Rupert*, *Orion*, *Iron Duke*, *Colossus*, *Black Prince*, and *Conqueror*—eight ships for coast defence, 20 corvettes and cruisers, and 27 gunboats; and I am informed officially that they could be manned, in an emergency, under 10 days. My right hon. Friend also complained of the insufficient provision for repairs. We have no efficient iron-clad ship needing repair. It has always been the policy of the present Board to keep the Iron-clad Fleet in a complete state of repair. My right hon. Friend also asked for information on the subject of the increased cost per ton. He said the average cost per ton of ships was estimated in 1883-4 at £33 6*s.* 9*d.*, in 1884-5 at £34 8*s.* 9*d.*, and in 1885-6 at £35 5*s.* 9*d.* In 1884 we were just beginning some new ships. Some of the *Admirals* were begun in the previous year, and we were working on the old Estimates for the *Edinburgh* and *Colossus;* but since that time we have been obliged to increase the Estimates for all the others. The tendency of modern ships of war is to increased cost per ton, and not towards decrease. The programme of new shipbuilding was stated by my right hon. Friend to be less than was promised for the year. I can only assure the Committee that we intend to spend all the money promised. It was always intended to build not less than 28,000 tons in Dockyards and by contract, and that amount will be built. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster also asked for an explanation of the changes made in propelling machinery of the *Benbow*, *Howe*, *Rodney*, and *Camperdown*, which in 1884-5 were shown as of 7,500 indicated horse power, but which are now shown as 9,500 horse power, and of the *Hero*, which was formerly shown as of 4,500 horse power, and now shown as of 6,000 horse power. The changes were made in consequence of a decision to apply forced draught with the very desirable result of an additional knot in speed. The engines, in fact, are better than promised. There has been a Question asked to-night on the subject of the recommendations of the Committee on Shipbuilding, and I think my right hon. Friend asked the same question in his speech some time ago. A Paper will presently be laid before the House showing what is proposed to be done, and therefore I will not say more on that point at present. I now come to the observations made by the right hon. Gentleman as to the alleged non-fulfilment of the shipbuilding programme of 1884-5, and it seems to me that they call for a very careful reply. He has spoken of the figures of the Estimates of last year as absolutely

fallacious. That is a very serious charge. The subject has also been referred to by the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed), and the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands). Well, Sir, in the Estimates for the year 1884-5, the tonnage (weight of hull) proposed to be built in the Dockyards was—armoured, 10,500; protected, 2,667; unarmoured, 2,888; or a total of 16,055. The tonnage actually built, as shown in the Estimates for 1885-6, was—armoured, 10,745, a gain on the Estimate of 245; protected, 2,160, showing a loss of 507; unarmoured, 3,261, showing a gain of 373; making a total of 16,166, and showing a net gain in the Dockyards of 111 tons. The tonnage estimated to be built by contract in 1884-5 was — armoured, 2,114; unarmoured, 2,510; or a total of 4,624. The tonnage actually built was—armoured, 2,080, showing a loss of 34; unarmoured, 2,164, a loss of 346; making a total of 4,244. There was thus a net loss by contract of 380 tons. From these figures it appears that, taking Dockyard and contract work together, we built—armoured tonnage, 12,825 tons, as against 12,614 promised, or a gain of 211 tons; protected tonnage, 2,160 tons, as against 2,667 promised, or a loss of 507 tons; unarmoured tonnage, 5,425 tons, as against 5,398 promised, or a gain of 27 tons. On the whole shipbuilding programme of the year there was thus a net loss of 269 tons. I think that is as near an approximate result of the promise as anyone could reasonably expect. To take first the armoured ships. Having built 211 tons more than was promised in the past year, how comes it that, as stated by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, the armoured ships were not advanced towards completion to the extent anticipated in the Estimates—in fact, that they fell short of such advancement by no less than 1,739 tons? The explanation lies in the use of the word ton in connection with shipbuilding. It seems to fall to the lot of the Representatives of the Admiralty to explain year after year what is meant by the use of the word ton. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster has criticized this use of the word ton, and has repeated year after year that this ton is not a ton at all—we are, in fact, deceiving ourselves. We have only continued the use of a term and method of calculation which was in use at the Admiralty during the whole time the right hon. Gentleman was First Lord. The fact is that, as applied to a ship during its construction, the word ton loses its original meaning as a measure of weight, and becomes a measure of progress. At starting the actual weight of the hull is calculated in tons. Thus, if the hull weighs 6,000 tons, and the cost of construction as shown in the Estimates is £400,000, as soon as half this money has been spent, it would be said, and so stated in the Estimates, that half the tons weight of the hull—that is, 3,000 tons—had been constructed. But it is immaterial for this purpose whether or not the half of the hull that has been constructed actually weighs 3,000 tons. Half the money that the ship is to cost has been expended, and it is said, therefore, that half the work is done. This is absolutely true if the ship will be completed by the expenditure of the remaining half of the money; but if at this stage it is found that, for one reason or another—such as changes introduced into the original design of the ship, increased cost of materials, or even through a miscalculation of the cost at the beginning—the remaining £200,000 will not suffice to complete the ship, perhaps a further sum of, say, £100,000 will be required; then, inasmuch as half the total cost of the ship has not been expended, we can no longer say that half the tonnage, or 3,000 tons, has been built. We must put the ship back, so to speak; our calculation will have to be revised; and as only £200,000 out of £500,000 has been spent, we must now admit that only two-fifths of the tonnage, or 2,400 tons out of the 6,000, has been constructed. Here, the right hon. Gentleman will say, is a loss of 600 tons. But this is not so. There has really not been any loss at all. The money provided in the Estimates has been spent, and the corresponding amount of work has been done. But the work necessary to complete the work has turned out to be greater than was anticipated, and hence the ship is not so far advanced towards completion, for the money spent upon her, as she would have been had nothing occurred to interfere with the original design and Estimate. Objection has been taken to the use of the word ton. But what term would serve us any better to indicate the rate of a ship's progress? The French speak of hundredths in lieu of

tons, and find themselves in the same difficulty as we do. The fact is, it does not matter what term you make use of, as long as you take care to keep in view the purpose for which it is employed, and the sense in which you use it. Comparing the figures given in the Estimates in 1884-5 with those for 1885-6, there appears, as has been stated, to be a loss of armoured tonnage amounting to 1,739 tons. The ships in which this so-called loss has occurred are chiefly the *Impérieuse*, with a loss of 975 tons, and the *Warspite*, with a loss of 572 tons. The total cost of the *Impérieuse* has been increased by £52,900, aud the total cost of the *Warspite* has been increased by £25,000. The circumstances which have caused this apparent loss are—firstly and chiefly, the changes involved in the adoption of a modified type of boilers. It was intended, in the first instance, to fit them with a locomotive type of boiler, and then it was decided after the trial of the *Polyphemus* to change the type. The *Impérieuse*, at the time of making the alteration, was much farther advanced than the *Warspite*. Secondly, alterations consequent upon the adoption of Vavasseur mountings for barbette guns, and those due to changes in Vavasseur broadside carriage. Thirdly, changes in the hold, to provide the stowage of quick-firing gun ammunition. Fourthly, an alteration in the thickness of the wood sheathing; in the breastwork on the spar deck adjacent to the barbettes, and in the position and number of torpedo ports. In the protected ships there has been a real loss of tonnage in the past year. The tonnage promised has fallen short of the amount executed by 507 tons. This loss is accounted for chiefly by the decision to abandon the construction of a ship of the *Mersey* type at Devonport. The apparent loss has been rather in excess of the real loss. It amounts to 590 tons—namely, in the *Mersey*, 41 tons; in the *Severn*, 192 tons; in the *Thames*, 113 tons; in the *New Mersey*, 314 tons; total, 660 tons, less a gain on the *Forth* of 70 tons. The excess is attributable, as in the case of the armoured vessels, to changes in the designs and consequent increase of cost. In the case of the *Mersey*, *Severn*, *Forth*, and *Thames*, alterations were made from the original design, giving 8-inch guns in place of 6-inch on the poop and forecastle, involving special strengthenings of the decks, &c., also substituting teak in place of fir of deck under the broadside guns. In the unarmoured tonnage there has been a real gain in the Dockyards of 373 tons, but an apparent loss of 558 tons. The loss has occurred chiefly on the *Calliope* and *Amphion*, and is due to changes introduced into the designs. In the case of the *Calliope* there was a change of armament involving the building of sponsons for the guns, and in the case of the *Amphion* the original Estimate for armament and sponsons was altered from what was intended. In the unarmoured tonnage to be built by contract there is a real loss of 346 tons. This was caused by the decision not to proceed with the construction of the new torpedo depôt ship *New Hecla*, combined with minor changes. It thus appears that, while on the whole shipbuilding programme of the past year there has been a real loss of only 269 tons, the apparent loss amounts to 3,488 tons. The right hon. Member for Westminster pronounces the figures in the Estimates to be "absolutely fallacious," and accuses the Admiralty of stating that "a certain amount of work will be done which is not done." This condemnation is not justified by the facts, for, as has been shown, the total amount of tonnage executed in the year, taking all the ships together, corresponds closely with the amount promised in the Estimates. It is only the estimate of the state of advancement towards completion of certain ships that is at fault. It is at fault for the simple reason that a loss which has really been accumulating from the commencement of building is now taken account of, and the loss of former years is added to the loss proper to the year. In fact, our accounts all show the loss proper to the year, but do not include the loss in former years. This forecast is made a year in advance, and is liable to disturbance, as has been shown from changes introduced into the design of the ship, increased cost of materials, or other unforeseen circumstances. Alterations in designs are unavoidable incidents whatever Board of Admiralty may be in Office. Armoured ships necessarily take years to build, and it is almost certain that valuable suggestions will be made in that interval to which it is impracticable for the Admiralty to close their eyes. The most that can be done

is to insist that no changes shall be made in the original design, unless it can be shown conclusively that they are of such value as to justify the increased cost, and the delay consequent on their adoption, and such as will give us a better ship in the end. We contend that no such changes have been made except with that object in view. No change of any kind has been made by the Admiralty during the progress of these ships which has not distinctly added to the value of the ships to the full amount of the money expended. Well, Sir, I have endeavoured, as far as possible, to meet the contention of my right hon. Friend, and of other speakers to-night, with regard to the fulfilment of the pledges of the Admiralty as to their shipbuilding programme of last year. My explanation is satisfactory to my own mind, and I hope it will be equally satisfactory to my right hon. Friend the Member for Westminster.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: It is very gratifying to know that the statement which the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Caine) has made, and which I am sure he has made in perfect good faith, is entirely satisfactory to himself. I speak in the presence of a great many Gentlemen who are acquainted with shipbuilding, and I think that if they were informed that so many tons of shipping had been built because a certain sum of money had been spent upon a ship they would express great surprise, and their entire unwillingness to deal with any shipbuilding firm who treated them in that way. The truth is this—that these figures to which I refer are fallacious. I repeat the statement with the full consciousness of the responsibility which I assume in doing so—I say that the figures on page 191 of the Estimates of 1884-5, and on page 197 of the Estimates of 1885-6, are entirely fallacious. They give an impression which is not justified by the facts. They say that so many tons of shipping have been added to the Navy; but the truth is that a certain sum of money has been spent in shipbuilding which has not produced the result that was anticipated when the Estimate was framed. If you turn to page 204 of the Estimates of 1884-5, and page 210 of the Estimates of 1885-6, you see there a statement of the work done, which is more or less trustworthy; but, comparing that statement with the statement in the previous pages of the same Estimates, you will find the differences of which I speak. There are two sets of figures. First of all there is the Estimate of the work to be done in the coming year, and then there is a record of the work done. These figures do not correspond with the statement in the abstract of shipbuilding completed for sea in the later pages of the Estimates. The figures in the later pages are more or less correct; but the figures in the earlier part on which the Admiralty rest are fallacious. They are intended to create an impression in the minds of the public which is not justified by facts. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Caine) says it very often happens that the work upon ships turns out to be greater than was expected. "It does not matter," the hon. Gentleman added, "what term is used, provided the money is spent; changes of boilers, alterations in the armaments, and other considerations, have affected the original Estimate of the cost of the ships." The changes have been made, but they do not produce a larger ship; they do not produce, in many cases, a better ship. The result is that we are paying a great deal more for our ships than we expected, and, at the same time, less shipping is built than we were led to believe would be built. Those were figures based, not on any assumptions of my own, but upon the Returns brought forward by the Admiralty itself, and inserted in page 204 of last year's Estimates, and page 210 of the Estimates of the present year. I assume that those Estimates are correct, as they have always compared much more nearly with the expense accounts of the Admiralty; and I think there is reason to believe they are accurate, or, at any rate, that they may taken as more or less trustworthy. I do not wish to go into this matter at great length; all I desire to do is to point out to the Committee that the subject is one which requires very careful attention and consideration. Let us consider how this House has been dealt with in regard to this matter. On the 2nd of December last the Admiralty announced, in both Houses of Parliament, that they had made provision in the Estimates for building 29,810 tons of shipping in the course of the coming year. In the Esti-

mates that were presented to this House only two months later, they provided, according to the fallacious principle which I contend they have been acting upon, for the building of only 28,000 tons, so that their proposal put forward in February was less by 7½ per cent than the solemn engagement they announced to this House in December. This, I think the Committee will see, was not only a very rapid change, but a very extraordinary and important change; but it was still more serious, because we were exposed to this danger —that even these 28,000 tons of actual shipping would not be built, but that we should have only a proportion of those 28,000 tons built, having reference to what had been the case during the past year, when there was a deficiency of 3,700 tons of shipping out of 20,000 tons. Bearing this in mind, we have, I say, to look forward to a deficiency of at least 5,000 tons on the 28,000 tons that have been promised; and instead of our having 29,800 tons built, in accordance with the engagement made in this House in December last, I will undertake to say that, unless there is a complete change in the system pursued, we shall only have some 23,000 tons completed by this time next year. This being the case, it would be far better for the Government to say definitely one thing or the other. Let them say at once—"We only intend to build 23,000 tons;" so that the House and the country may really know what they are about. In that case, if the country is content or satisfied with such an engagement, I, at least, shall have nothing more to say. But I do object to expectations being held out to us in the Estimates which are not to be realized, but which, having regard to all past experience, fall short of the Estimates put before this House, just as the performance of last year and the year before has fallen short of the Estimates of those years. Turning to another point, I may say that I have made no complaint that improvements are made in the mechanical arrangements of the ships; I have made no complaint that improvements are made in the armaments of those ships; but I do complain of the system under which these improvements are made, and which I believe to be an extravagant and an injurious system; and I say plainly and unhesitatingly that instead of £35 a-ton the cost of our ships is £40 or £45 a-ton under a system which I assert is absolutely fallacious and unsatisfactory. Now, Sir, the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Caine) has spoken of ships which can be put in commission in the space of 10 days. I am not acquainted with all the ships he mentioned, but I am acquainted with the condition of the *Colossus* and the *Conqueror;* and I have no hesitation in saying that those two ships cannot be completed under a period of six weeks or two months from the present time, because the loading gear for their guns has only been recently supplied, and it will take about two months to get it on board the ships. Last year we were informed that the *Conqueror* had been completed; but I object to being told that any ship has been completed until she is ready to hoist her pennant to proceed to sea. What I desire is that the Admiralty should let us know what is our real position with regard to the strength of the Navy. If it is a strong position, well and good, and let them say so; but if our position be weak, let us know that it is so. All we require is that they should make us acquainted with our strength or weakness, whichever it may be. Then again, Sir, my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty (Sir Thomas Brassey) told us on the 17th of March something about our steam pinnaces. He stated that there were 170 steam pinnaces available for torpedo work. But I should like to be informed how many Whitehead torpedoes have been served out to those steam pinnaces? I should also like to be told how many of those steam pinnaces have been fitted for the Whitehead torpedo service; how many have been assigned to the Dockyards for Dockyard service; and how many have been assigned to the harbours for harbour service; and, also, whether there is a single steam pinnace or a single torpedo boat, which has not yet been assigned to the Fleet, which would be available for coast and harbour defence, and whether there is any expectation that even within the next three months, or, I will say, the next six months, there will be a single torpedo boat fitted with Whitehead torpedoes available for the service of our coast and for the protection of our harbours? My own impression is that the deficiency in this respect is so great that there is nothing in the

shape of torpedo boats available for the defence of our harbours and coasts, as they are all required for the service of the Fleet; and, as far as steam pinnaces are concerned, anything that may be fit for torpedo service would, I think, be absorbed entirely by the Fleet. We have been told that there is to be a Return laid upon the Table very shortly by the Admiralty in reference to the recommendations of the Committee on Shipbuilding. Now, one of the most important recommendations of that Committee, and one also which was supported by the Director of Naval Construction in a Paper to which I referred on a recent occasion, was in favour of the more rapid completion of the ships taken in hand, no matter whether those ships were armour-clad or unarmoured ships. The Constructor to the Navy gave three years as the time with which an armoured ship could be completed from the moment she was laid down. I believe that if the Admiralty were to insist on the completion of each ship within a period of three years from the time at which she was first laid down, a very large proportion of the incidental expenses, which the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) and the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed) have complained of, would be saved, and all those discrepancies between money and tonnage, to which the Civil Lord of the Admiralty has referred, would disappear entirely. It ought to be sufficient for the Admiralty to procure the design for a ship, and to require that that ship should be completed, whether in one of Her Majesty's Dockyards or by a contractor, as she was designed. It must be possible for the Admiralty to decide beforehand what the armament of a ship should be, and to insist that that ship, with her armour and armament, and all the mechanical appliances she would require, should be put in hand when she was designed and completed within the time specified. The reason for all the delay that takes place, and the cause of all the consequent extra expense, is this. The Admiralty lay down a ship without having, in the first instance, fully determined what her armament is to be; they then wait for six, or even for 12, months, to make up their minds on these points, in order to get over another year's Estimates, and then they wait for a further year before ordering the mountings of the guns, and for the same reason—namely, to get them into a later year's Estimates. In the meantime, some suggestions are made for improvements, certain inventions and alterations are recommended to the Admiralty, which cause still further delay, and have the effect of enormously increasing the cost of the ship. Now, if they would have the ship completed off-hand, they would be able to start afresh with another and as they went on with their shipbuilding they would have in what was done some suggestions that would enable them to effect improvements in the next ship they laid down. But they will not adopt this course. The hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed) has referred to the *Edinburgh*, which has been put on one side and taken in hand two or three times in the course of its construction; and it should be remembered that during all the time our ships are being thus dealt with the capital employed upon them remains unproductive, as nothing can be done with the vessels. I should like to know whether the new ships which are being built by contract — and we have not yet been told what contracts have been accepted—are to be built out of hand? The suggestion has been made that if they are to be built by contract, it would be to the interest of the contractors to go on and finish the ships as rapidly as possible. I am led to believe that the time given to the contractors for the completion of the ships intrusted to them is much longer than the contractors themselves desire to have, and that it would be more to their interest and advantage that the ships they have to build should be completed in less time than that which is specified in the contracts. I know that there are contractors who would be glad to build iron-clads and complete them in three years, or less than three years, once for all.

MR. GLADSTONE: The right hon. Gentleman assumes that the long terms given to the contractors have been introduced since he was at the Admiralty.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I know that the system was very much complained of at the time I was at the Admiralty; but I had not the responsibility of building any iron-clads by contract while I was there, or I should have proposed that they should have been completed

in shorter periods, as I am well aware of the loss sustained by the country owing to the present system, which has frequently been insisted on as an evil by right hon. and hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House; and I have learnt to follow their good example by calling the attention of this House and of the country to it. I wish, therefore, to know from the hon. Gentleman who will reply on behalf of the Government what the time allotted to the contractors for the construction of the new ships really is; whether it is more than the Director of Naval Construction has considered to be necessary for the building of such ships; and whether it is more than the Committee on Repairs and Building Contracts would themselves sanction? The hon. Gentleman has referred to the fact that all the iron-clads, or at any rate all the efficient iron-clads, are in good repair. I am sure that that statement was regarded by the Committee as an exceedingly gratifying one, especially after the very unpleasant series of statements made to us last week, when we were told that the *Neptune* could not steam 10 knots an hour; that the Channel Squadron was suffering from the prevalence of the boiler disease, as it has been termed; and that the *Monarch* had broken down altogether in the Mediterranean, and was burning blue lights and sending up rockets for help within a short distance from Malta, after having been cast off by a tug which had burnt out her coal. I do not believe that our iron-clads are in such perfect order as has been made out, as far as their boilers are concerned. If they were, I do not think there would be any hesitation in giving a Return showing the condition of the boilers, such as has been given in past years, but which is refused now. If the boilers were in good order, the Admiralty would no doubt be prepared to say they are in good order in regard to each particular ship. Such a Return has been given in times past, and there is a good deal that I should like to know at the present moment about the condition of the boilers. Here is a statement which is a commentary on the very satisfactory state of mind in which the Admiralty would appear to exist with regard to the condition of the boilers. I would also ask is it a fact that there is at least one other iron-clad now in the Mediterranean that can hardly crawl along in consequence of the state of her boilers; is it the fact, furthermore, that the *Euryalus*, which is not an iron-clad, but which is the flagship on the East India Station, had to be tugged up the Red Sea and through the Mediterranean to Malta, for the purpose of being docked, because her boilers had broken down; and, if so, what is about to be done? I should also like to know what is proposed to be done, or what has been done, in regard to cruisers, now that we have occasion for employing them? Are the *Inconstant*, the *Shah*, and the *Boadicea* to be repaired and made efficient; and, if not, why not? What is to be done with regard to those and other vessels that are required as cruisers under present circumstances? If, as we find has been the case, Her Majesty's Government have deemed it necessary to hire large passenger steam ships from private trading Companies vessels that are to be converted into cruisers, how is it that these fast and powerful war ships have not been made available? Turning, now, to another matter, I desire to refer to what I consider the very satisfactory assurance that has been given to the Committee with regard to the increased arrangements for torpedo instruction. I am very glad to find that the Admiralty has taken this matter into serious and practical consideration. But in regard to the number of blue-jackets, I have on a previous occasion expressed doubts as to whether there was a sufficient supply; but I was told that the reduction in the number of boys which I had effected in 1878-9 had had an influence on the number of blue-jackets at the present time. This, no doubt, may be true; but I would remind the Committee that the present Board of Admiralty reduced the number of boys by 800 more than the reduction I effected; so that the conclusion at which they must have arrived in 1880 was, doubtless, that there was a surplus of blue-jackets which it was desirable to decrease. As far as my own action is concerned, I am not at all ashamed to say that I effected every economy I possibly could in the Service, having, of course, due regard to the maintenance of its efficiency; but the present Board of Admiralty has gone far beyond what I did, for they have reduced the number

both of the boys and of the Marines, and I am very much afraid that we shall want both the boys and the Marines who have been so reduced. I am glad to see that the number of boys is to be increased; but the result will hardly compensate for the reduction already effected, because those 800 boys to whom I have just referred would now have been valuable constituents of our naval strength had they been retained for the service of the country. There is one question I should like to ask my hon. Friend opposite; and that is whether he will undertake that the 28,000 tons the Admiralty has promised shall really be built in the course of the present year? If the Admiralty will do this they will accomplish a good deal towards the necessary increase of the strength of the Navy, and will have done a good deal also towards satisfying the expectations of the country. Nevertheless, I am still at a loss to understand why Her Majesty's Government should have reduced their original proposal; and I leave it for this House to say whether it is satisfied with a diminution of 7½ per cent in February of that which was promised by the Admiralty in the preceding December.

MR. NORWOOD said, it had not been his intention to have intervened in this discussion; but in consequence of the course it had taken he felt it his duty to offer a few observations. He thought that in discussing a question of this kind the Committee ought to divest their minds of anything like Party bias. He had served on the Admiralty Committee on Shipbuilding, to which so much reference had been made in the course of the debate; and having had the advantage, or the disadvantage, of being present at very many discussions on Navy Estimates, he confessed that it seemed to him to be difficult for any one Administration to point the finger of scorn at the other, and to claim that a particular Board of Admiralty had been more effective in its naval administration than another. He thought that whatever might be the individual views of hon. Members with regard to the present state of naval affairs, it was not fair or right to attempt to shift the responsibility from one side to the other. It had been said on the present occasion, as had been stated on many previous occasions, that the condition of naval affairs was ripe for discussion in that House; and he had often heard hon. and gallant Gentlemen on both sides of the House, as he had that evening heard his hon. Friend the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, institute comparisons between the Navy of this country and the Navies of other countries, especially as to the amount of money expended by this country and by France. To his mind they ought to look upon the naval expenditure of this country as the amount of insurance paid for the vast amount of shipping property it possessed, and the enormous trade it carried on every sea. He regarded the amount of their expenditure in this respect as too small, and considered all Boards of Admiralty equally blameable for the result. If he had regard to the Returns made of the value of our imports and exports, what did he find? He found that for the year 1883 the combined amount of those imports and exports was stated at £732,000,000. Taking the value of their shipping at £10 per ton, on a total tonnage of 7,026,062, he found that it reached the sum of £70,260,620, the two items together making a gross total of £802,260,620. The sum of £11,500,000, put down in the Navy Estimates, amounted only to an insurance of 1½ per cent on that amount; and in arriving at that result he entirely put out of calculation the all-important considerations connected with the defence of their property on land, and the frightful state of things that would result in this country should it at any time find its first line of defence seriously imperilled. He, therefore, thought it false economy on the part of Her Majesty's Government to limit their naval expenditure to a sum varying from £11,000,000 to £12,000,000 per annum, when there were such vast interests to be protected. He believed that there was much room for improvement in their naval administration, and that they would never get a satisfactory return for their naval expenditure until they had a reform in the constitution of the Board of Admiralty. He was satisfied that the administration of that Board was not based on sound commercial principles; and although he did not deem it his duty on the present occasion to point out where he thought a reform ought to take place, he had no hesitation in saying that it would be impossible for any private shipowever, however wealthy he

might be, to conduct his business on the basis adopted by the Board of Admiralty and to keep himself out of the Court of Bankruptcy. Two points arising out of the recommendations of the Admiralty Committee had been dwelt upon by several hon. Members who had taken part in the debate, and especial reference had been made to the constant delay which took place in the construction of the ships laid down for the service of the country. Under the present system they commenced the construction of a large vessel, and after a certain amount of work had been done upon it there was a stoppage. After a long interval the work of construction was recommenced, only to be again broken off, and in that way a vessel that ought to have been constructed in three years was not completed until after a lapse of seven or eight years; whereas, had the work been regularly and systematically proceeded with, the ship might easily have been put afloat in three. That he regarded as a most unsatisfactory state of things, because not only did it involve a loss of interest on the outlay, but it also prevented the addition to their Fleet of a powerful vessel, which it was very desirable to have. As had been pointed out by his hon. Friend below him, there were at the present time from £6,000,000 to £6,500,000 locked up in vessels that remained in an unfinished condition in their Dockyards. A merchant shipowner did not proceed in that way. When he had determined on the construction of a new ship, he gave his attention not only to the form and dimensions of the vessel, but to every detail of its construction. When he had made his contract, he very rarely, if he were a wise and able man, deviated from the course agreed upon; and the result was that he obtained the vessel he wanted at the minimum expenditure of time and money. But in the Royal Navy the system was the very reverse of that. The sanction of Parliament was asked and obtained for a new ship, and after the construction of that vessel had been carried to a certain point alterations were suggested, and she was in some respects, almost entirely reconstructed. A new armament was probably recommended, and that required that the vessel should be specially adapted to the reception of that armament. The result was that, as a matter of course, the cost of construction very considerably exceeded the amount of the original Estimate for which the Vote of the House had been taken. There was also another serious matter, to which he would here refer, in connection with the mode in which the naval affairs of the country were managed. He referred to the great mismanagement that was evidenced with regard to the construction of the ordnance with which the ships were mounted. The evidence taken by the Committee showed that a great portion of the delay in the completion of their ships arose from the frequent fact that, when a vessel was constructed, the ordnance with which she was intended to be armed was not prepared. The Admiralty had been in the hands of the War Department for a long time. The Committee which had been referred to recommended that the Admiralty should be free to purchase their guns wherever they could be best and most easily obtained. It was, however, the practice that Woolwich, and to a small extent Elswick, should furnish the guns for the Navy; but he said, if they could be bought more readily and of a satisfactory kind from private firms, he was at a loss to see why they should not be so obtained. He was rejoiced to find that public attention was being directed to this most important question of the Navy. The Committee would be aware that by far the larger portion of the grain consumed in this country was imported from beyond the seas, and that, therefore, the very means of subsistence of their people depended on the Navy being strong and thoroughly able to protect their Mercantile Marine. He trusted that the foreign political difficulties they were now passing through, and which he hoped would soon disappear, would indelibly fix the mind of the House and the country upon the folly and absurdity of allowing the Navy to sink so much below the requirements of the country as it had done. He could not think it was creditable or proper that the country should resort so soon to the Mercantile Marine for assistance as was now the case. He could have understood that, after a severe struggle with a great Naval Power the Admiralty would have to apply to the Mercantile Marine for assistance; but at the outset of a contest the country

ought to have a sufficiency of properly equipped men-of-war at its disposal. The ships of the Mercantile Marine were useful for national purposes, such as despatch vessels and transports; but they were egg-shells, so to speak, as compared with ships of the Navy, and it was a sign of weakness to have recourse to them now as fighting ships. It was impossible to imagine a more complete confession that the Admiralty were unable of their own resources to place a proper Fleet on the seas, in view of a possible war with a single Power, than the recourse they had already had to the Mercantile Marine for the purpose of strengthening the Navy.

SIR JOHN HAY said, that when the Navy Estimates were introduced, the sum asked for was criticized as not fulfilling the promises made by the Admiralty in December; but since then an entire change of policy had taken place, and they had seen, as the hon. Member for Hull (Mr. Norwood) had just pointed out, the Admiralty going into the market to obtain by hire or purchase a number of merchant vessels to perform the duty of frigates which the country did not at present possess. He did not object to that; it was absolutely necessary that they should have them, and he had pointed out, more than 18 years ago in that House, that it would be necessary, under certain conditions, to arm a requisite number of ships of the Merchant Service. Further, a proposal was made at that time to the War Office that 500 guns and fittings should be prepared for the purpose of arming those vessels when it became necessary to acquire them; but those guns had not been prepared. The change of policy on the part of the Admiralty was even greater than this, inasmuch as he gathered from the ordinary sources of public information that the Admiralty had been endeavouring to purchase the iron-clads of other nations. The *Esmeralda* was now in the possession of Chili; when she left this country he believed that she might have been acquired at cost price; but now that she was wanted he had no doubt that the Chilian Government would not see its way to selling her. Therefore, it was with great difficulty that they could now acquire ships in different parts of the world, especially as their price was greatly enhanced. They would, no doubt, hear more about those vessels; but, in the meantime, they had the fact that the country was short of ships, and, in spite of statements to the contrary, he confessed that he doubted if there were as many ships available for the Public Service as it was supposed there were. He would now call attention to the number of ships which they at present possessed, and to their position in respect of seaworthiness and trustworthiness for the Public Service. He thought it was fortunate for the country that there should be a scare of the kind which had directed the attention of Parliament to the defenceless condition of the country. The hon. Gentleman the Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Caine) had thought it right to state to the Committee the number of armour-clads which he conceived to be available for the Public Service, and he had compared them with the ships of the French Navy. He should take the opportunity of showing that the optimist views of the hon. Gentleman were not those he would hold if the figures he was about to give to the Committee could be proved to be correct. It was absurd to talk of ships as being efficient that could not carry a sufficient supply of coal, and could not steam 14 knots an hour. He would, therefore, give the speed of the ships of Great Britain. Great Britain had ready of first-class iron-clads, with a speed of 14 knots, the *Inflexible*, the *Dreadnought*, the *Thunderer*, the *Devastation*, and the *Neptune*, or five in number. The French had three—namely, the *Amiral Duperré*, *Dévastation*, and *Redoubtable*. England had ready nine second-class iron-clads—namely, the *Téméraire*, *Nelson*, *Alexandra*, *Sultan*, *Iron Duke*, *Triumph*, *Invincible*, *Hercules*, and *Monarch*. The French had also nine of the same class of ships—the *Bayard*, *Turenne*, *Colbert*, *Trident*, *Richelieu*, *Friedland*, *Suffren*, *Marengo*, and *Océan*. England had 14 other ships that were not capable of going 14 knots, and France 12; but they were not worth considering in the event of war. But we were fitting at this moment seven —namely, the *Conqueror*, the *Colossus*, the *Edinburgh*, the *Collingwood*, the *Impérieuse*, the *Warspite*, and the *Rodney*; while France had eight—namely, the *Tonnant*, *Terrible*, *Amiral Baudin*, *Foudroyant*, *Caïman*, *Indomptable*, *Duguesclin*, and *Vauban*. Then we were building six—namely, the *Howe*, the *Benbow*, the

Camperdown, the *Anson*, the *Hero*, and the *New Hero;* while the French were building 10—namely, the *Formidable*, *Neptune*, *Hoche*, *Requin*, *Magenta*, *Marceau*, *Charles Martel*, *Brennus*, *Guerrière*, and *Regnier*. Those ships which were being built by France were capable of steaming 14 knots an hour, or were assumed to do so; so that, when those ships were completed, Great Britain would have 27 iron-clads capable of going 14 knots an hour, and France would have 30. Then, as to obsolete ships, England had 10 and France had 12, to which he had alluded; but if, as it was stated, Great Britain must have twice as many iron-clads as France the Admiralty would have to build 33. It might be said that it was absurd to ask for so many ships; but he did not think so. If they referred to *The Three Panics* published by Mr. Cobden, it would be found that between the years 1848-50 the French Navy had half as many war vessels as the English. In 1850 the French had 56 line-of-battle ships, and the English had 112. Everyone knew that iron-clads now represented the line-of-battle ships of those days; and if it was intended that they should have supremacy at sea it was necessary that 33 iron-clads should be added to the Navy. But that was still more necessary in these days than it was formerly, because then France and Spain were the only two other Powers which had Navies, and the Fleet of France and Spain together was not quite equal to the Navy of Great Britain. In former days also England took possession of the Navies of smaller countries to prevent them having ships in war time, as in the case of Denmark in 1801 and 1807, and the Russian Fleet held in our ports in 1808. At that time they were supreme at sea, but they were not so now, France having 30 iron-clads as against the 27 which Great Britain possessed. At that moment, from the East of the Cape of Good Hope to Cape Horn France had seven iron-clads; five in Chinese waters, one in Oceania, and one at Otaheite. Russia had four, one of which, the *Vladimir Monomach*, was a very formidable vessel; while Chili had four very powerful iron-clads. To protect Australia, India, and the West of Canada, they had only four iron-clads. If a combination took place between any of those countries, what would become of our enormous carrying trade in the Pacific, lying, as it would be, exposed to the ravages of a superior force? The hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott), on a former occasion, had alluded to the defenceless position of the harbours of the Colonies. He was told that if demands were made by this country the great Colonies would build 11 iron-clads, and that India would contribute two more without any strain at all upon the resources of this country, and that arrangements could easily be made by which the ships would be under a British Admiral. In that case, they would have a sufficient force to protect their Dependencies. The Navy of India had been put an end to entirely by this country, and they had promised in doing so to provide a sufficient Marine for India. He did not doubt that if the Indian Government were to arrange with the English Government they would soon place three or four iron-clads on the seas under the orders of a British Admiral for the protection of their coasts. But nothing had been done since the time he was referring to. He knew that New South Wales, New Zealand, and Canada were willing to assist in providing ships, and that the smaller Colonies were also willing to join with them. If that were so, was it not worth while to enter into an arrangement with them?—because that arrangement alone would reduce the number of additional iron-clads to be built by the Home Government from 33 to 20. If 20 of those vessels were added to the Navy, and 13 of them employed on the Indian and Colonial Stations, he had no doubt that they might then rest at ease, for there then would be a sufficient Navy for the protection of their shores. In the event of a war with Russia that would be of the greatest possible advantage in maintaining their great lines of communication. At that moment he believed that the four great Russian iron-clads in Vladivostock would be able to inflict an enormous amount of damage on our commerce and trade on the West Coast of America, Hong Kong, Singapore, Australia, and India, which it would take many years to repair. He would like to give the Committee an example of the way in which efficient preparation obviated war. In 1789, when a question arose with regard to the possession of Vancouver's Island, they had 26 sail of the line commissioned in the Channel, and in a few

months 28 were added; and it was owing to that addition to their strength that the French and Spanish withdrew their claims without firing a shot, and they had been able to hold the Island without having to re-acquire it. That was effected owing to the excellent arrangements made by Admiral Earl Howe as First Lord of the Admiralty, and by Admiral Sir Charles Middleton as Head of the Navy Board. That was the result of being prepared; whereas, had they been unprepared, the result would have been the infliction of a great amount of injury on property and loss of life. He agreed with the hon. Member for Hull (Mr. Norwood) that some change was required at the Admiralty. He did not think that the system of Admiralty government had proved itself to be satisfactory. His right hon. Friend the Member for Westminster knew that on a former occasion he had criticized the arrangements made, especially with regard to the reduction of the number of boys which had been alluded to, and also with regard to the want of energy in pushing forward the construction of iron-clad vessels necessary for the country. There was an impression that, although they had not ships enough, they had only to go to the great shipbuilders, who could turn them out as fast as they were required. But how long did it take to turn out an iron-clad?—how long did it take to finish a man-of-war? He knew that Mr. Samuda had built a powerful iron-clad for Brazil in two years; but how long did it take the Admiralty to build iron-clads? The *Benbow* had been laid down in November, 1882; the constructors were to have finished her in July, 1886, and the Dockyards were to have done with her nine months later — that was to say, she would take nearly five years to finish. If all that time was to be spent upon the *Benbow*, a war might be begun and ended long before the *Benbow* was ready. Although it was true they had enormous resources, unless they availed themselves of them they were no use to them. If the House would insist upon it, he believed that iron-clads like the *Benbow* could be completed within two years. If orders were given he was convinced that something like eight iron-clads could be laid down on the Clyde, and that there and in other parts of the country the whole of the 20 iron-clads he had referred to as being necessary for the protection of the interests of the country could be produced in two years. As it was, the Government did not ask for the money that was necessary, and it was not voted; and accordingly the building of those iron-clads, which might be completed in two years, was spread over five. That was not because the contractors were not ready to push forward the work; they were ready to deliver the ships in two years if Parliament would vote the money. But the money was voted in driblets, in order to make the Estimates appear small; and the result was as he had described, the country being deprived of the security which would be obtained by the possession of those ships. He wished to say a word or two on the subject of guns. The *Inflexible* was one of those ships supposed to be very valuable and efficient. He should not go into the question of plating, which the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed) had touched upon, but would simply say that he agreed with the hon. Gentleman entirely on this subject. He assumed that the *Inflexible* was a valuable and efficient ship. She had been engaged in the action at Alexandria; she had on board four 81-ton guns, one of which was worn out, and that gun had never been changed until now. Strange to say, that gun had never been changed until the present Russian scare. Now it had been changed; but there being no gun available for the *Inflexible* she had received a gun used for experimental purposes as Shoeburyness. Therefore, for three years the *Inflexible* had been going about with one gun so damaged as to be perfectly useless, and of no more account than the wooden guns which the Chinese used to display. With regard to the *Conqueror* and *Colossus*, he was not assured that the guns of either of them were complete. A statement had been made some little time ago in the House which he had heard with some surprise—a statement of one set of guns having done duty for two ships. When he had inquired into the matter it was said, having been appropriated to one ship they had afterwards been appropriated to another, but that having never been handed over to either ship they were put down as possessed by both.

Sir John Hay

MR. W. H. SMITH: The ships were the *Edinburgh* and the *Colossus*.

SIR JOHN HAY said, he was reminded by his right hon. Friend that the ships were the *Edinburgh* and the *Colossus*, and he found that neither of them possessed the guns, though each was supposed to have them, and that was a very good instance of the way in which the public were gammoned. He had thought it right to put this matter before the Government, and he maintained that arrangements of that kind for the arming of ships were really trifling with the House. There were neither the guns, the shot, the shell, the gun carriages, nor anything in the world that was required for those ships. At that moment the Government were making 5-inch guns as fast as they could turn them out for steamers which had been bought; but the carriages were not ready. He saw in his place the hon. Member for Perthshire (Sir Donald Currie), who had done more than anyone, he might say, to give the country efficient cruisers in the present emergency; and the hon. Member himself had been in different parts of the world lately seeing foreign ports and shipping, and he would be surprised to find the scare that had taken place and the number of ships that were being required by the Government as cruisers. The hon. Member would know that the guns were not ready for those vessels, nor the ships themselves indeed, and that at that moment they were engaged at Woolwich Arsenal in manufacturing the necessary ordnance for vessels that were only intended to protect their commerce. The *Shah* and the *Inconstant* were the only two ships they had to protect their commerce, and they were not ready, and would not be ready for some time. Great efforts had been made to get ready the *Mercury*, and with the exception of that they had at the present time no vessels for that purpose. There was a great highway through the Mediterranean and the Suez Canal; there was another great highway round the Cape; a third round Cape Horn; a fourth across the Atlantic to the United States; a fifth from the West Indies, and another from the Baltic; and each of those would require three or four fast frigates in them for the protection of their commerce. They wanted at least 24 fast frigates to protect their commerce properly, and they had only one. An emergency had arisen, or was imminent, and to make up for the deficiency it was found necessary to acquire 15 fast ships from the Merchant Service to do the necessary duty. But, moreover, there were only nine ships for a duty of that kind in course of building—nine when they required 24. The French had nine. The Committee might rest assured that the scare in the country was entirely justified, and that unless they bestirred themselves, and saw that the country did not go back into apathy with regard to the Navy, which had hitherto existed, they might depend upon it that one of these days they would find themselves at war with a great Naval Power, having their coast towns bombarded, and their commerce destroyed. As had been pointed out in *The Revue des deux Mondes* a year or two ago by Admiral Aube, they would see their commerce broken up, and would wonder why their Navy had not been able to protect their shores. If ever they were brought to that position, and were unable to protect their shores and their commerce, it would be because that Parliament had refused to listened to those who, made acquainted with the wants of the Navy, had not been ready to urge upon the Government, and support them in obtaining the ships, the men, and the guns, which were absolutely necessary for their national safety. The Prime Minister would remember there was a debate in that House, raised by the then Member for West Norfolk (Mr. Bentinck) some years ago, in which the right hon. Gentleman himself and the Earl of Beaconsfield, then Mr. Disraeli, sitting where his right hon. Friend (Sir Stafford Northcote) now sat, argued the case with regard to whether a naval officer ought not to be at the head of the Admiralty. At that time the right hon. Gentleman and Mr. Disraeli together combined to deny that that was a good and proper arrangement; and the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, unless he was mistaken, quoting from Lord Brougham, had pointed out what an inefficient First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord St. Vincent, had been. He (Sir John Hay) had at that time moved for a Return on the subject, and it was laid on the Table, and was now in the hands of Members. According

to that Return, he found from 1706 to 1806—that was to say, speaking roughly, from the time of the battle of Cape La Hogue to the time of the battle of Trafalgar, the practice had been to put a naval officer at the head of the Admiralty. He found that for 59 years there was a naval officer at the head of that Department, and for 19 years more the Admiral who had been First Lord had, when war broke out, to take command of the Fleet, and show if his own arrangements were satisfactory. For a portion of that time he was taken from the head of the Admiralty, and charged with the command of the Channel Fleet, and many of those officers had held the post of First Lord of the Admiralty for a long time. There had been Lord Orford, Lord Torrington, Sir John Leake, Lord Dursley, Sir Charles Wager, Lord Anson, Sir Charles Saunders, Lord Hawke, Lord Keppel, Lord Howe, and then had come Lord St. Vincent, to whom the right hon. Gentleman had alluded, and Lord St. Vincent was not the last—Lord Barham was the last. In 1803, when Pitt became Prime Minister, and war broke out with France, it was discovered that Lord St. Vincent, who had been First Lord of the Admiralty, had got bitten with economy, and that the Navy had dwindled into decay; and when Lord Barham became the head of the Department he ordered 40 ships to be built at once, and they were subsequently known as the 40 thieves. He (Sir John Hay) had sailed in them; they were not very good vessels; but they served their purpose. If the hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Thomas Brassey) would turn to Lord Nelson's despatches, he would find that the greatest of Admirals said it was fortunate that a naval officer was at the head of affairs, for he had given him all he wanted to fight with. Lord Nelson had received the means to fight, and he had fought the battle of Trafalgar. Lord Barham retired in 1806, and they had not, since his time, had a Naval Lord at the head of the Admiralty, except William IV., when he was Duke of Clarence, for a few years, and the Duke of Northumberland for one year. But he did not recommend the system of making a naval officer First Lord of the Admiralty, and then, when war broke out, invariably sending him to sea; but he was certainly of opinion that it was advisable to have a Naval First Lord at the head of the Department, and that the process was one by which an efficient Navy could be secured. If they had such an arrangement, the First Lord could either come to the House himself, or, through the Secretary, inform Parliament of what he wanted, and if he did not get what he asked for, he would, of course, resign; an inquiry would then take place, and it would be found whether what he asked for should be granted or not. Since 1806 they had had four ex-Governors General of India and several Secretaries to the Treasury at the head of the Admiralty; but they had never had a naval officer, and the result had been that the Navy had dwindled down and fallen into decay, until at that moment he had been able to point out, without fear of contradiction, that they had neither ships, guns, nor men in sufficient numbers to defend their shores, or to keep the country in the state of defence some believed it to be in.

Sir DONALD CURRIE said, his right hon. and gallant Friend (Sir John Hay) had referred to him, and, therefore, he might perhaps be permitted to say a word or two on this subject; but it would only be a word or two. If he were to say all he could say, it would be to the effect that his experience of the last few weeks, during his absence from this country, had only served to emphasize and justify every word of warning he had formerly addressed to the House and to the country on the state of Her Majesty's Navy. They had, during the recent difference with the French at Madagascar, only one ship at Tamatave, and that one vessel had carried nine guns, eight of which she dared not fire shotted. An attempt had been made to deny that statement, but it had been found that it could not be denied; and he had learned that there were other ships which carried similar guns. But in the present circumstances of the country he would rather not go into particulars, either upon the subject of guns, or with regard to coaling stations, and the necessity of fortifying them. The country had been living in a fool's paradise as to the Navy under the late and the present Governments. We could not have gone to war with France with much hope of a successful issue, as we had not the ships in Eastern waters

fit to compete with her on the sudden outbreak of war. Nor would he ask, with regard to Russia, were they in a position to properly maintain their interests?—for when he was in the Red Sea he was told that there had passed through a Russian armoured vessel of great speed, carrying very powerful guns, and with a large supply of torpedoes, whose captain had been bold enough to say that he was not afraid of any vessel he could meet with on his way for thousands of miles. The French had improvised as naval cruisers one or two merchant vessels to cruise in China waters to help the carrying out of the policy of that country in regard to contraband of war. Had we the guns; the men; the ships; had we the torpedoes necessary for a great war? It was a disgrace to the country that we should be in such a position. An official of the Government had said to him the other day that if they were at war with a strong Naval Power, shipowners might have to put their shipping under a neutral flag. Was such a state of things creditable? The Government were taking up merchant ships to arm them as cruisers in the first line of defence, which clearly proved the Navy was short of cruisers; but they had not the guns to put into them. They had only 64-pounders in those cruisers; and what would they be against a powerfully armed cruiser? A merchant ship so equipped could do nothing against an armoured vessel but run away. He urged what he had said at first—that they had to look most anxiously into the present position of matters. It was not to be dealt with by mere declamation, or statements in regard to actual or apparent tonnage, or anything of that sort; it was both the apparent and the real danger which they had to consider.

Sir MASSEY LOPES congratulated the Committee upon the fact that public attention and public interest were at last awakened as to the state of their national defences. A great deal of alarm and apprehension had been prevalent in the public mind for a considerable time; and he thought he could say, without fear of contradiction, that there was now a unanimous opinion that the naval defences of the country were not in the position in which they ought to be. He did not think the comforting assurances which from time to time had been given by the Board of Admiralty had in any degree tended to allay that apprehension. He had had the honour for some years to be connected with the Board of Admiralty, and in conjunction with his right hon. Friend (Mr. W. H. Smith) it had been his duty to consider the Navy Estimates; and he did not hesitate to say this—that the money that had been voted for the Naval Services had never been sufficient, and had never been adequate to maintain the naval supremacy of this country, or to enable the Navy to perform the manifold duties that devolved upon it. It had been his duty to revise the Estimates, and he could assure the Committee that the task which had devolved upon himself and his Colleagues had been most hard, and difficult, and unsatisfactory. As the Committee very well knew, the Board of Admiralty was controlled by the Treasury; but if anything unfortunate happened to their Navy it would not be the Treasury that would be responsible, but it would be the Board of Admiralty. Now, he thought the subject of the Navy ought at all times to be beyond Party considerations; and it was not his intention to make any charge against the present Board of Admiralty. He admitted, for the sake of argument, that the Board of Admiralty had expended the money voted to the best purpose; but he contended that sufficient money had never been voted to maintain the supremacy of the country—that was to say, in the construction of ships, and, at the same time, for the repairing of ships, and the consequence was that one Board had attended to the construction of ships and neglected repairs, whilst another Board of Admiralty had attended to repairs and neglected the construction of ships, and so alternately. That seemed to him to be a most unsatisfactory state of things. Notwithstanding the costly improvements which had taken place in their guns and ships during the last few years, the money voted during that period had been very much less than the sum voted 25 years ago; and, that being so, the Effective Votes had decreased, whilst the Non-Effective Votes had considerably increased, and the difference between the Effective and Non-Effective Votes in 1860 and the present time was more than the cost of two first-class iron-clads —something like £1,200,000. He would

also mention that he did not think that they had realized this fact—that changes in their modern warfare had been very greatly to the disadvantage of this country. Formerly, they had been very justly proud, both of their Marines and of their blue-jackets, and of their seamanship; but now, though they had not degenerated, to a certain extent they had lost the benefit of all those advantages. Steam had made their coast more vulnerable, and had opened their commerce to greater danger; and, therefore, to that extent also, they were in a worse position than they occupied years ago. He would also mention this point, which had been referred to just now—namely, that the construction of ships in this country could not be improvised. They could improvise an Army, but they could not improvise a Navy; and the consequence was, when an emergency arose, they were obliged to buy ships at an enormous cost—ships which were not suitable for the purpose for which they bought them—and requiring large sums of money to be expended on alterations. Something had been said just now as to the Mercantile Marine, and he agreed with the hon. Member for Perthshire (Sir Donald Currie) in the statement that they were putting too much reliance upon that Service. He did not believe that any of their mercantile steamers would ever be likely to make good improvised armed cruisers. To his mind small iron-clads, which could be built at half the cost and half the trouble, would be more than a match for the best-armed merchantman that was ever commissioned. It was understood that in an emergency the Admiralty had ready certain fittings for merchant steamers to enable them to act as auxiliary cruisers to the Fleet; but that, at the best, could only be looked upon as a makeshift; and he would like to ask the Board of Admiralty whether the understanding as to those fittings had been carried out, and whether, as a matter of fact, there was a single modern gun that could be put on board those steamers at the present moment? He did not believe there was one existing. It was said just now that comparisons were odious; but he (Sir Massey Lopes) did not agree with that. He thought that comparisons were not only necessary, but very often salutary. The hon. Member the Civil Lord (Mr. Caine) had deprecated any comparison between the state of their Navy and the condition of Foreign Navies; but the hon. Member must bear in mind that Foreign Governments knew perfectly well the state of our naval affairs just as well as anyone of ourselves; and, therefore, he really did not think it was undesirable sometimes to bring those matters into consideration. His opinion was that they ought not simply to compare the ships, but they ought also to compare the work that the ships had to do. Now, if the relative duties of the ships of Her Majesty's Navy and of Foreign Navies were compared, it would be found that Foreign Navies were much better circumstanced than ourselves, because our ships had to be scattered all over the world, keeping up our communications with our Colonies, whereas ships of Foreign Powers could be concentrated and brought together at any time into a focus. Then, our Navy had not only to look after our commerce and our Colonies, but our coaling stations; and last, but not least, had to look after our daily bread. Those were matters of vast importance to us, while to other nations they were by no means of the same magnitude. Then, he wished to say a word or two about armaments. The question of artillery was one of the utmost importance to this country. It could not be denied that this country at that moment, so far as their big guns were concerned, was certainly inferior to both Italy and France. That, he thought, would be admitted. They must bear in mind this fact—that they were not only in arrear of guns, but that they were in arrear of plant to make them. Woolwich Arsenal was not adequate to their wants; and it appeared to him to be a great misfortune that Woolwich had a monopoly of this work. More than that, he should like to call the attention of the Board of Admiralty to another point. When they succeeded the late Government in Office, one of the first and chief pledges they gave with reference to the Admiralty was that they said that the last Government had been four or five years employed and occupied in building one ship, and that they intended to initiate a great reform in this respect. They had declared it to be their intention to build an iron-clad in three years. He should like to ask them whether it was true, as had been said by the

hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed), that the whole time the present Government had been in Office they had never turned out a vessel of above 1,500 tons, from the time they succeeded to Office to the present day?

Sir EDWARD J. REED: Begun by themselves.

Sir MASSEY LOPES: Yes. He would say he believed they were wasting a great deal of money in this country upon repairs and refits in their Dockyards. He believed it to be a great mistake, when they had once designed a ship, that they should ever alter it. The best way to get a new design was to finish an old one. He was sure that a great deal of money was lost to this country in that way, and that was one of the reasons why they got ships so much more rapidly and satisfactorily constructed by contract in private yards than they did in Her Majesty's Dockyards. When ships were begun in private yards they were completed as designed. He did not think he need press upon the Committee or the country the necessity of maintaining their naval supremacy. As the hon. Member for Hull (Mr. Norwood) had said, the investment of money upon the Royal Navy was a good insurance. That was perfectly true; and though they might have to pay a high figure, he thought the investment was an excellent one. He thought there was no sum this country would not be prepared to give for the maintenance of their naval supremacy; and he was sure that all classes would protest against parsimony in naval matters which would have the effect of endangering their Navy, and thus imperilling the national interest.

Mr. SUTHERLAND said, he was one of those who had always been disposed to believe that the English Navy was fit for any emergency, and he was not willing to abandon that idea even at the present moment, although he was bound to say, judging from the discussion which had taken place that evening, that there must be something rotten in the state of Denmark with regard to the state of the Navy. He agreed with the right hon. and gallant Admiral (Sir John Hay) that it was anything but a satisfactory thing that they should be compelled to employ merchant vessels as cruisers in their first line of defence. It was often said that the Russians had, at certain points, such as Vladivostock, under their flag, certain armed cruisers which would be able to sweep the sea of all the merchant cruisers that could be hired, and all the merchant vessels under the British Flag. Considering the fact that no less than 10 or 12 years had elapsed since the Admiralty had first promulgated the idea of adopting the vessels in the Mercantile Marine as auxiliaries for the purpose of naval defence, it was almost disgraceful that they were not at that moment possessed of armed cruisers of their own, and that it was only within the last few weeks that the Government had asked for tenders for the construction of vessels of the cruiser class, vessels which, considering that the tenders had not yet been received, would require at least two years to build. He confessed that the apprehensions to which he had given expression had not been diminished by what he had heard that night, in the shape of the ingenuous confession of the hon. Gentleman the Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Caine), as to the manner in which the administration of the Admiralty was carried on in certain respects. He had said the ingenuous confession of the hon. Gentleman, because of all the statements that he ever heard made by a man holding a public Office the statement of the hon. Gentleman was certainly the strangest. The hon. Gentleman had said that it had been customary to measure the capacity of their Fleet by the tonnage, but that owing to alterations made in the designs of ships a ton had now ceased to be a measure of weight or capacity, but had become a measure of progress—that was to say, a measure of the expenditure of the Admiralty over and above the amount estimated to be required. He (Mr. Sutherland) maintained that was a most extraordinary doctrine, and if it stood by itself would be well calculated to cause uneasiness in the mind of any plain and simple business man. He feared, therefore, there was some ground for the statements which were constantly made in the public Press that the public were losing confidence in their Admiralty system. He did not mean to say that the public were losing one whit of confidence in the sailors and officers of their Navy; he was fully persuaded that the public would never have occasion to lose that confidence; but they were losing con-

fidence in the administrative capacity of the Board of Admiralty, constituted as it was at present. When he said that, he trusted that his hon. Friends who were responsible to the House for the work of the Admiralty, and hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite who had formerly represented the Admiralty, would believe that he did not mean, in the slightest degree, to underrate their merit, or the work which they individually performed. Unfortunately, the position of his hon. Friends in the House of Commons, of the Secretary to the Admiralty (Sir Thomas Brassey), and the Civil Lord (Mr. Caine), was this —that they were simply the Parliamentary exponents of the ideas of the permanent officials of the Admiralty, and their position at the Admiralty was that of exponents of the ideas of Parliament to the permanent officials. That alone was the function they were able to perform; indeed, it was the only function which their previous experience and knowledge would admit of their performing. Now, he ventured to think that if the impressions the public were forming on this question were just— if they were founded in verity and in truth—the public would not long be content with the present system. What the public would want to know was, where and who were the brains of the Admiralty; and that was a point, he thought, on which the public would have to search for some considerable time before they made any very striking discovery. He need scarcely say that he did not allude to those gallant officers on the Board of Admiralty, who served a certain number of years, first afloat and then ashore. He heard his hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) make some disparaging reference to the appointment of gallant and distinguished naval officers to the Dockyards and to the Board of Admiralty; but, for his own part, knowing what he did about questions connected with naval affairs, he considered that the fact that the Admiralty obtained, from time to time, the benefit of the experience of eminent officers must be of vast advantage to the Public Service, always, however, assuming that the gentlemen were chosen not only because they had served a certain number of years with the flag, but because they also possessed high administrative qualities. He believed, and his right hon. and gallant Friend opposite (Sir John Hay) would bear him out in his belief, that a gallant officer like Lord Nelson might very likely have made the very worst First Lord of the Admiralty there could be conceived. He maintained, therefore, that on the Board of Admiralty there must be high administrative capacity. There were two great and important Offices in the Board of Admiralty which required to be filled by men of the greatest ability and experience. The first Office was that which had control of the construction of their ships, and, of the two, perhaps that was of the highest importance. The other Office was that which had to do with financial control, an Office which, if it had to be made successful, must be filled by a thorough man of business. A proof of the success of a concern owning commercial vessels was the fact that its vessels were able to pay; in the case of an Admiralty owning not commercial, but war vessels, a proof of success was the maintenance of a thoroughly efficient Fleet at the smallest and fairest possible cost. They had heard that night, and on many previous occasions, sufficient to show that, in matters connected with the cost of the Fleet, the system which was pursued at the present moment by the Admiralty was a most deplorable one. Decidedly and emphatically he maintained that at the Admiralty there was no financial control whatever. Reference had been made to the Report made by the Accountant General of the Navy. He (Mr. Sutherland) had read that Report with care, and had come to the conclusion that the Accountant General merely fulfilled a clerical duty, and nothing beyond that; he did not inspire the business control, but simply recorded facts. Now, in a business like that of the Admiralty they required more than that. Having regard to his own experience, and to the experience of more than one hon. Gentleman beside him connected with merchant shipping, he did not hesitate to say that the Admiralty required to have men, not as clerks, not as Accountant Generals, not as Secretaries, but as officers holding rank as Lords of the Admiralty, though not with seats in Parliament—men who should have between them the control and the burden of the construction and financial management of this great public concern. Nothing else but that would

effect the improvement which he thought the Committee, or, at least, those Members who had spoken during this debate, generally demanded. He remembered very well some slight experience that he had had of Admiralty management in connection with the business with which he was more or less intimately concerned. It was at one time the custom for vessels engaged in the conveyance of Her Majesty's Mails to be placed, as far as their construction and outfit went, under the control of the Admiralty; and the specifications and the elaboration of details had all to be submitted and approved, and not only approved, but from time to time changed and transformed, in order to satisfy the change of mood of the officials in the Admiralty Department. He spoke of a time now 20 years ago; but from what he heard that day he feared that the spirit which governed the inner working of the present system to which he alluded was not very much more business-like, or more advanced, than it was formerly. Well, what was to be the result of this discussion? He should have liked very much the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. W. H. Smith), or some of his hon. Friends above or below the Gangway on the Ministerial side of the House, to have made some practical suggestion as to what steps the Committee should take with regard to this matter. Probably his hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed) intended, upon the occasion when he would be permitted to propose the Motion of which he had given Notice, to show the whole case in its proper light. He (Mr. Sutherland) asserted that when the time came that they were able to grapple with this matter properly, some mode of improvement should be pointed out. He trusted the discussion they had had that night would not be forgotten, and that, as a result of it, Her Majesty's Government would agree—he hoped they would agree willingly; but, if they did not, that they would be forced to agree—to the appointment either of a Royal Commission or Committee of the House to inquire into the working of the Admiralty in order to effect such improvements as might be necessary. He was sure that both political Parties would unite in doing whatever was necessary, in this or in any other way, in order to sustain the glory of the British Navy.

MR. PULESTON ventured to say that the oldest Member of the House had never heard so remarkable a debate as they had had that night; without a single exception, everyone connected with the administration of the Admiralty had adopted the same tone and the same spirit. Not the least remarkable of all the circumstances connected with the debate had been the conversion of his hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands). They knew that last year the hon. Gentleman had nothing to say in the way of criticism of the remarks a noble Earl (the Earl of Northbrook) made in "another place" upon naval affairs, remarks which were very severely commented upon at the time. He (Mr. Puleston) was happy to find that the hon. Member for Burnley, and other hon. Members, who last Session were not prepared to say they ought to spend any more money on the Navy, were now disposed to agree to further expenditure for the purpose of increasing their naval strength. Last year the hon. Member (Mr. Rylands), like others of the school of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth), thought that they ought to spend less than they did on the Navy. It was quite true, however, that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Rylands) had veiled his remarks that night by saying that he would not grudge the expenditure of millions, provided that the money was spent in the right way; and he went so far as to fully agree with the late Mr. Cobden, who said that they should spend, if necessary, £100,000,000 on the Navy. He (Mr. Puleston) did not think that hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House, even those, like himself, who had been accused, because they represented Dockyard constituencies, of holding rather extravagant views on the question of the Navy—he did not think that any of them, even in their wildest dreams, had ever gone so far as to predict the necessity for so lavish an expenditure as the hon. Gentleman the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) had said might be necessary. He regretted, however, that the hon. Gentleman still held the opinion that Her Majesty's Dockyards should be practically abolished. The hon. Gentleman told the Committee that there were £7,000,000 of capital

now standing in useless ships; but how many millions would there be useless in the ship and Dockyard property and plant supposing the Dockyards were to be abolished? Then the hon. Gentleman illustrated, from his standpoint, the expensive character of the Dockyards by saying that there was a loss upon Dockyard work of some 20 per cent owing to changes of plant; but that was not the fault of the Dockyards. He (Mr. Puleston) must insist here that night, as he had insisted on previous occasions, that anyone giving a ship of war, or any other ship, to be built by contract, would give out the specifications, and stipulate that the work must be completed within a certain time. So would the authorities of the Dockyards, if they were allowed to do so. The hon. Member for Burnley had answered his own argument to a very great extent. The fault did not lay in the administration of the Dockyards proper, but in the administration in Whitehall. Every string was pulled from Whitehall; and, therefore, if a large ship was commenced, which ought to be built in two or three years, and the plans were changed several times, and the ship occupied twice the number of years to build, and cost twice the amount of money, the fault was clearly not that of the Dockyard authorities, but of those who controlled the construction. He could not but strongly impress upon the Committee once more the utter fallacy of arguing from the standpoint of the abolition of all the Royal Dockyards. His hon. Friend (Mr. Rylands) had referred to Mr. Scott Russell as a great shipbuilder. During the war with Russia in the Crimea two important ships, the *Gibraltar* and the *Rover*, were given to Mr. Scott Russell to build; but before they were finished advantage was taken of the emergency by the men to strike, and the builder had to appeal to the Admiralty for assistance, and assistance was sent to him from Deptford and elsewhere. Mr. Scott Russell completed his contract, and the ships were taken to Woolwich and Chatham to be fitted out. A similar contingency might occur again; what had once happened might happen again. Such a state of things as occurred in the yard of Mr. Scott Russell would not occur in Her Majesty's Dockyards. All the men who were employed in the Royal Dockyards felt their position was perfectly secure; and if they worked to-day for lower wages, it was because they felt they received compensation in the shape of the pensions which would come to them after a certain length of service. That argument in itself ought to be conclusive in favour of maintaining the Dockyards, not merely for the repair of ships, but at their utmost capacity. He was sure that if his hon. Friend (Mr. Rylands), and those who thought with him, had a large capital invested, such as the Government had, in the Royal Dockyards, it would not be long before they would have to look in the face the contingency of the Bankruptcy Court if they allowed their capital to stand idle. He thought it a fortunate thing for the country that this change of feeling had come over the House of Commons; and he trusted they would hear more in favour of increasing the utility of the Dockyards rather than the disestablishment of them. As the Committee was aware, his hon. Friend (Mr. Rylands) referred to another matter which had often been referred to during the last few years; and he (Mr. Puleston) was glad it was now coming, for the first time, from the Ministerial side of the House. This was not a Party question; and he was glad that, at all events, that night there had been no question of Party involved in discussion, because, as he had said before, there had been only one universal chorus in the one direction. A very remarkable speech had been delivered by the hon. Member for Perthshire (Sir Donald Currie), who had given them the benefit of his experience during three or four months of recent travelling. The hon. Gentleman had said that what he knew and could tell the Committee was actually too painful for him to repeat. He had, however, told them how eight or nine guns of one ship dared not be fired, and he was afraid the same thing might be said of the guns of other vessels. Hon. Gentlemen like the hon. Member for Hull (Mr. Norwood) knew what they were talking about when they spoke of converting merchant vessels into cruisers, and the impracticability of converting such vessels into a portion of their first line of defence. So far as the defences of the country were concerned, so far as the efficiency of the Navy was concerned, he (Mr. Puleston) thought something would be done by the force

of public opinion which had been so thoroughly represented on both sides of the Committee that night. In his opinion, it would be an utterly hopeless task for a Committee of Inquiry or a Royal Commission to reconsider the constitution of the Admiralty. He believed it was out of the question—he said it with great regret—to expect any reform whatever in the Board of Admiralty. His hon. Friend (Mr. Rylands's) contention was that the First Lord of the Admiralty should have a seat in the House of Commons. Now, that matter had been a bone of contention for some time. He thought they would all agree that it was a most unfortunate thing that the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Sir Thomas Brassey) was not himself the First Lord, because it was impossible he could exercise in the House that influence in his present position which he would exercise if he occupied the higher rank. He (Mr. Puleston) was bound to speak of the First Lord with very great respect. Some hon. Gentlemen had said that when the noble Earl (the Earl of Northbrook) was in Egypt his absence was not noticed. He (Mr. Puleston) echoed that sentiment, because he had occasion sometimes to go to the Admiralty, and he found that the absence of the noble Earl made no difference whatever. That was a very serious thing to say, and he was sorry there was no Cabinet Minister on the Treasury Bench at the present moment. [The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Childers) entered the House at this point.] He thought that if the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been present during the whole of the discussion he must have come to the conclusion that he had never listened to a debate that was so unanimously depreciatory of the administration of the Admiralty. He (Mr. Puleston) confessed he never heard such a debate before, and he was confident his hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) had not. Just as the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer entered the House he was saying a word or two about the First Lord. They knew what the First Lord said in "another place" last Session—namely, that even if he had at his disposal millions which he did not want, he would not know what to do with them. Now, he (Mr. Puleston) asked the Committee if they could contemplate a more deplorable admission from a person holding such a responsible position as First Lord of the Admiralty? His hon. Friend had spoken of 26,000 tons being the tonnage for two years for all other nations, against 25,000 of their own, those figures referring to war ships. He did not remember which two years his hon. Friend mentioned; but at that time the Estimates for the French Navy were only half as much as their own, and the French Navy was only half as large as theirs. But the French Navy had progressed at a much greater ratio of late, while ours had been practically standing still. The Civil Lord of the Admiralty had taken pains to tell the Committee that the Admiralty always intended to construct 28,000 tons. He (Mr. Puleston) did not know how far that word "always" extended; but they certainly did not do it until very recently—not till after the Autumn Session, which entirely and absolutely reversed the statements made by the noble Earl at the head of the Admiralty only a few months previously. The Representatives of the noble Earl in this House were obliged to actually reverse his statements on the Navy. They did not hear then of 26,000 tons; and what he (Mr. Puleston) wanted to know was, if that was the tonnage that was to be built before the discussion of last Autumn, what addition was it proposed to make now under the new order of things? He wanted to know whether the "always" referred to the time preceding the discussion here last Autumn, when it was supposed that the House succeeded in impressing on the Admiralty the necessity for a very large enlargement of the Navy, for which very little had been done before? It seemed that they were now going to buy wildly everything they could, whether it was efficient or otherwise, so long as it had the appearance of being a ship. However, he was glad to say they were to have other opportunities of discussing this matter, and he hoped the first of those opportunities would come soon; for although there had been a very remarkable debate that night, which would be read throughout the length and breadth of the country, and which would be read in other countries besides their own, there were still many points which required discussion. He hoped that what had already been said would have no ill-effect upon the

country at large. But at all hazard the truth should be told, and the sooner the weakness of the Navy was understood the sooner would the ill-effect of disclosures such as they had had to-day be overcome.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he would not detain the Committee very long; but he wished, in the first place, to support his hon. Friend (Mr. Puleston) in the complaint he had made as to the manner in which the Navy Estimates were treated by the Government. He had more than once protested against the Head of this Department being in the other House of Parliament. It was against the principles laid down by the Prime Minister during his last Administration; but it was of apiece, in every respect, with the singular manner in which the Navy Estimates were treated by the entire Cabinet. In the discussion that night, for instance, they had had angels' visits from one or two Members of the Cabinet occasionally; but for by far the greater part of the time the Secretary to the Admiralty had been left there without the assistance of a single responsible Minister of the Crown. Was it true that an order had been issued for the purchase of a large number of steam tugs; and was it the fact that they were to be bought because the Government were convinced that it would be impossible, owing to defective machinery, for iron-clads to go in and out of action without their assistance? If that were the case, it showed the existence of the most serious defects in the Administrative Departments of the country. Without detaining the Committee any longer, he should like to have a categorical answer to that question.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he thought it was worth while to make one observation, though he would not go into the large questions which had been raised. They were now discussing the Vote for Victuals and Clothing; and on that Vote they had discussed the comparative size of the English and French Navies, the condition of their guns, the defence of their coaling stations, the defence of their commerce, the capacity of the First Lord of the Admiralty, the rights and wrongs of having him in the House of Lords; and all this had been debated in reference to the question of victuals and clothing. It was worth while to know how that arose; it evidently arose from the absurdity of the new Rules. Had it been possible to put a Resolution on the Motion for the Speaker leaving the Chair, they might have had all those questions discussed, and then they could have been followed by a Vote in Committee of Supply. As it was, there would have to be another debate of equal length, to be followed by another Vote, when all those questions could be raised again on the Motion of the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed). He did not himself regret those repeated and prolonged debates. Everything which brought the question before the country, and forced the attention of the country to the defective state of the Navy, was good; but the fact that they had debated in that desultory fashion all those important questions for a whole night, and that they would have to debate them again in a few weeks' time, did show a great want of management on the part of Her Majesty's Government. It had been a fact worth observing that all the speaking that night had gone one way—that the Government had found no defenders but those who sat on their own Bench. His hon. Friend (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) had been very much struck with the novelty of this; but it seemed to be the rule now in almost all important controversies. On almost all the important debates they had had on questions of public affairs, every speaker on both sides of the House attacked the Government, and the Government were only defended by Members of their own body, and seldom, or never, found anybody else to say a good word for them. They had even lost the single defender they had in the General Gordon debate—the hon. Member for Greenock (Mr. Sutherland)—who had just uttered a tremendous philippic on the state of the Navy. That hon. Gentleman was the only Member who rose in the four nights' debate on General Gordon to defend the Government. His hon. Friend, therefore, might have spared his wonder at the course the debate had taken that night.

MR. D. DAVIES said, he thought this was a very serious matter indeed. The country did not know very much about it. In the old time their Navy was built of old English or Welsh oak; and if a bullet went through it, the hole

could be easily caulked up again; while the timber of foreign nations tore up and went into splinters. But now all nations were similarly provided. There was a sort of sameness in the iron-clad everywhere. Everyone could build an iron-clad equally well. The foreign iron-clads were just as good as their iron-clads. There was this difference, also. In the old time, if they were turned out of the sea altogether, they could live at home; but now they were dependent on foreigners for their very bread. If that supply were stopped they would be done for—they would starve. He hoped the Government would take that fact to heart. They were then free and happy, and their Fleet was able to meet with all others. But now the case seemed to be very different. He would not mind a bit of a brush with one of those foreign nations, just to gain a little experience; they did not really know what they could do. [*Laughter.*] That was no laughing matter at all. They might, at any moment, have a brush between their iron-clads and those of a foreign nation. It would be a very serious matter if four or five of their iron-clads were sunk. Where would be the rest of their Navy then? At present they were almost without a ship. They were buying some rotten ships, and things that would be of no use at all; and he hoped the Government would take all that to heart. He did not know whether they had proper ships, or whether their ships were what they ought to be—he left that to the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed) and other Gentlemen who understood the question. But he wished to draw the attention of the Government to a matter about which the country was very anxious. He did not often intrude himself into debate; but he thought they ought to have some explanation.

MR. HARRIS said, he approached the question from the view of their food supplies. This country, he said, was in a position which no other country in the world had ever been placed in in regard to her supplies. They were not producing much more than one-third part of their consumption of wheat. The statistics being a consumption of 26,000,000 quarters; whereas, of the home growth, there was only available for food the small quantity of 9,000,000 quarters.

THE CHAIRMAN here interposed, and said, that the statistics of their food supply were beyond the scope of the debate.

MR. DEASY pointed out that new gunboats could be built in Cork; and he wanted to know whether the Cork shipbuilders would have any opportunity of tendering? Was it the intention of the Government to supply plans and specifications for the new boats required?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY said, he thought, at that late hour of the night, hon. Members would scarcely desire that he should attempt a full answer to the numerous charges which had been brought against the Admiralty. He would, however, endeavour to take up some of the more important points, and to offer such explanations as he could in reference to the matters which had been brought under discussion. And, first, he would like to refer to the observations made by his hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed) with reference to the employment of mercantile auxiliaries for the defence of commerce. His hon. Friend had raised a question as to the fighting power of ships of that character. The Admiralty did not rely upon mercantile auxiliaries to cope with battle-ships, or regularly built ships of war; but they contended—and they confidently contended—that for the defence of commerce those mercantile auxiliaries were well able to contend with similar vessels which might be employed by a hostile Power for the purpose of attacking and interrupting their commerce. They contended that a wise policy had been pursued, not only by the present Board of Admiralty, but by those who had preceded them, in encouraging the construction of vessels in the Mercantile Marine of a character suitable for conversion into cruisers. They considered that the existence of such vessels in such numbers in their Mercantile Marine formed one of the great resources of this country; and he could assure hon. Members that those ships were regarded with feelings of envy by the Administrators of Foreign Powers. Those who had studied the Annual Reports of the Secretary of the United States Navy would have observed the repeated allusions and expressions of admiration with reference to the splendid fleet of mercantile cruisers which had been

called into existence in connection with the British Navy. He would also remind hon. Members that large sums were paid by Foreign Governments in the form of subsidies to encourage the construction and navigation of ships of a class such as it was our happy fortune to be able to procure in such numbers, and of such efficient types, without any expenditure in the form of subsidies. His hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed), and his right hon. Friend the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith), had criticized the mode of measuring the tonnage which was annually built in the Dockyards. His hon. Friend admitted that the system which he criticized was the one which was in force when he (Sir Edward J. Reed) so ably took part in the administration of the Navy. He (Sir Thomas Brassey) concurred with his hon. and right hon. Friends as to the unsatisfactory character of that method of measurement; and he would endeavour to ascertain whether it might not be possible that the tonnage built in the Dockyards should be determined rather by an actual measurement of the work done than by a statement of the money which was annually spent. His hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff called the attention of the Committee to inaccuracies which he alleged to be found in the statement of cost for certain ships. All that he had to say on that point was this—that since he had heard the criticisms of his hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff he had compared the figures which that hon. Gentleman criticized with those which were inserted in the Returns which were in use at the Admiralty, and he found that they corresponded exactly. Those figures, of course, had been adopted upon the authority of the Accountant General of the Navy; and he could confidently say that there was no intention whatever to make a mis-statement in the House of Commons. His hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff spoke critically as to the cost of ships, and he instanced the case of the *Conqueror*. Well, he (Sir Thomas Brassey) believed that the cost of the *Conqueror*—even the enhanced cost as determined upon a more recent computation by the Accountant General—compared almost exactly with that of the last iron-clad which was put out to contract—he referred to the *Benbow*—and he might say that in former years, when from an independent standpoint he gave a good deal of attention to Admiralty matters he arrived at the conclusion—he was bound to confess that it was not authoritative—but he arrived at the conclusion that, in a general sense, the cost of Dockyard building might be taken as about 10 per cent more than the cost of building by contract. He had never heard any hon. Member question that conclusion. There could be no doubt as to the excellence of the workmanship which was carried out in the Dockyards. It might be asked why should there be this difference of cost—this great difference of cost—in the case of the Dockyard work? Well, he could give one reason among many others, and that was that it was not possible in Dockyard work to introduce the system of piece-work to the same extent to which it was applied in the private shipbuilding establishments. The reason was obvious. They must maintain their great Dockyards on the system best adapted for the purpose of meeting all the demands which might occur in connection with a great Navy. There were not only the emergencies which would arise in time of war, but the emergencies which constantly arose in time of peace; and in order to deal with those sudden demands it was necessary at times to take off every man from the building, and put them on to the repairing of ships. That being so, how was it possible in the case of any particular ship to carry out the system of construction by piece-work to the same extent as in establishments where they were less liable to those kinds of interruption? Then there were other reasons, which must, he thought, be accepted upon any fair view of the case, why the general charges for the administration of the Dockyards should be larger than in the case of private establishments. It was not possible fairly to compare a Dockyard with an ordinary shipbuilding yard. First of all, a Dockyard required, and essentially required, a somewhat expensive superintendence for naval purposes. They must have naval officers present in those Dockyards, both to superintend on behalf of the Admiralty, and to act as arbitrators between the Service afloat and the professional officers of the yard. They

wanted advice at every stage, and that was an expensive feature which would not be present in a mercantile establishment. Then those Dockyards must be laid out in such a manner as to give them a great power of expansion in time of war. The necessary result was that they had widely extended establishments, large works, and great distances between the workshops, and this involved the cost of transport, and the value of the time spent by the men in going to and fro. Then they ought to have, and must have, an abundance of stores to meet an emergency, and large store-houses, and a large store-house staff, such as was not necessary in dealing with ordinary mercantile demands. He ought not to omit to mention that in dealing with a public business they must have considerable minuteness of calculation and record, for the purpose of giving the information to Parliament which was so frequently called for. Hence arose the necessity for a more extensive accountant's staff than would be maintained in a private shipbuilding establishment. Those were sufficient reasons why the general charges in the Dockyards should be in excess of those which were borne under private administration. Everybody knew that the item for general charges must be larger in a Dockyard than in a private establishment. He would endeavour now to deal with the question of delay in the completion of ships. The hon. Member for Hull (Mr. Norwood) had referred to that subject, and had mentioned, what he (Sir Thomas Brassey) was glad to acknowledge, the indebtedness of the Admiralty to the Committee, of which he was a Member, for their most useful inquiry and very valuable suggestions. The hon. Member for Hull had urged that more care should be used in the preparation of designs before beginning the building of ships. The Admiralty had endeavoured, as he (Sir Thomas Brassey) had lately explained, to follow that advice; and that was the cause of the delay, which at the time was much criticized, in putting out some of the new work to contract. But, as he had said before, he believed the delay was a wise delay, and it was desirable that the utmost care should be used in preparing the designs before they commenced construction. With reference to those delays, it was known to all those who had had experience in the administration of Admiralty affairs that in the initial stages the ships in the Dockyards were built quickly. It was in the later stages that they suffered from those delays, and the cause of those delays was not far to seek. It was connected with constant changes in armament, including the torpedo armament. No doubt, it would always be desired to improve and perfect the armament of the Navy, and where there was no pressing need for a ship there was a tendency to give way in point of time, in order to secure even greater efficiency. He would repeat, what he had already stated on a former occasion, that they entertained sanguine hopes that the gun and torpedo questions were gradually settling themselves. They did not look forward in the near future to the same radical changes with which they had had to deal recently. They were now completing their ships more rapidly than formerly, and were certainly doing better than any of their rivals abroad. In order to show to the Committee that he did not make that statement without some foundation, he would read a list of the ships which it was proposed to complete within the present financial year. They would complete the *Collingwood*, the *Leander*, the *Arethusa*, and the *Phœton*—ships which were laid down in 1880-1. They hoped also to complete the *Impérieuse*, the *Warspite*, the *Amphion*, the *Calypso*, and the *Calliope*, which were laid down in 1881-2. They would complete the *Mersey*, a very highly protected and fast cruiser of 3,520 tons, laid down in 1883; and if that was fulfilled, as they confidently hoped would be the case, it would be a performance which he thought his right hon. Friend would agree the Dockyards would be fairly entitled to take credit for. They would complete the torpedo and cruiser vessels *Scout*, *Surprise*, and *Alacrity*; and of vessels laid down so late as 1884 and 1885, they would complete the *Swallow* and the *Curlew*. Those were torpedo vessels of a very valuable type. The total number of vessels to be completed in the present financial year was no less than 14, including four iron-clads, five protected or partially protected vessels, two despatch vessels, one torpedo cruiser, and three gun-vessels. They had been criticized with reference to their delays, because the ships built for the Navy were

not completed so rapidly as certain foreign iron-clads built in private yards. He was sure his right hon. and gallant Friend would do them justice—he would recognize the fact that the class of iron-clads which he spoke of as being built for Foreign Navies was not to be compared with the much more powerful ships that were being built for the British Navy. It would not be just to claim that the much larger and more complicated ships built for the Admiralty should be finished in so short a space of time as was found sufficient for the second-rate iron-clads built for Foreign Powers. He had endeavoured to explain as well as he was able the cause of those delays, and in doing so he did not wish unduly to excuse them. On the contrary, he would say for the present Board that it would never cease to contend with the utmost energy against the great difficulties with which they had to contend; and he earnestly hoped that in future they might be able to present to Parliament a more satisfactory record than in the past. His hon. Friend the Member for Wigan (Mr. A. F. Egerton) had made certain comparisons; but he did not wish to detain the Committee at that late hour (12.50) with statistics; but, whatever might be the state of their Navy in comparison with the Navies of Foreign Powers, he must contend that the comparison at the present time was more favourable than that which might have been made in former years. Certain it was, if there had been any failing, which he could not admit, it would not be due to any relaxation of efforts on their part. On the contrary, since they had been charged with responsibility, they had steadily increased the number of men employed and the amount of tonnage built; and that process of expansion was going on at a steady, though at a very considerable, rate before that great development which had recently taken place. Turning to some questions which were proposed by his right hon. Friend the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith), he might refer to two ships to which he had specifically alluded. The date at which it was proposed to complete the *Conqueror* was the 16th of June, and he might add that the *Colossus* was actually completed, except in respect of certain minor guns which were being supplied from Elswick. His right hon. Friend asked him as to the number of steam pinnaces available for torpedoes. He had not the figures at hand; but he must refer his right hon. Friend to the answer he gave to a Question put to him a short time ago in that House. With regard to the torpedo, he would point out that the value of those pinnaces for the purpose of harbour defence did not depend on their ability to supply them with Whitehead torpedoes. The spar torpedoes were much more suitable for boats, and in the case of attack by a large iron-clad a small torpedo boat would be found most effective for the purposes of destruction. His right hon. Friend asked him as to the contracts recently put out. Those ships were only ordered that day, and he might inform his right hon. Friend as to the two large iron-clads that the time named for completion was three and a-half years. For the belted cruisers, the time allowed to the contractors was two and a-quarter years, and in two instances the contractors offered to complete in two years. The periods named were thought reasonable for suitably completing work of this magnitude; and as he had repeatedly stated to the House, if they could be built more quickly, they would be grateful to those who could put them into their hands in a shorter time. It had been urged that they had been neglectful in the matter of repairs. He did not say that they had no iron-clads requiring repair; but that all efficient iron-clads requiring repair were taken in hand and pushed forward vigorously as soon as they had completed their commissions. With regard to the ships of the Channel Squadron, he thought it had been generally understood in Parliament that those ships were maintained very much for the purpose of training, and for that purpose it was not necessary that their boilers should be able to bear a full pressure of steam. With regard to the criticism on the *Monarch*, that vessel was not the flagship in the Mediterranean. [Sir JOHN HAY: She carried the flag.] Lord John Hay happened to be in Alexandria, and wished to take passage to Malta; he was in a position to obtain the best information, and nothing reached him to lead him to doubt that he could make a quick passage in the *Monarch*. The accident to the *Monarch* was an unexpected accident,

and instances of that kind must necessarily occur from time to time in a great Service. The incident of the *Monarch* had been mentioned in connection with the deterioration of boilers; but he could assure his right hon. and gallant Friend that the accident did not occur from any defect in her boilers. With reference to the endurance of boilers generally, he confidently believed that under the improved system of boiler management introduced into the Navy they might look in future for a much longer endurance of the boilers of Her Majesty's ships. He did not see why they should not attain to the same success in that respect as in the Mercantile Marine. He was in conversation lately with the managing owner of the White Star Line, which was celebrated for the speed and regularity of its ships; and he was surprised to find that after 11 years the older vessels maintained the same speed as the new vessels of that Line, and none of them had been re-boilered. He hoped they might soon obtain the same result. The hon. Member for Perthshire (Sir Donald Currie) referred to some circumstances which might seem somewhat difficult of explanation, with reference to the suspended use of a gun on one of Her Majesty's ships. After a gun had burst on board the *Daring* it was ordered that the similar guns supplied to the *Dryad* should not be again used for exercise. The hon. Member for Greenock (Mr. Sutherland) had been rather severe in his criticisms of the Admiralty. The hon. Member had referred disparagingly to the merchant auxiliaries; but he was greatly mistaken in supposing that they took up those vessels because they had no vessels in the British Navy capable of rendering valuable protection to the commerce of the country. He would remind the hon. Member that there had been ordered in the last five years four ships of the *Leander* type capable of steaming 17 knots, four ships of the *Mersey* type of the same high speed—the *Calliope*, the *Calypso* corvette, two *Scouts*, and two despatch vessels of 17 knots. Some of those were ready, and several others would very shortly be ready for the protection of the commerce of the country. He would further remind the Committee that of late years the speed of all their iron-clads had been raised to 16 knots, and in many cases even to a higher speed. He thought he had now gone through the main points that had been put forward; and if he had not alluded to the large expenditure of a special character that had taken place it was because the presentation of the Vote of Credit would perhaps offer a more suitable opportunity to the Committee for discussing what had been done. All that remained for him to do was to ask the Committee to accept the assurance on the part of Her Majesty's Government that they had taken all the steps which they considered necessary in the interest of the Navy; and perhaps he should not be thought indiscreet in saying that the more they tested the resources of the country in cases of emergency the more confident they felt in their ability to meet all the demands that might be made upon the Navy. Having now endeavoured to offer such explanations as had been called for, he trusted there might now be no further opposition to the Vote.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he believed the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would confirm him in saying that provision ought to be made in the Estimates of the year for pay and expenses of the Service which was foreseen. There was a note in this Estimate to the effect that 1,000 men, Marines and Seamen, would be borne on the Votes for service in Egypt, and for which a separate Estimate would be presented to Parliament. That he believed was an entirely new practice; and without detaining the Committee on an important question of procedure at that time, he wished to record his protest against it, and to remark that when they came to discuss the Vote of Credit it would be necessary to raise the question as to the way in which the Estimate was made up.

Sir JOHN HAY said, the Committee would be glad to receive information as to the contracts that were being entered into for provisions at Chicago and other places. Remembering what had taken place during the Crimean War, as regarded the Goldner preserved meat contract, he would ask his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty to inform the Committee what was the nature of the contracts entered into for

preserved meats, and what steps had been taken to ascertain the quality of the meats?

MR. PARNELL said, he wished to remind the Secretary to the Admiralty that his Colleague in the representation of Cork had asked whether any inquiry had been addressed to the Irish Shipbuilding Companies who were capable of constructing such vessels as gunboats. The hon. Gentleman would recollect that they had had several conversations on the subject. He did not intend to go into the question on the present occasion, but would merely remark that his hon. Friend's question had probably been missed, and that the hon. Gentleman would doubtless be able to give a satisfactory assurance on the subject.

MR. PULESTON said, he would take that opportunity of asking the hon. Gentleman whether anything had been done with reference to the engineers counting their extra time for pensions? The Report of the Committee had been under consideration since November last. He would also ask whether in the Report any consideration was given to the application of the engine-room artificers, who sought to have the rank of Warrant Officers given to them?

MR. HARRIS said, that he regretted that in his previous remarks he had, in the opinion of the Chairman, overstepped the bounds of the debate; but his only object was to show how very necessary it was for Her Majesty's Government to protect their food supplies by keeping the Navy in a thorough state of efficiency, and how lamentable the results would be if, through any inadequacy in their line of marine defence, any interruption should take place in their supplies. He therefore deprecated all parsimony in this branch of the Service.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) was quite correct in the view he had taken with regard to the placing of foreseen expenditure on the regular Estimates; but the expenditure in the case of the 1,000 Seamen and Marines in Egypt could not be estimated for when the Estimates was prepared.

MR. W. H. SMITH remarked that it violated the principle on which the Estimates had always been framed—that a certain number of men which it was foreseen would be required should not be provided for in the regular Estimates.

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY said, with reference to the question of his right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Wigtown Burghs (Sir John Hay), he could assure him that, in the case of the Navy, the most scrupulous care was used to see that the supplies were of the best quality.

SIR JOHN HAY asked, if the agents of the Government were to be present to inspect the meat before it was packed in cases, or if the inspection consisted in taking a sample from the cases, and assuming that the rest was good? He trusted the latter was not the case, because that test had been found to fail on former occasions.

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY said, he must confess that he could not answer the question of his right hon. and gallant Friend; but he would take care to procure information on the subject, and either answer him in that House or personally. In reply to the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), he might say that they were about to invite tenders for smaller vessels, and there would then be an opportunity for the shipbuilders in Ireland to tender for the construction of those ships. With reference to the inquiry of the hon. Member for Devonport (Mr. Puleston), the subject he had referred to had been considered; and the change proposed was that every two years of junior time in the case of engineers would count as one year of senior time. These proposed concessions were even more liberal than those demanded by the engineers themselves.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £194,300, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expenses of the Admiralty Office, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886."

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee also report Progress; to sit again upon *Wednesday.*

MOTIONS.

—o—

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS (VOTING).

NOMINATION OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK said, he wished to move the Motion standing in his name for the nomination of the Select Committee on Voting at School Board Elections. The name of Mr. O'Connor Power was a misprint for the name of Mr. J. O'Connor.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Select Committee on School Board Elections (Voting) be nominated."—(*Sir John Lubbock.*)

Mr. DILLWYN said, he thought this subject ought to be carefully considered before the Resolution was agreed to, and he did not think that full consideration could be given to it on the present occasion, as there was not a full House.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Motion made, and Question, "That the Committee do consist of Twenty-one Members,"—(*Sir John Lubbock,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. DILLWYN: I beg to move, "That the Committee do consist of 22 Members."

Mr. SPEAKER: I put the Question to the House, and no negative voice was raised against the number 21.

Committee *nominated* of,—Mr. Courtney, Mr. Cubitt, Mr. Illingworth, Viscount Folkestone, Mr. Mundella, Lord George Hamilton, Mr. Noel, Mr. Houldsworth, Mr. Lyulph Stanley, Mr. Ritchie, Mr. Picton, Mr. Cochran-Patrick, Mr. Samuel Smith, Mr. Biggar, Mr. Blennerhassett, Mr. Arthur Balfour, Mr. John O'Connor, Mr. William Edward Forster, Sir Herbert Maxwell, Viscount Crichton, and Sir John Lubbock.

Mr. DILLWYN: I wish to move to make an addition.

Mr. SPEAKER: Does the hon. Member wish to move the addition of another name?

Mr. DILLWYN: Yes; the name of Mr. John Morley.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member must give Notice.

Mr. DILLWYN: Then I give Notice that I will move to add the name of Mr. John Morley.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records; Five to be the quorum," put, and *agreed to.*

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS (QUARTER SESSION BOROUGHS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Dodds, Bill to repeal certain provisions relating to Quarter Session Boroughs of "The Municipal Corporations Act, 1882," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Dodds, Mr. John Bright, Mr. Barran, and Mr. Jackson.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 133.]

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of The Lord Advocate, Bill to amend the Law regulating the Registration of Voters; and for other purposes relating thereto, *ordered* to be brought in by The Lord Advocate and Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 132.]

House adjourned at half after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 21st April, 1885.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Friendly Societies Act (1875) Amendment * (77).

Second Reading—Local Government Provisional Orders * [66]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) * (67).

Committee—Infants (46-78).

Report—Solicitors (Ireland) * (53).

EGYPTIAN LOAN BILL.

CENTRAL ASIA — RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—ATTACK OF THE RUSSIANS ON THE AFGHANS AT AK TEPE—DESPATCHES OF SIR PETER LUMSDEN.

QUESTIONS. OBSERVATIONS.

The Earl of CARNARVON: My Lords, seeing the noble Lord the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in his place, I will ask him two Questions of which I have given him private Notice. The first relates to the Egyptian Loan Bill, which stands for second reading to-night. The noble Earl and the House must be aware that this Bill has not yet been printed, and, of course, has not been read. Under these circumstances, I cannot but doubt that the noble Earl

will consent to put it off to a future day. I think the noble Earl has suggested Thursday next for taking the second reading; but I would point out that Thursday next is not altogether a very convenient day, because on that day the Colonial Secretary proposes to move the second reading of a Bill dealing with the Australasian Confederation, which may possibly raise some discussion. I hope the noble Earl will consent to fix the second reading of the Bill a little later. Having said that, I wish to ask another Question, and it is this—Whether the noble Earl will consent to lay on the Table either the despatch of Sir Peter Lumsden or the substance of it? I ask the Question for two or three reasons—first of all, because the Russian account of this matter has now been before the world a great many days. It has been published and freely commented upon, not only in the English Press, but in that of Europe, and has, no doubt, having received no contradiction or qualification, exercised a certain influence. Secondly, there is this further reason—that Her Majesty's Government have as good as admitted that Sir Peter Lumsden does contradict, in fact, the statement made by the Russian General; and, thirdly, there appears in one of the morning papers today a very clear and detailed statement telegraphed from Tirpul, which not only contradicts the Russian account, but which purports substantially to confirm the account Sir Peter Lumsden is supposed to have sent. Under these circumstances, I feel quite sure that no one can be a gainer by the withholding of this despatch—neither Her Majesty's Government nor the country at large, nor even the Russian Government itself, when we are in this state of doubt. I would, therefore, very strongly urge on the noble Earl that he should comply with that which is undoubtedly the wish of the very large majority of this House.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, in answer to the first Question put to me by the noble Earl, I have to state that I think it would be more desirable that the Egyptian Loan Bill should be taken without delay. I should very much regret that there should be any delay on our part. The noble Earl stated that the Bill has not been printed. It is in my hands now; but I have a very strong notion, derived from the interest recently shown by the noble Earl in politics, that the noble Earl would have been able to proceed with the Bill at five minutes' notice. Still, I feel it more respectful to him and to your Lordships, the request having been made, to postpone the second reading till Thursday. In the meantime I will communicate with my noble Friend the Colonial Secretary, and ascertain from him whether there is any reason why the two Bills should not be proceeded with on the same night. At any rate, I will fix the Loan Bill for Thursday. The noble Earl also made another very reasonable request with respect to the unfortunate events that have taken place at Ak Tépé. I stated the other day that we had not received a despatch from Sir Peter Lumsden, though we expected one in answer to the categorical questions we put to him. I have now to say that a telegraphic message has been received this day, and I sent it to the Russian Ambassador soon after it arrived. I propose to lay it on the Table of your Lordships' House, and I hope it will be in your Lordships' hands immediately.

THE EARL OF HARROWBY: Can the noble Earl state how long that message from Sir Peter Lumsden took in transmission? The matter of time is of great interest to us.

EARL GRANVILLE: I regret that I am not able to state without Notice what time is required for the transmission of messages from Afghan territory to St. Petersburg or to England.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH: Does the noble Earl know whether there is any truth in the announcement published in the newspapers, or will he inquire whether it is a fact, that the Russians are making a military road by means of forced labour from Sarakhs to Herat?

[No reply.]

NAVAL AND MILITARY OPERATIONS, 1885-6 (VOTE OF CREDIT).

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, I stated the other day that I proposed shortly to make a statement as to the basis of a Vote—a considerable Vote—of money which is either being asked for at this moment "elsewhere," or will be asked for in the course of the even-

ing. In accordance with the understanding that Her Majesty's Government have carefully considered our military position, not with reference alone to the Soudan, but to the general condition of public affairs, and to all the probable demands upon the military resources of the Empire, we have come to the conclusion that it is necessary to hold all these resources, including the Forces in the Soudan, as far as possible available for service wherever they may be required. Under these circumstances, the Vote does not include any provision of money for further offensive operations in the Soudan, or for military preparations with a view to an early advance on Khartoum. It does, however, include items having reference to such contracts or undertakings as, being already considerably advanced, could not be stopped with any appreciable advantage, and, at the same time, do not involve any necessity for hostile action. It provides for river steamboats which have already been contracted for, and for the completion of the Wady Halfa Railway, towards which extensive preparations have already been made, and which will have advantages altogether apart from military necessities. As to ulterior steps we reserve our entire liberty of action, subject to the approval of Parliament. I may here add that this does not imply any change of view or intention as to the defence of Egypt and of its Frontier. My purpose is simply to explain the basis of the Vote. With regard to the Suakin Railway, it was projected and commenced as a military work in support of the Nile Army. With the cessation of active operations on the Nile any considerable extension of this railway will be suspended; but until some other permanent arrangement can be made it will be necessary to hold the Port of Suakin with British or Indian troops. The experience of last summer, however, proves that in order to hold Suakin for any useful purpose, and, indeed, to hold it without undue exposure and risk to the garrison, it may be necessary also to occupy one or more positions in its neighbourhood. The Military Authorities will be consulted as to the positions which it may be considered necessary to occupy, and as to the points up to which, on the ground above stated, the railway should be advanced. It is proposed to complete the Suakin Railway up to the point which may be determined to be best for the security of the garrison, and while this is being done to consider our future course as to any prosecution of this railway beyond that point. We consider that if the Nile Railway is an advantageous work for general purposes, the prosecution of it need not be discontinued, as it does not involve any question of hostilities. The addition to our resources which will be effected by holding the Soudan Forces available for service elsewhere is an addition quite independent of the demands which have recently been made upon us by the Government of India for large reinforcements. Those demands will be entirely met by provision at home, leaving the Force released in Egypt and the Soudan as an additional reserve for employment in India or elsewhere. In fact, we are providing for (1) what the Indian Government has already asked for; (2) for the mobilization at home of a Force which, with that released in Egypt and the Soudan, will constitute a complete Army Corps; (3) for guns and submarine mining defences, in addition to and in aid of the naval preparations. The Vote asked for amounts to £11,000,000. The amount wanted for the Soudan is £4,500,000, and for special preparations other than such as are connected with the Soudan we ask for £6,500,000. Our strong desire is to remain on friendly relations with all Foreign Powers, and this increase of our military and naval means will not affect our wish to settle any differences between us and other countries in a peaceful manner honourable to all parties concerned.

Viscount CRANBROOK: My Lords, the grave announcement just made by the noble Earl is one which has carried the knowledge of the House a great deal further than it has been carried heretofore; but we are still kept in ignorance of the state of affairs in India, and also with respect to the question which has been so lately paramount in this country—namely, what is being done in the Soudan. At present, as far as I understand the noble Earl, that question is left in abeyance. The noble Earl has made a very careful statement, and I presume that every word of it has been carefully weighed; and I understand from his statement that we may still look forward to an Expedition to Khartoum at a period not yet decided

upon. The noble Earl has left us, at all events, with the impression that the war operations in the Soudan may have to be resumed. That is a very serious question, and we have heard no new statement as to the objects or the intentions of the Government, because the noble Earl limited his observations as to the intentions of the Government to the statement that they adhered to the previous pledges given by them with reference to the defence of the Frontiers of Egypt. But the question of the Frontiers of Egypt is a very large and wide one, and one which I understand is not wholly decided upon by the Government themselves, and it certainly is not one as to which there can be any general agreement on the part of the Government. It seems to me, therefore, that the Government ask us to hold the sword over a great district in Egypt without telling us what use they are going to put their operations to, and we do not know when we are going to withdraw our troops from the Soudan. As I understand the noble Earl, it is not intended to withdraw those troops at once, and to bring them home; but they are to remain in Egypt as a reserve in case of necessity. It appears, therefore, that we are keeping a large Army in the Soudan without knowing what the intentions of the Government are with respect to that country. That is a matter, I think, upon which those who have not any confidence in the past or present policy of Her Majesty's Government may at least request further information. With respect to the other great question, the noble Earl has promised that we shall be placed in possession of the despatches of Sir Peter Lumsden, in order that we may know what the English officers say of the untoward event which has taken place in Afghanistan, for, according to all the maps, I believe the event did take place in Afghanistan, and not in territory belonging to Russia. But I can understand that the Government may wish at this moment to have their hands free, and not to be questioned too closely about the negotiations with the Russian Government. With respect to those matters, therefore, I shall be silent; but I cannot be silent about the Soudan. There has been a terrible slaughter in the Soudan of thousands of Arabs, and I want to know for what purpose that has been done, and what are the intentions of the Government with regard to that country?

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL: My Lords, it is quite impossible to have listened to the words—the calculated and carefully prepared words—of my noble Friend the Foreign Secretary, without feeling that we are in the presence of a very grave conjuncture of public affairs. I have hitherto taken no part in the discussions in this House on the Egyptian question; but I cannot help now expressing a very warm opinion that, except on the ground of public necessity and military necessity, with reference to the position of this country in other parts of the world, it would be a great and terrible mistake to go back from the policy announced by the Prime Minister in the other House of Parliament on February 19. That announcement was made after the fall of Khartoum; it was made after it was known that we could no longer hope to rescue that extraordinary and gallant man, whose memory will remain for ever in the history of this country. It was a deliberate announcement on the part of the Prime Minister that the Government, after full consideration of the circumstances in which they were then placed, knowing that General Gordon's life had been lost, knowing that the garrison of Khartoum had been sacrificed—it was an announcement to Parliament and the country that, nevertheless, they felt it necessary for the honour of England and the safety of Egypt that their original policy with respect to Khartoum should be pursued. My Lords, it has been an open secret that since that time a considerable portion of the supporters of Her Majesty's Government have wished that that announcement had never been made; and public meetings have been held expressing the opinion that it was wrong for England, now that Gordon had been sacrificed and no lives could be saved in the garrisons, to pursue the campaign in the Soudan. I had hoped that the Government would stand firm to the policy they had announced. I am so far relieved by the carefully worded announcement, read rather than spoken by the noble Earl, that it is still an open question with the Government; and I rejoice to hear that the ground upon which the suspension of those proceedings is founded is the ground of military necessity, of the necessity of holding a great Army of Reserve in the

case of further proceedings in Asia. I could not allow this discussion to pass without expressing my earnest and anxious hope that the Government will be able to pursue their original policy with respect to Khartoum. I hope that the preparations which they are making with regard to the Afghan Frontier will not be necessary; and I believe that if both Governments are really sincere in their desire for peace a solution of the difficulty may easily be found. But I hope that these preparations will not be made an excuse for divided councils at home. I hope they are not now made the excuse for backing out of the pledges which were given by Her Majesty's Government on the 19th of February. It is my firm conviction that unless the power of England to overcome the resistance of the Arab population of the Soudan and of Upper Egypt is proved by force of arms, we shall never have peace in Egypt, and we shall have exposed ourselves to the taunts and reproaches of the other nations of the world. I will add my conviction that the opening of those regions by the making of the Suakin-Berber Railway is a necessary condition for the further civilization of the great African Continent—an object in which all the nations of the world are now expressing their interest and taking their respective parts. I hold that—not by our own will, but by a series of events over which, as the Government have told us, we had no control—we have been led on step by step and by such steps as indicate our manifest duty to take our part in the civilization of that region; and my belief is that civilization will never be secured there, and the horrors of the Slave Trade will go on for ever, unless England does her duty with regard to the Soudan. I have nothing to say as to the military necessity for the moment of keeping the Army of Egypt as an Army of Reserve; but I will repeat my hope that the circumstances in which we are now placed with regard to the Afghan Frontier will not be made a mere excuse by the Government for a vacillating policy and for divided councils.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY: I understand that of the Vote of £11,000,000, £4,500,000 are to go to the Soudan. Are we to understand that the proposed railway from Suakin to Berber, which has made considerable progress already, is not to be continued? I ask the Question because I understood the noble Earl to say that there was a doubt whether we should go on with that railway. I also understood the noble Earl to say in another part of his speech that the contract entered into still continued. My understanding was that the contract with Messrs. Lucas and Aird was for the construction of the railway and its continuance until within about 100 miles of Berber. Have the Government decided to alter their course as regards that railway?

THE EARL OF LIMERICK: I wish to ask a Question which arises out of the statement made by the noble Earl. Your Lordships will remember that some weeks ago a Royal Proclamation was issued authorizing the calling out of the Army and Militia Reserve. No action has been taken on that Proclamation, and I cannot help thinking that some steps should be taken at an early date which would indicate the intention of Her Majesty's Government as to the calling out of the Reserves, because the uncertainty as to whether they are to be called out or not, and as to the number that may be called out, has a most injurious effect on the circumstances of these men, and also of their employers. A considerable time has now elapsed, and I trust it will be possible for the Government to say what their intention is with respect to the matter?

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN: Could the noble Earl state whether it is still the intention of the Government to proceed to Khartoum? I took down his words, and they were—"We do not contemplate an early advance to Khartoum."

EARL GRANVILLE: In answer to the Questions which have been put to me, I thought the House understood what I stated—namely, that we intended to continue the Wady Halfa Railway, which would be useful for military purposes. With regard to the Suakin-Berber Railway, it is the present intention of Her Majesty's Government to continue it as far as is advantageous for the defence of Suakin itself and the outposts, as the Military Authorities may think necessary. With respect to Khartoum, I stated that we reserved to ourselves entire liberty of action.

LORD NAPIER OF MAGDALA: My Lords, I am not quite certain that I correctly understood the noble Earl

the Minister for Foreign Affairs to say that the Forces in Egypt were to be held as a Reserve to meet any emergency that may happen to the country. Is it the case, then, that if such emergency should arise the Forces would be suddenly withdrawn from Egypt, leaving the country to anarchy? No preparations have been made for any supplementary Force to replace the present troops when withdrawn from Egypt. I trust that Her Majesty's Government will reconsider their decision to abandon their declared intentions regarding the Soudan. Lord Wolseley received the instructions of Her Majesty's Government to take Khartoum. That was their declared intention. In pursuance of that intention the Expedition from Suakin was undertaken. It will be a great national disgrace if we retreat from the Soudan. It cannot be that the power of England, if vigorously exerted, is insufficient to carry out the intentions announced regarding Egypt and to meet any dangers that may arise. We have destroyed a certain amount of civilization in Egypt, which existed to a far greater extent than we were aware of, and I consider that it is our duty to replace the Soudan in that condition from which we threw it down. We have made no increase to our Military Forces notwithstanding the difficulties that surround us. The Militia have not been embodied; the Reserves not called out. It is said that the confidential officer of the Government, the Adjutant General, has demanded 10,000 men to work the present Army system. It is said that the Viceroy of India has demanded 10,000 men more to hold India. But it will be a great disgrace to this country if the Government abandon the Soudan, and I trust they will maintain their original purpose. If we withdraw from Suakin we shall disgrace ourselves in the eyes of the world, and I hope the Government will reconsider that matter.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: My Lords, I very earnestly hope myself that Her Majesty's Government will not follow the advice of the noble and gallant Lord who has just sat down, and engage in military operations in the Soudan for the purpose of spreading civilization in that country. I am one of those who form, it may be, but a small minority in this House, but who do not believe that civilization can be spread very easily by warlike operation; and I must certainly strongly deprecate such an extension of the policy of the Government already announced as would be involved in any attempt of that description. It is perfectly true that the Government last February gave orders under the circumstances which then existed to Lord Wolseley to make an advance upon Khartoum if the military conditions of the country would allow of it. But when that announcement was made there still remained a certain amount of uncertainty as to the fate of General Gordon; and it was perfectly obvious that the first duty of the Government under such circumstances as those was to take whatever steps might be necessary to ascertain fully the fate of that gallant and deeply-lamented man. I certainly never understood the Government to declare the smallest intention of conquering or occupying the Soudan for the purpose of introducing and spreading civilization in that country. For my own part, I certainly heard even the declaration then made with regret, because, while I was as ready as any man in this House to support the Government in taking any measure that might be necessary for ascertaining the fate of General Gordon and fulfilling honourably our engagements and duties in Egypt, I failed to see that these obligations involved the necessity of an advance to Khartoum. I am glad, therefore, to learn now from my noble Friend below me that Her Majesty's Government, while they do not declare their intention of not taking that measure, hold themselves perfectly free with regard to it to follow whatever course under the circumstances of the time may appear to them to be most advisable. I cannot but think that, looking at the complications which have arisen since February last in various parts of the world, Her Majesty's Government are bound to keep for themselves the most perfect freedom of action in the position in which we are now placed. The noble and gallant Lord who has just sat down said—and said, as I think, very truly—that it would be impossible for us, and improper on the part of Her Majesty's Government, to abandon the defence of the frontier of Egypt. But I perfectly understood my noble Friend the Secretary for Foreign Affairs to declare that it was the full intention of

Her Majesty's Government completely to adhere to their obligations with respect to the defence of the frontier so long as they occupy that country. We have duties in Egypt which we must fulfil, but I find it difficult to believe that in the fulfilment of these duties the Government need undertake an advance on Khartoum; and I am very glad to hear that it is their intention to keep themselves entirely free with regard to any such operation.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH: I hope the noble Marquess who has just spoken does not express the sentiments of the Government, because I believe those sentiments are the cause of half, if not two-thirds, of the trouble we are now suffering in India, at the Cape, and in Egypt. Whether the Government were right or wrong in making their solemn pledges in regard to Egypt—and I am of opinion that they have been wrong throughout—it is evident that no confidence can be placed in them by our Allies if they are always prepared to yield finally under the influence of pressure.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: My Lords, I cannot congratulate Her Majesty's Government on the advocacy they have obtained from the noble Marquess, for they are in this position. If they accept that advocacy, they certainly bring themselves under the censure of the noble Duke who spoke just now. None of us, and indeed no sensible man, would object to the disposition of the troops by holding them in hand for any military emergency that might arise or that might affect affairs at large. What we take objection to is the opportunist policy, or no policy, which has distinguished the Government, and which has existed in South Africa and in other countries, and which we apprehend will also exist here. But I did not rise for the purpose of continuing this discussion, and if I did I should find it difficult to do so, because it is difficult to argue with persons who will not argue in reply. I rose for the purpose of asking a Question about another Military Expedition to which no allusion has been made. That Expedition has been fitted out on a very large scale, costing no less than £150,000 per month; it has been in existence some time, and may be in existence for a long time to come. The objects of the Expedition and the conduct of it are very uncertain. I allude to the Expedition under Sir Charles Warren in South Africa, and I want to know whether it is included in the Vote of Credit now asked for, or whether it is to be over and above the £11,000,000 which we are told is to be the amount of the Vote?

THE EARL OF MORLEY: My Lords, one or two Questions have been asked to which I may be permitted to reply. My noble Friend opposite (the Earl of Limerick) has complained that delay has occurred in acting upon the Proclamation calling out the Reserves. I may say that an Army Circular has been issued to-day with regard to the mobilization of the First Class Army Reserve. The terms of the Circular are (1) that a sufficient number of Reservists belonging to regiments having in India battalions which are not up to their establishment will be recalled to the Colours with a view of completing the establishments of battalions in India. This will require about 2,000 men. (2) All the First Class Army Reserves are warned that they may be recalled to the Colours at short notice.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY: Army and Militia?

THE EARL OF MORLEY: I am speaking only of the First Class Army Reserve. At once a certain number of Reserve men, those belonging to the 15 regiments of the battalions now in India, which are at present below their strength, will be recalled to the Colours; and the men belonging to the 14 other regiments will be warned that they may also be recalled to the Colours at very short notice, but they will not be actually recalled pending further instructions. There is no intention at present of calling the Militia Reserve to the Colours. The First Class Army Reserve consists at present of about 39,000 men, and of these about 2,300 will be at once recalled to the Colours for the purpose of making up the full establishment of the regiments in India which are at present below their establishment. In answer to the noble and gallant Lord opposite (Lord Napier of Magdala), I may say that, as regards the Army in Egypt, which has now 20½ battalions of Infantry, the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs did not intend to imply that the whole of that Force might be at once withdrawn and employed as an Army of Reserve elsewhere. What he intended was

that as long as no forward movement was made in the Soudan so large a Force is not required for the safety of Egypt. The battalions—say 10—would thus be relieved, and, supplemented by a like Force from home, would give us a Force equivalent to an Army Corps of Reserve for general service. The noble Earl opposite has referred to Sir Charles Warren's Expedition. That Expedition has been provided for out of the Estimates for the year.

THE EARL OF HARROWBY: My Lords, in the present state of affairs I think we ought not to lose any opportunity of rallying round the Government. It is impossible to overlook the gravity of the announcement made this evening, for if it means anything, it means that the Government are in the greatest possible alarm as to the safety of the Empire at large, and that they think that the dark cloud which has so long threatened on the side of Russia is only too likely to burst. I can imagine nothing more grave than the announcement made to-night, and I think that in view of this great emergency we should all be on one side and support the Government through thick and thin. One reservation only I must make, and it is that if this extraordinary change of policy with regard to Egypt is carried out, the country should be plainly and fully informed what the policy of Her Majesty's Government with regard to Egypt is. If they call upon us to rally round them regardless of Party, we have the right to demand that there shall be a clean breast made with regard to the policy of Her Majesty's Government in Egypt. As a matter of fact, the country is in a position of wild alarm, and it is utterly in the dark as to what we have been doing and are doing in Egypt. If they do really wish that, in the grave emergency they foreshadow, the country as one man should rally round the national flag, we have the right to a clear statement of the views of the Government as to Egypt. We really know nothing as to them. One month we have one policy and another month another. At one moment one party in the Cabinet seems to gain the day, at another moment another party; at one moment it is the Peace party, and at another moment what people vulgarly call the Jingo party. At such a moment a good patriot is only doing his duty in saying that the matter should be cleared up. Do not let it be said that retirement from our position in Egypt is a light matter, and one that may not involve serious cost hereafter. Remember what we found when we deserted Suakin last year after those brilliant victories over Osman Digna. We had to do the work over again and to spend British life and treasure more largely than before. For one, I should wish heartily to support Her Majesty's Government in an emergency like this; but I do feel confident that the people of the country will require some clear explanation of the policy of the Government as to Egypt, if they are to submit to the enormous sacrifices they are called upon to make.

THE EARL OF RAVENSWORTH said, there could be no doubt that all would be ready to stand by the Government in this emergency. He desired to know what provision would be made for the wives and families of the Reserve men when they were called upon to rejoin the Colours?

THE EARL OF MORLEY said, the wives and families of Reserve men recalled to the Colours would be treated, as regarded separation allowances, on the same footing as those of soldiers married with leave.

INFANTS BILL.—(No. 46.)

(*The Lord Fitzgerald.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee, read.

LORD FITZGERALD, in moving "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee," said, that Notice had been given of an Amendment by the noble Earl opposite (Earl Beauchamp) which went to the root and principle of the Bill; and if the Amendment were carried, he should consider it his duty to abandon the Bill. The principle of the Amendment ought really to have been discussed on the second reading of the Bill. The object of the Bill, which had its origin in the other House, was to amend the Common Law which gave the father of a family absolute control over his children to the exclusion of the mother. Under the law great cruelties had been practised and great hardships suffered. The Bill declared that in certain circumstances the mother should be guardian or joint guardian. It had had been erroneously supposed that the

late Earl Cairns was an opponent of the Bill; but he was not. Earl Cairns said that it would interfere largely with social relations, and that the details could not be settled satisfactorily except by a Select Committee; and the Bill had been carefully considered and amended by a Select Committee. The Bill of last year was supported in the other House by the Law Officers of the Crown, the Lord Advocate, Mr. Horace Davey, Mr. Bryce, and 17 Members of the Government. It was opposed by Lord Randolph Churchill and Sir R. Assheton Cross. The present Bill differed in some particulars from that of last year; but its leading principle was to confer upon the mother the right to which she was morally and inherently entitled of appointing guardians for her children in case she survived her husband. Some objection had been taken to the proposal to give jurisdiction in these questions of guardianship to the County Courts. It was said that questions of great delicacy and difficulty might arise unfit for such a tribunal to adjudicate. But he thought it was impossible for any injustice or inconvenience to arise, inasmuch as either party was entitled, without assigning any reason, to require the transfer of the matter to the Chancery Division of the High Court. The Amendment swept away the whole principle of the measure, and if it were carried, he should abandon the Bill.

Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee."—(*The Lord Fitzgerald.*)

EARL BEAUCHAMP said, that the Bill entirely overlooked the interest of the children, which was sacrificed to the sentiment on behalf of the mother. Nothing could be more injurious to the welfare of the children than a divided guardianship, and the law of England had not been unwise in throwing upon the father the entire responsibility of bringing up the children. The mother had not equal rights in the matter with the father. There was no reference in the Bill to the case of the mother remarrying. It was important to remember that, as the father was the head of the family, the mother, on a second marriage, became part of her second husband's family. Then there was no provision for divorced persons, and a divorced woman, whose children had been placed by the Court under the protection of the husband, would still, under the Bill, be entitled on the father's death to the guardianship of the children. If their Lordships passed this Bill, they would be introducing a principle which involved the utmost confusion in our families. The Bill would introduce discord between husband and wife, it would place women in a position of equality with men which by nature they did not possess, and it would open out sources of the gravest disaster in order to meet some exceptional cases which certainly had not been laid before their Lordships. All cases of litigation were cases of difficulty and doubt. What their Lordships had to consider was how our existing law affected our English homes in our every-day life. In his opinion, that law was for the benefit of the children. He did not deny that there were exceptions to the general rule; but for the sake of exceptions which were limited in number, and for which the proposed remedy was exceedingly doubtful, they had no right to upset the principles regulating the relations of a father towards his children. Perhaps he might be told that a Select Committee had carefully considered the Bill; but really this question was one not so much for the consideration of lawyers as for the consideration of fathers of families. The Select Committee did not pay so much respect to the interests, the position, and the duties of fathers of families as they did to the somewhat exaggerated and hysterical view of the case which had been made out for mothers as against fathers. He thought he had now shown that the Bill itself was full of dangerous matter. He quite admitted, however, that there was one point in which the law might be amended with safety. As the law at present stood, the mother did not become guardian of the children if the father made no appointment at all. He thought there could be no doubt that when the guardian nominated by the father was dead, or if the father waived his paternal rights, it was right and proper that the mother should become the guardian of the children. This was one reason why he had hesitated to move the rejection of the Bill; but he thought he had shown that the measure would introduce novel and dangerous principles into our legislation, and therefore he intended to move, in Com-

mittee, the Amendments of which he had given Notice.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR remarked, that if the noble Earl's speech were of any value at all, it did not stop short of the total rejection of the Bill. He had listened to that speech with much regret, because it showed that his noble Friend had not a just appreciation of the legitimate claims and rights of the mothers of this country, and of the scandalous state of the law, which at present entirely ignored them. He had hardly expected to be so soon reminded of the enormous and irreparable loss which that House had sustained in the death of Lord Cairns. The noble Earl had spoken of the Select Committee as if it had been composed of men who approached this question with the feelings of lawyers only. Some of those who sat on that Committee, including himself, might accept such censure; though lawyers, as well as others, were husbands and fathers, and, if influenced at all by professional prejudices, were not likely to be so in the direction of change. But was there a man in that House who would say that Lord Cairns had not considered the question with a mind open to broad and generous views of the rights and interests of fathers and children? He would now make a few observations on the criticisms of his noble Friend. In the first place, there was not in the Bill a single word which interfered with the rights of a father. He denied that a father, after he was dead, was capable of discharging the duties of guardian of his child, and he also denied that any person whom the father might put in his place could possibly succeed to the father's position and to his natural rights, however earnestly he might desire to discharge the duties intrusted to him. The objection of a divided authority had been raised; but surely such an objection would have no validity, because the Bill introduced no change of principle in that respect. As things were now, more guardians than were might be appointed by the father, and the authority might be divided between them. In the event of a disagreement between the guardians, the Bill provided that the Court might be appealed to, and would make such order as might appear to promote the welfare of the children. In his opinion, the welfare of the children was intimately bound up with their relations to their parents, and the law, at all events, had enough of humanity in it to treat the mother as a child's guardian, when there was no other. And what was the title it gave her? The language of the law was "guardian by nature and nurture." He thought it would be a very unfortunate day for their Lordships' House on which such a Bill as this were rejected on such grounds as had been urged against it.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE expressed his fear that the Bill would give rise to a large amount of litigation, which, as their Lordships knew, meant ruin to the purse and continued hostility between the parties concerned. The Bill would, in fact, bring about a totally new state of society. The domestic habits and relations in this country were as good if not better than in any other part of the world. The *onus probandi* of the existence of the evils which this Bill was intended to remedy lay with those who were responsible for the Bill, and yet the noble and learned Lord in charge of the measure had not cited any cases of cruelty which did not come under the law as it is at present, and therefore showed no good cause for new legislation.

LORD INCHIQUIN said, he objected strongly to that clause of the Bill which empowered a mother to appoint a testamentary guardian to act jointly with the father. If a father should object to being associated with a guardian of that kind, he would be compelled to prove before the Court of Chancery his fitness to have the sole charge of his own children.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH thought it would be a great mistake to refer questions of such extreme delicacy as those connected with the custody of children to County Court Judges. He, therefore, on that ground alone, would be prepared to support the rejection of the Bill, if it should be moved, on the third reading.

Motion *agreed to:* House in Committee accordingly.

Clause 2 (Surviving parent to be guardian).

EARL BEAUCHAMP moved, at the end of line 9, to leave out ("if surviving"), and insert ("unless the father shall have by deed or will otherwise appointed"). He thought they should be acting much more wisely by retaining the right which the father now possessed. He believed the system, on the

whole, was conducive to the peace of families. In cases of this kind they usually heard a great deal about the law of other countries. According to the law of the United States, the father had the right of appointing a guardian to his children. That was an argument which ought not to be disregarded. He entreated their Lordships not through the consideration of exceptional cases to upset a well-ordered system of English law which had existed for upwards of 200 years.

Amendment *moved*, in page 1, line 9, leave out ("if surviving"), and insert ("unless the father shall have by deed or will otherwise appointed").—(*The Earl Beauchamp.*)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, that the exact point involved in the Amendment was that though there might have been a divorce through the husband's fault, and though the children might be in the wife's care during their father's lifetime on account of his misconduct, he might by will appoint a guardian who was to supersede the mother.

On Question? Their Lordships *divided*:—Contents 5; Not-Contents 40: Majority 35.

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Remaining Clauses *agreed to*, with Amendments.

The Report of the Amendments to be received on *Friday* next; and Bill to be *printed* as amended. (No. 78.)

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT (1875) AMENDMENT BILL. [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the Friendly Societies Act, 1875—Was *presented* by The Lord GREVILLE; read 1ª. (No. 77.)

House adjourned at a quarter past Seven o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 21st April, 1885.

MINUTES.]—PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Channel Tunnel (Experimental Works), *postponed.*

PUBLIC BILL — *Committee—Report*—Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) (*re-comm.*) [49-134] [*Seventeenth Night*].

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

CHANNEL TUNNEL (EXPERIMENTAL WORKS) BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

SIR EDWARD WATKIN said, that in consequence of an intimation he had received from the Secretary of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain), who had a Motion on the Paper for the rejection of the Bill, he would move that the Bill be read a second time upon that day week.

MR. HICKS: No; this day fortnight.

SIR EDWARD WATKIN said, that if the hon. Member for Cambridgeshire (Mr. Hicks) chose to amend his proposal to that day fortnight, he had nothing to say against it; but his own proposal was to postpone the second reading for a week, with a view, upon that day, of fixing such a day for the discussion as would be most convenient for the right hon. Gentleman and the House in connection with the despatch of important Public Business. He desired to say that last week a similar adjournment had been made, as the night originally fixed was not considered a convenient night for discussing the Bill. He wished now to suggest that a question had since been raised which might very much shorten the discussion whenever it did take place. He understood from the newspapers that the noble Lord the Member for Flintshire (Lord Richard Grosvenor) had stated publicly that the Prime Minister was still in favour—he thought these were the words of the noble Lord—of the construction of a tunnel under the Channel to connect England with the Continent. He (Sir Edward Watkin) would, therefore, suggest that the Prime Minister should say whether he corroborated the statement of the noble Lord, because, in that case, he would be quite prepared, as the issue would be a very short one, and seeing that a General Election was coming on, to move the discharge of the Order for the Second Reading, after that expression of opinion. He thought, however, that from his (Sir Edward

Watkin's) point of view an expression of favourable opinion at this moment would be exceedingly useful in calming certain asperities which were manifesting themselves on the other side of the Channel. If, on the other hand, the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister were now to say that his opinion having been in favour of the construction of a Channel Tunnel, he had altered that opinion, and at no time or under any circumstances would he support the establishment of direct communication between the Continent and this country, he should be equally prepared to move the discharge of the Order for the Second Reading, hoping that he might be more fortunate after the General Election, which might possibly, among other changes, bring about a change of Government. He begged to move that the second reading of the Bill be postponed until that day week.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be read a second time upon Tuesday next." — (*Sir Edward Watkin.*)

MR. HICKS said, that having been the humble instrument in a previous Session—no Member of Her Majesty's Government having risen to oppose it—of causing the Bill to be thrown out, he desired to say a few words upon the proposal of the hon. Baronet. He believed that the large attendance in the House at that moment was in consequence of the feeling entertained by hon. Members as to the importance of the questions at issue in connection with this Bill; and he did not think the general feeling would be in favour of postponing the consideration of the measure for so short a time as a week. If it was to be postponed at all, hon. Members ought to have full Notice, so that they might be able to make arrangements to be in their places to oppose the measure. He felt fortified in expressing that opinion by the fact that on entering the House he heard from the Officers of the House that an understanding had been come to between Her Majesty's Government and the promoters of the Bill for the postponement of the second reading for a fortnight. He, therefore, begged to move, as an Amendment to the proposal of the hon. Baronet, that the second reading be postponed until that day fortnight.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "next," in order to insert the words "5th May,"—(*Mr. Hicks,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the word 'next' stand part of the Question."

SIR EDWARD WATKIN said, he did not object to the proposal of the hon. Gentleman. All he wished was to fix a convenient day consistent with the discharge of the important Public Business now before the House, and also with reference to the convenience of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade.

Question, "That the word 'next' stand part of the Question," put, and *negatived.*

"5th May" *inserted.*

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

Bill to be read a second time upon *Tuesday* 5th May.

QUESTIONS.

LUNACY LAWS—DETENTION OF PAUPER LUNATICS.

MR. J. G. TALBOT asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been called to recent decisions of magistrates as to the detention of pauper lunatics in workhouses pending their admission to lunatic asylums; and, whether he intends to promote such legislation as will make it clear that such detention is legal, in order to prevent the scandal of lunatics being confined in prisons?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: The question is now under consideration in connection with the Lunacy Bill which has been brought in by the Lord Chancellor.

MR. J. G. TALBOT asked if the hon. Gentleman had seen the decision of the magistrate at the Lambeth Police Court, reported in *The Times* of that morning, illustrating the point in question?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL said, he had seen it.

ARMY (CONTRACTS)—BEESWAX.

MR. MARRIOTT asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether notices for tenders for not less than three tons of beeswax for lubricating purposes have

been issued by the authorities at Woolwich; whether the quality specified was the best African beeswax according to a sample; whether in fact the sample was "manufactured wax" prepared from mineral and other substances; whether the authorities made a contract on the basis of this sample; and, whether the jamming of cartridges, of which there have been so many complaints in the Soudan, is due to the combination of this "manufactured wax" with other substances?

Sir ARTHUR HAYTER: Tenders have been issued for beeswax, the supply to be genuine beeswax, not necessarily African, with a minimum melting point. To secure this minimum supplies may be mixed—that is, may consist of various sorts of beeswax in combination; but all must be genuine beeswax, and none manufactured from mineral and other substances. The samples were submitted to and approved by the War Department chemist. The beeswax used has not had anything to do with the jamming of cartridges.

FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND).

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the delays complained of in connection with projects for the construction of Fishery Piers and Harbours in Ireland is due to any action on his part in stopping communication between the Fishery Piers and Harbours Commissioners and the Treasury?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Irish Government have been the medium through which certain correspondence has been carried on between the Treasury and the Fishery Piers and Harbours Commissioners with respect to the allocation of the remaining balance of the fund, but they have stopped no communication whatever. The last letter on the subject, dated the 11th of last month, was addressed to the Fishery Piers and Harbours Commission, and has not yet been replied to.

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—MALIN HEAD PIER.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, How soon the construction of Malin Head Pier (Donegal) is to be commenced, according to the terms of the contract concluded with Messrs. Colhoun, of Derry; whether the estimate of the Irish Board of Works for this pier was £10,000, and whether this estimate was met as follows:—£300 by subscription from the locality; £1,000 loan by the Board of Works, to be repaid in twelve years by the county at large; £1,000 further loan from the Board of Works, to be repaid by a tax on the ratepayers of the district of one shilling in the pound for twelve years; and £7,700 free grant; whether the contract for the pier has been taken at £7,765, and whether a proportionate part of the saving will be returned to subscribers, and a proportionate part deducted from the charge upon the county and district, or whether the saving will be used in further improvement of the harbour, or how it will be applied; whether the Board of Works have declined to furnish to any ratepayer interested a copy of the detailed plan and specification; and, whether, in view of the local interests concerned in the work, the money subscribed in the district, and the taxation to fall upon it in consequence of the construction of the pier, the Government will arrange that a copy of the detailed plan and specification shall be available for examination by the interested ratepayers?

Mr. HIBBERT: The contractors for this pier have been making preparations on the spot, and hope to be vigorously at work early in May. The figures are correctly given by the hon. Member; but it is impossible to say what actual saving will be realized until the works are complete, as there are expenses, such as the pay of the clerk of the works, not included in the contract. A copy of the detailed plans and specifications will be given to the secretary of the Grand Jury if he applies; and full information will be given to any interested person who may apply. A plan showing the position and nature of the work has already been sent to the Rev. Mr. Doherty.

Mr. SEXTON: Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the Irish Government would consider the propriety of allowing the savings made upon the estimates of the contract to be allocated for the commencement of further works?

Mr. HIBBERT: The case stands thus. The Treasury have estimated that

after the probable working expenses, there now remains a balance of £45,000 to be allocated, and they have suggested that the Commissioners should look into the various cases and select those which have strong claims, so that the amount of preliminary future grants should be decided.

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND) BILL.

MR. LEWIS asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Government is prepared to limit the provisions of the Irish Registration of Voters Bill to the necessary provisions relating to Registration of Voters only, in regard to the new Franchise Act, and so promote the withdrawal of all opposition?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I can only say that the Bill, which is down for second reading to-night, contains the provisions which the Government consider necessary to secure the due registration of voters and other objects of a similar character in connection with the new franchise.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (CORRUPT AND ILLEGAL PRACTICES) ACT — PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATES AND FREE BREAKFASTS IN THE EAST END.

MR. LEWIS asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether his attention has been called to a recent announcement in the newspapers that Mr. George Russell, M.P. the Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board, and Liberal candidate for one of the Metropolitan boroughs, was present and spoke at a free breakfast, given on March 24th in Bermondsey by Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild, the Liberal candidate for St. George's-in-the-East, to labourers from the docks situated in that borough, and to a subsequent announcement that Mr. George Russell, M.P. is now about to give a free breakfast in St. George's-in-the-East itself also to labourers from the docks; and, whether it is an infraction of the Corrupt Practices Act for a gentleman to first identify himself with a candidate at a free entertainment in the way Mr. Russell did with Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild, and afterwards to give a similar free entertainment to the same class of people in the borough for which his friend is a candidate?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): I have no personal knowledge of the matters connected with these breakfasts, and therefore I have had to seek information from my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board. I trust that the House, considering the nature of the question, will bear with me while I read a letter which I have received from my hon. Friend on the subject—

"18, Wilton Street, S.W., April 18, 1885.—

"My dear Attorney General,—I am sorry that you should be troubled with inquiries about my personal actions. But as Mr. Lewis has thought right to question you about them, it seems desirable that I should put you in possession of the facts. These dock breakfasts originated with the 'Bitter Cry,' published in 1883. I was invited by Mr. Arnold White to attend one of them in February last. Mr. White is most zealously endeavouring to deal with the great problem of finding employment for the unemployed. His plan is to attend at the docks at an early hour of the morning, when the gates are shut upon the hundreds whose services are not required. When he has means at his disposal, Mr. White invites these men, without any previous notice, to come to a breakfast. They are then addressed, solely in relation to their own position. Each man is asked to give his name and state his case; and after full inquiry endeavours are made to afford them the means of emigration, or to find them employment at home. By means of these breakfasts, which have been given by different donors, upwards of 300 men have since January last been helped to emigrate or provided with work at home. From first to last the movement is entirely unconnected with politics, and at the breakfasts no reference is made to any political subject. From the proceedings at the breakfast on the 24th of March, I understood that these exertions of Mr. White met with the approval of men of all parties. Sir Stafford Northcote, whose original letter I enclose, wrote most kindly and heartily, regretting that he could not be present at the breakfast; but entirely approving the movement and wishing it all success. The right hon. Baronet in his letter says—'I had hoped to be able to attend and say a few words at your breakfast, but I have so much work to get through this morning I find it is impossible to do so.' Among many others, Sir Baldwyn Leighton and Mr. J. W. Lowther were present on this occasion, and many, whose names I need not mention—some were ladies—promised to contribute to the expense of a breakfast, and I gave in my name with others. I had no communication with Baron F. de Rothschild, and acted without his knowledge; I had no voice in the selection of the place; and I had not the slightest notion that any political benefits could accrue to myself or to anyone else from this act of mine. I may mention that I should suppose that not one of the men who have received these break-

fasts is an elector. I fear they would be able to give no better residential qualification than the casual ward in winter, or an arch of London Bridge in summer. I have only to add that my motive has been simply to help some of the poorest of the industrious poor to help themselves. But I should be sorry, even with this object in view, to run the slightest risk of appearing to use treating as a political weapon. Therefore, if you will let me, I will place myself in your hands, and, if you think that, even by misconstruction, this breakfast can by anyone be regarded as illegal, however sorry I may be to send the hungry away empty on Tuesday morning, I will intimate to Mr. White that my contribution must be withdrawn. Forgive me for troubling you, and believe me, sincerely yours, G. W. E. RUSSELL."

Upon that statement every Member of the House is as capable as I am of forming a judgment of the course which my hon. Friend has taken. But as my hon. Friend thought it necessary to throw some responsibility upon me, I, forming the best judgment I could, wrote my hon. Friend a simple reply that he could give the breakfast.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES—REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked the President of the Local Government Board, If he can now state when he expects that any Report of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes will be presented?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The Report as to the Housing of the Working Classes in England and Wales will be presented to Her Majesty in the course of next week. The Scotch Report will probably follow before Whitsuntide, and the Report with regard to Ireland soon afterwards.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE CLERK OF THE CROWN IN DUBLIN.

MR. WARTON asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, What was the annual amount of salary, fees, and emoluments received by Edward Geale as Clerk of the Crown in Dublin; what annual amount, in salary and fees, is it contemplated will be received by George Fottrell who has been appointed temporary holder of that office; what amount of pension is to be paid to Mr. Geale; if the offices of Clerk of the Crown and Clerk of the Peace had been amalgamated on Mr. Geale's retirement, what would have been the saving effected; and, if Mr. Geale had appointed a deputy, approved by the Government, what would have been the saving effected?

MR. HIBBERT: Mr. Geale's average receipts in the last five years were about £1,500 yearly, and his statutory pension is about £1,000 per annum. His successor will receive salary and fees from the same sources; but as the latter fluctuate it is impossible to predict how much his emoluments will be. There are separate Clerks of the Peace for the County and City of Dublin; and it is not possible to say what might have been the financial effect of the amalgamation, though there would probably have been a saving on the present temporary arrangement. The Government have no power to compel Mr. Geale to appoint a deputy, even had this been otherwise desirable; and it is, therefore, unnecessary to consider what would have been the financial effect of such a course.

DECLARATION OF PARIS, 1856.

MR. M'COAN asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the two Despatches of the 13th and 18th of April 1856, which conveyed to Lord Clarendon the approval of Her Majesty's Government of his previously unauthorised signature of the Declaration of Paris?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: In Lord Granville's opinion there would be no public advantage in laying these despatches on the Table, which previous Foreign Secretaries have always declined to produce.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—RAILWAY TO SARAKHS.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is the fact, as stated by the special correspondent of *The Daily News* at Krasnovodsk, that the Military Attaché of the British Embassy at St. Petersburg has been refused permission to visit the railway which is now being made from Krasnovodsk to Sarakhs; and, whether any confirmation has been received from Her Majesty's Minister at Teheran of the following statement, made by the same

correspondent, as to the Russo-Persian frontier:—

"The Russian advance into Turkestan necessitated a more exact delimitation of the Persian frontier from the Caspian to Sarakhs. This work was gone over a year or two ago, and was supposed to have been definitely settled. The boundary was laid down, but now the Russians are taking it upon themselves to determine what had been determined, and to settle where the boundary had been fixed. I understand that one subject of dispute is connected with the Attrek River, near its junction with the Caspian. About forty miles from its mouth this stream splits in two, and these branches flow separately into the bay of Hassan Kuli. The Attrek was settled to be the boundary between Persian and Russian soil; but whether the Commissioners forgot to define which branch of that river was to be the frontier or not I cannot say. Russia now claims the southern fork, and Persia claims the northern. The Russians, I am informed, have taken a very effective means of settling the question; they have constructed, or are constructing, a dam where the northern branch separates, and thus it will cease to exist. The southern branch will thus become the River Attrek, and that as been defined as the frontier?"

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Her Majesty's Government are not aware that the Military Attaché at St. Petersburg has been refused permission to visit the railway in question. The Russo-Persian Frontier as far as Lutfabad is defined in the Treaty of December 9-21, 1881. ("Asia," No. 1, 1882, p. 8.) The appointment of Commissioners to mark out the Frontier was delayed for a long time, as the Russian Commissioner did not reach Teheran until July, 1883. The position of Hassan Kuli was one of the first questions to be decided by the Commission. Details on this subject will be found in "Asia," No. 1, 1884, p. 89. It is the case that the Attrek enters the Caspian by two channels. No information has reached Her Majesty's Government as to the construction of the dam referred to, though rumours on the subject existed some years ago. The question of Hassan Kuli has not, as far as they are aware, been settled yet, as the Commission proceeded to the Eastern instead of the Western end of the Frontier.

CYPRUS (FINANCE, &c.)—REPORTED REVENUE FRAUDS.

MR. GORST asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the loss of revenue in Cyprus from systematic frauds in assessment has, during the last few years, amounted to from £15,000 to £30,000 per annum; whether a collector who, in 1884, reported to the Chief Inspector of Revenue the irregularities, the embezzlement of arrears, and the fraudulent assessments, was dismissed for so doing; whether, on the recent trial of Pappa, the Deputy Inspector, it was proved that the Chief Inspector knew of the frauds in the Famagusta District; whether, on the same trial, the Chief Justice commented on the suppression of evidence on the part of the Government counsel who conducted the prosecution; what charge was brought against the Chief Inspector by the Government of Cyprus; whether he was acquitted after trial, or whether the charge was dismissed by the magistrate in consequence of the non-production of evidence in the possession of the Government of Cyprus; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will cause some impartial and independent inquiry to be made into the history of the revenue frauds in Cyprus?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: No information that we have yet received supports the estimate of loss suggested in the hon. Member's Question. We know nothing of a collector having been dismissed in 1884. As to the third and fourth Questions, if the hon. Member will communicate the grounds on which the suggestion is based, due inquiry shall be made. As to the fifth and sixth Questions, the charge against Mr. Bistachi seems to have been the taking of "hush money." It was dismissed by the magistrate on the ground of the evidence being untrustworthy. We have no reason to believe that evidence was withheld; on the contrary, that much doubtful evidence was admitted for what it was worth. As to the last Question, I can only repeat what I said the other day, that the Secretary of State, before deciding, must await further Reports from the Governor and the Receiver-General.

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE—ELECTORAL DISTRICTS.

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether an elector having a qualification at the present time for the Division of a County, say South Warwickshire, and voting at an election for two candidates, will, when the Division

is divided into single member districts, have a vote in each district, or only in the district in which his qualification is situate?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: No proposal has ever been made, as far as I know, that an elector connected with one division should vote in another.

EGYPT (THE MILITARY EXPEDITION)—THE TROOPS IN THE SOUDAN.

SIR FREDERICK MILNER asked the Secretary of State for War, If it is the case that already more than four per cent. of the Troops now employed in the Soudan are sick; whether the Government are determined to leave the Troops in the Soudan all through the summer months; and, if it is the intention of the Government to complete the Railway from Suakin to Berber, as set out by the Secretary of State for War in his letter to General Graham of the 20th February?

MR. MACFARLANE asked if the noble Lord could tell the average amount of sickness among troops at home and in the British States abroad?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I cannot state the average, as the Returns differ. In reply to the Question of the hon. Baronet, my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary to the War Office said on Friday that, from the circumstances in which the Force is now situated, it is scarcely possible to state the present percentage of sickness. On the whole, the health of the troops is good; but I think it is probable that the percentage of sick exceeds 4 per cent. The replies to the two latter Questions would be more conveniently given after the Prime Minister has made his statement with reference to the Vote of Credit.

EGYPT (THE MILITARY EXPEDITION)—THE TROOPS ON THE NILE.

SIR FREDERICK MILNER asked the Secretary of State for War, If his attention has been called to the following letter from an officer up the Nile, which has been published in the papers:—

"They are supposed to be going to build straw huts for us, but its not begun yet. The sun is most frightfully hot, and the tents we have are really unbearable in the daytime. The thermometer was 112 yesterday in the tents, and this is only March. We have nothing to read and nothing to do all day, and they have stopped the parcel and newspaper post, and we are only to get one newspaper a regiment, and we all want things so badly, and by the parcel post being stopped we can get nothing. The men have no clothes, except the rags of what they started in, and there are none for them;"

if he has any reason to doubt the accuracy of this report; and, if not, whether he will at once take steps to improve the lot of our brave soldiers up the Nile; and, if he will cause inquiries to be made, and inform the House of the exact number of soldiers now sick from climatic causes?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON, in reply, said, that of course they were aware that the heat on the Nile, and also at Suakin, was very great; but they had not received any Report showing that any extraordinary suffering now prevailed among the troops. Their arrangements for the troops were made locally. A large supply of clothing and other requisites for the troops had been sent out; but it was impossible to state how far the means of transport at the disposal of the authorities in Egypt enabled them rapidly to distribute them. The arrangements in regard to hutting and other accommodation for the troops were under the control of the General Officer commanding; but they had not at present a detailed Report on the subject.

THE DARDANELLES AND THE BLACK SEA.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he can state what protection would be given to British vessels in the Black Sea in case the Dardanelles were closed during hostilities between this Country and Turkey; also, whether there is any truth in the report that the Governments of Austria, France, and Germany have made representations to the Government of Turkey, on the subject of the closing of the Dardanelles, in case of hostilities between this Country and Russia; and, if he can give any information to the House on the substance of such communications? He would not press for an answer to the first Question if it were inconsistent with the public interests.

MR. GLADSTONE: I accept the offer of the hon. Member, and will, therefore, not answer the first Question, which relates to a contingency that has not arrived, and which does not appear

to be probable on the face of it. I can assure the hon. Gentleman that at the present moment it is hardly possible for a person holding my Office to deal with the subjects that demand my immediate attention, and it is quite beyond my power to undertake to investigate matters of this kind, however interesting. The second Question, however, refers to a matter of fact. As to that, I am able to inform the hon. Gentleman that no information has been received at the Foreign Office, either from Turkey or from any of the Governments named in the Question to any such effect.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—ATTACK BY THE RUSSIANS ON THE AFGHANS AT PENJDEH—SIR PETER LUMSDEN'S DESPATCH.

MR. GLADSTONE: I may perhaps be allowed to refer to the question of the intelligence received from Sir Peter Lumsden. I was obliged to inform the House yesterday that it was in my power to communicate very little in addition to what I had previously stated; but I signified to the House that important instructions had been addressed to Sir Peter Lumsden on the 10th of April, to which we had not then received a reply, but to which we were in constant daily expectation of receiving one, so far as one can use those words with regard to a country with which communication is somewhat variable. That reply has been received to-day. It contained what I may call a full and detailed account of what Sir Peter Lumsden considers to be the main points of the case connected with the painful incident of the attack near Penjdeh. And it will serve to show how seriously Sir Peter Lumsden has been at issue with General Komaroff on important points connected with that attack. It would not be in my power —it is a long telegram, entering into details with particulars for which we had specifically asked—it would not be in my power to state its effect in a few words. But we will lay it on the Table, as it is a document which is, I think, complete in itself, and gives important and valuable information to the House. In fact, it has been laid on the Table, and it will be circulated generally to-morrow morning, and copies of it will, I believe, be accessible to hon. Members in the Vote Office at an early hour this evening.

LORD JOHN MANNERS: Is it proposed also to lay on the Table the telegram that was received on Friday night from Sir Peter Lumsden?

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir. Any question with regard to that telegram would embrace also the previous series of telegrams, and with regard to these I am very doubtful whether they would add anything to the information contained in the telegram received to-day. I do not refuse to review it if it is desired for the purpose of examining exactly how that matter stands; but the series contain a good deal of hearsay, a good deal of here-and-there expressions of opinion, and do not present a narrative of what took place. I think that when hon. Gentlemen have seen and considered the telegram received to-day, they will be able to say whether it is desirable to press us to examine the old telegrams in order to see what portions should be laid on the Table.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Then none but this particular telegram will be presented; none of the other communications will be produced?

MR. GLADSTONE: Not at present.

EGYPT — RUMOURED NEGOTIATIONS FOR OCCUPATION BY A TURKISH FORCE.

MR. M'COAN asked the Prime Minister, Whether there was any truth in the generally reported statement that negotiations were either in progress, or had been already completed between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of Turkey for the occupation of Egypt by a Turkish Force under English officers?

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir; I have nothing to communicate on that subject. I am not aware that there have ever been any negotiations on a proposal corresponding with that to which the hon. Member refers.

Afterwards,

MR. GLADSTONE said: In the absence of any Notice, I did not know whether I could speak very confidently, and therefore I gave a limited answer to the Question of the hon. Member. But after conferring with my right hon. Friend near me for a moment I have to say that there is no foundation whatever for the Question which the hon. Member (Mr. M'Coan) has put.

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE — THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the House would have in its hands when the Budget was being introduced a statement of the Receipts and the Expenditure, as was the case last year?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): Before the Budget is brought in I will follow the rule observed last year.

NAVAL AND MILITARY OPERATIONS, 1885-6 (VOTE OF CREDIT).

RESOLUTION.

Mr. GLADSTONE: In laying this Vote of Credit on the Table, Her Majesty's Government have engaged that it should be accompanied by a brief explanation, which will contain nothing in the way of apology, argument, or controversy, but the whole object of which is to give to the House of Commons a clear idea of the course we are now taking and the meaning of the Vote proposed. The House of Commons was apprised soon after its meeting in February that it would be necessary to make provision for military charges in the Soudan, not only during the unexpired portion of the year 1884-5, but also during the financial year 1885-6. At that period we had in view the expenditure in the Soudan, and expenditure in the Soudan alone; but circumstances which have since occurred, with the greater portion of which the House is acquainted, have obliged us to widen our investigations and greatly to enlarge our demand for funds. We have found it necessary to review our military position, not with reference to the Soudan only, but with reference to the general condition of public affairs and to all the possible demands upon the military resources of the Empire. We feel that it is necessary at the present moment, in our judgment, to hold all these resources as far as possible, and including the Forces in the Soudan, available for service wherever they may be required. In these circumstances, the Vote for which we are now asking does not include any provision of money for further offensive operations in the Soudan, or for military preparations with a view to an early advance upon Khartoum. It does, however, include items having reference—as will be readily understood—to such contracts or undertakings as, being already considerably advanced, could not be stopped with any appreciable advantage, and which, at the same time, do not involve any necessity for hostile action. For example, we provide for the river steamboats which have already been contracted for, and for the completion of what is known as the Wady Halfa Railway—the railway beginning at Wady Halfa—towards which extensive preparations have already been made, and which will have advantages altogether apart from military necessities. As to the ulterior steps beyond what I have stated, we reserve our entire liberty of action, subject to the discretion and control of Parliament. Perhaps I ought to add—though it is hardly necessary—that what I have now stated with respect to the Soudan does not imply any change of view or intention as to the defence of Egypt and its frontier. There are many considerations of importance—moral, military, political, and physical—which bear upon the question of the operations in the Soudan. I refer to them now merely to say that the whole of them are entirely beyond my present purpose, that purpose being merely to explain the basis of the Vote; and I may repeat for the convenience of the House the most important words I just now used—words in which I declared that we do not in the Vote now laid on the Table ask for any provision of funds for further offensive operations in the Soudan, or for any military preparations with view to an early advance on Khartoum; but that we solicit Parliament to hold the military resources of the Empire, including the Force in the Soudan, available for service wherever they may be required. I think it may be convenient that I should add an explanation of one or two details which fall within the scope of what I have already said. The Suakin Railway was projected and commenced as a military work in support of the Nile Army; but with the cessation of active operations on the Nile any considerable extension of the railway will be suspended. But until some other permanent arrangement can be made, it will be necessary to hold the Port of Suakin with British or Indian troops. The experience of last summer

has proved to us that in order to hold Suakin for any useful purpose—indeed, in order to hold it without undue exposure and risk to the garrison, particularly including their health—it may be necessary to occupy one or more positions in the neighbourhood of that place. The Military Authorities will be consulted as to the positions which it may be considered necessary to occupy with that view; and as to the point up to which it will be necessary, on the grounds I have already stated, that the construction of the railway should now be carried. It is proposed to complete the Suakin Railway up to the point which may be determined as best for the garrison; and while that is being done—for it must take some little time—we shall consider our future course as to any prosecution of this railway beyond that point. We consider, Sir, that if the Nile Railway be, as we think it is, an advantageous work for general purposes, the prosecution of it need not be discontinued, as it does not involve any question of hostility. The addition to our resources which will be effected by holding the Soudan Force available for service elsewhere is an addition quite independent of the demands which have been recently made upon Her Majesty's Government by the Government of India for large reinforcements. These demands will be entirely met by provision at home, leaving the Force released in Egypt and the Soudan as an additional reserve for employment in India or elsewhere. I may perhaps say—my noble Friend the Secretary of State for War has furnished me with the information—that in the total Vote it is proposed to provide, first, for the Government of India, as already stated; and, secondly, for the mobilization at home of a Force which, with that released in Egypt and the Soudan, will constitute a complete Army Corps; thirdly, for guns, submarine mines, and defences in addition to, and in aid of, naval preparations. I will now state in outline the particulars of the Vote. Perhaps I may first explain to the House the change which has taken place in our views as to the order of Business, which was suggested—although I will not say it was asked for—by the short statement or question of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote). When we first had to contemplate asking the House for a Vote of Credit it had reference to the Soudan alone, and as it was to be asked for with reference to the Soudan alone, besides that the amount was not so large, it was one with regard to which the question of time was not in our view of very great importance; and, consequently, we intended to propose that Vote to the House after the Budget; but, considering the important change that has taken place—the change in the proposition which the Government now make to the House, and the great change of their having to introduce other and larger items of great consequence into the Vote—and with reference to what I shall term special preparations, we think now that the considerable addition to the military expenditure of the year which it is our duty to ask Parliament to make should be distinctly submitted to Parliament at a very early day, and before we determine finally upon the financial proposition which will be necessary in order to enable us to meet the charge. The general principle upon which our arrangements are made is that before the Budget is submitted to the House the general scheme of expenditure is sufficiently known and sanctioned, though all its details have not been fixed. This is so considerable an addition to the annual Expenditure, that we believe it will be better that we should pursue a course founded on that basis on the present occasion; and, therefore, our proposal is to submit this Vote of Credit to the House for its sanction, if it should meet with approval from the House, on Monday next—which will, I think, give the House sufficient time for its consideration—and to postpone the Financial Statement of my right hon. Friend from Thursday to Thursday next week. Now, Sir, the total sum for which we ask the House by this Vote is £11,000,000. The sum is put in one Vote upon administrative grounds, but it is divided in that Vote between what I have termed the remaining charges relating to the Soudan, and what I have termed special preparations other than the Soudan; and I think it is a fact that, in point of law, we should be enabled to effect a transfer from one portion of this Vote to the other without any previous explanation to the House. I wish to state distinctly that we shall not effect any transfer whatever from the head which

relates to special preparations to the head relating to the Soudan without full previous communication to Parliament. The House will, therefore, understand that the Government entirely gives up its discretion in that respect. Of the £11,000,000 I have mentioned, the remaining charge for the Soudan stands at £4,500,000. Of this £4,000,000 would be in the technical division military charges; out of that sum £750,000 would have relation to the Suakin Railway, for which very considerable cost has already been incurred, and £400,000 would have relation to the Nile or Wady Halfa Railway, making in all £1,150,000. Taking the military charge at £4,000,000, there would be also a naval charge of £500,000 in connection with operations in the Soudan. I may say, at once, it refers to the removal of the troops from one point to another. Under the head of special preparations we ask for the sum of £6,500,000. Of this sum, again, the House will please to understand that I am not able to speak with the rigid technicality of an Estimate; but the description I give is prepared in the Departments according to the best understanding they can form of the respective sums that will be required for each purpose. Upon that basis, the expenditure of these £6,500,000 would be approximately — for military charge, £4,000,000; for naval charge, £2,500,000. Under the head of special preparations there are £4,000,000 for military charges, including £1,150,000 for railways, and £500,000 for the Navy in connection with the Soudan. Thus we have £6,500,000 and £4,500,000, making together the total I have mentioned, £11,000,000. In conclusion, I can only say that we are sensible of the gravity of the proposal which we now make under a deep sense of our responsibility to the Crown and to the Empire. While we count with confidence on the liberality and patriotism of Parliament for meeting every just demand, our course, it is perhaps hardly necessary for me to say, will continue to be, in all our relations with Foreign Powers, what, as far as our intentions went, it has been already—that is to say, our aim and desire are, if it be possible by pacific means, to obtain a just and honourable settlement of every controversy in which we are, or in which we may be, involved.

Estimate *presented*,—of the Sum required to be Voted, beyond the ordinary Grants of Parliament, towards defraying the Expenses which may be incurred during the year ending the 31st March 1886—(1.) For Remaining Charges in the Soudan and Upper Egypt; (2.) For Special Naval and Military Preparations—£11,000,000.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: The statement of the right hon. Gentleman, both in what it actually contains and what it implies, is so important that I do not propose to say much upon the subject at the first blush. I cannot, however, help noticing the change, the change in the arrangements which the Government propose in the order of Business. I regret that we should have the Budget delayed; at the same time, if it appears to the Government to be important that they should proceed rapidly with that portion of this Vote which refers to special preparations, I can quite understand that it may be necessary and desirable to lay aside or postpone other Business for a time in order to arrive at the consideration of that very important proposal. It is one the magnitude of which, and the circumstances under which it is brought forward, must at once strike the House with a sense of its gravity, and impose caution upon us in dealing with it. With regard to one part of the statement of the right hon. Gentleman—that relating to the expenses in connection with the Soudan—I am not entirely satisfied with the right hon. Gentleman's statement; and if it were not for the fact that this question is coupled with another which requires careful attention, and which I should be most sorry to damage by premature criticism, I should feel it necessary to make some observations upon the subject. I do not think the Government are dealing with the Soudan Question, if it can be regarded as a question by itself, in a manner that would be satisfactory to the House. We ought not to be asked to spend money, and especially to give Votes of Credit, for operations in the Soudan without a fuller and more complete statement of the policy of Her Majesty's Government.

MR. GLADSTONE: I have not even attempted to sketch the policy of the Government.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: When the right hon. Gentleman states that he is going to ask for the large sum of £4,500,000 for expenditure in the Soudan, I think it is only reasonable that Her Majesty's Government should give us full and complete explanation of their policy. I understand, however, that we may look for that statement when the time comes for the question to be raised. With regard to the matter as a whole, I am glad to hear that the Government intend to proceed rapidly; and if it is necessary for the purpose to postpone the Budget, of course I shall make no objection to that course being taken. If the Government find it more convenient that the Budget should follow the statement, that is a course to which, I think, the House will offer no objection.

Estimate referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be *printed*. [No. 155.]

ORDER OF THE DAY.

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PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION) (*re-committed*) BILL.—[BILL 49.]

(*Mr. Gladstone, The Marquess of Hartington, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Attorney General, The Lord Advocate, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 17th April.*]

[SEVENTEENTH NIGHT.]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

SEVENTH SCHEDULE.

COUNTIES AT LARGE.

NUMBER OF MEMBERS AND NAMES AND CONTENTS OF DIVISIONS.

PART III.

IRELAND.

MR. HEALY, in moving an Amendment, in page 101, to leave out from line 21 to line 4 of page 102, and insert—

"Barony of North-West Liberties of Londonderry.

Barony of Tikeeran (except the parish of Learmount, and that part of the parish of Banagher which is in this barony).

Barony of Kennaught (except the parish of Dungiven, and that part of the parish of Banagher which is in this barony, and except that part of the parish of Bovevagh which is bounded by the parishes of Dungiven and Errigal.

Barony of Coleraine.

Barony of North-East Liberties of Coleraine.

No. 2.—The South Londonderry Division.

Barony of Tikeeran (parish of Learmount, and that part of the parish of Banagher which is in this barony).

Barony of Kennaught (parish of Dungiven, and that part of the parish of Banagher which is bounded by the parishes of Dungiven and Errigal).

Barony of Loughinshollin,"

said, it was necessary to call the attention of the Committee to the manner in which the Boundary Commissioners had acted in regard to this division, and the changes which they had made in the division as originally laid down. In the first place, he was reminded that the hon. and learned Gentleman Her Majesty's Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) was represented before the Commissioners by counsel. ["No, no!"] He understood that hon. and learned Gentleman denied the soft impeachment; but the counsel who appeared at the inquiry stated that he represented Mr. Walker, and that he was exceedingly dissatisfied with the boundaries which had been agreed upon. Now, he (Mr. Healy) must say, that for any counsel who appeared on behalf of a Law Officer of the Government, or of any Member of the Government, to attempt to intimidate the Commissioners by alleging that fact was extremely unsatisfactory, unprecedented, and he might almost say shocking, and especially so when viewed from a point of general policy. What must have been the effect produced on the minds of the Commissioners when they were told that the Irish Solicitor General, and a strong supporter of Her Majesty's Government—namely, the hon. Baronet the Member for the county of Londonderry (Sir Thomas M'Clure), were disappointed at the arrangement which had been made. He would say, at the outset, that the inquiry was prejudiced to a very large extent by that unfortunate statement. He was quite willing to admit that the proposal put forward by the hon. and learned Gentleman was not adopted; and that it would have been worse for the popular Party in Derry than the scheme finally adopted by the Commissioners. As he had said on a former occasion, the object of the Commissioners had been, not to jerrymander the divisions altogether, but just to jerrymander them enough; and the proposal

of the hon. and learned Gentleman to draw a line through the barony of Loughlinshollin, which was largely Catholic, was so indecent and outrageous that it was even too much for the strong stomachs of the Boundary Commissioners. The Irish Members had been attacked by the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) for having imported religious distinctions and some sectarian bitterness into this controversy. For his own part, he altogether repudiated any charge of the kind. The religious element had been introduced into the discussion by the Commissioners themselves, who, at the instigation of the Tory Party, had undertaken the inquiry with a theodolite in one hand and a Religious Census Table in the other. In point of fact, the Religious Census Table, from first to last, had been the guide which had been followed in Ulster. And what had happened? The county of Derry had been divided into four baronies, one of them being the barony of Loughinshollin—a very large Catholic barony; and the question arose—what parishes of the Northern baronies were to be thrown into the division which comprised that barony? The original scheme of the Commissioners was to throw in bits of the barony of Tikeeran and the barony of Kennaught in order to obtain the requisite amount of population. That provision would have given the popular Party a Member for South Derry, the Catholics being 47 or 48 per cent of the entire county. Seeing how persons of other denominations were divided, it was not too much to say that the Catholic Party, under that arrangement, would have been entitled to one Member. It happened that in the lower division, as it was at first arranged, the Catholics, not to speak of the Nationalists, would have had a majority of over 2,000. When that fact came out the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland, who, of course, was extremely well informed with regard to the county of Londonderry, and was kept well supplied with information by his agents, immediately presented a counter-proposal to the Commissioners. Before he (Mr. Healy) touched upon that proposal he wished to draw the attention of the Committee to this extraordinary fact—that with the exception of the counties of Dublin and Kildare, the scheme for the county of Londonderry was the last issued by the Commissioners. It was the third of the schemes published, and it was not kept back until the very last moment without a purpose, for the operations of the Commissioners had not been of such an unbiased character that it could be supposed they had been occupied in the interim with an entirely innocent investigation. However, in spite of the delay they were not able to hit the mark accurately enough for the Solicitor General; but, at all events, the fact remained that the county represented by the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite supplied nearly the last scheme that was made public. However, when the Commissioners held their inquiry the hon. and learned Gentleman was represented at it by counsel, who protested, in the strongest terms, against the scheme of the Commissioners. He would leave the House to imagine what kind of impression was produced on the minds of the Commissioners, connected as they were with Dublin Castle, when they were informed that Her Majesty's Solicitor General was opposed to their scheme; and he would ask what guarantee of fair play the Nationalists had in the matter? The Government, or the Whig Party, were represented upon the Commission by Mr. Piers White; the Tories had two representatives—Major Macpherson and Captain Johnston; and the Irish Official Party were represented by a member of the Irish Local Government Board—Mr. Burke; while the popular Party, with whose constituents the Government were dealing in five out of six cases, were not afforded a single representative. They were not even consulted in regard to the names of any individual appointed upon the Commission. The Conservatives had two representatives, and the Whigs two; but the Nationalists had no representative at all, although 85 out of 103 seats to be dealt with were Nationalist constituencies. He thought that fact alone was sufficient to damn the Report made by the Commission in the opinion of every fair-minded man. In the next place, they had the operations of the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland. Perhaps it was indiscreet for the Liberal agent in Derry to have employed Dr. Todd, notwithstanding the fact that he was a distinguished bar-

rister; and it might have been indiscreet for Dr. Todd to have avowed to the Commissioners that he represented the Solicitor General for Ireland. He (Mr. Healy) had no doubt that by-and-bye the hon. and learned Gentleman would get up at the Table and tell the Committee that Dr. Todd was altogether unjustified in stating that he represented him (Mr. Walker); because the hon. and learned Gentleman could not but feel the extraordinary position in which the Commissioners were placed by having a distinct statement made to them that one of the chief Law Officers of the Crown in Ireland, possessing a seat in the House of Commons, disapproved of the Commissioners' scheme. He would ask the Tory Party in the House what interest they had in backing up this scheme, which was a scheme for returning two Whigs for the county of Derry, although the Tories had not a single Member in that county at present, except for the city of Derry; and the present scheme of division no more interested the Tory Party than it interested any political Party not connected at all with the county. It was purely a Whig scheme, from first to last; for the Tories would have no chance of returning a Member for Derry. He asked, then, was it right or fair, in the interests of decency, for a lawyer and advocate to get up in Court and tell the Boundary Commissioners that Her Majesty's Solicitor General disapproved of their scheme? He maintained that it was a monstrous attempt to interfere with the judgment and liberty of action of the Commissioners, and that it was an indecent attempt to wrest from them a scheme in favour of the views of the Government themselves, and what they considered to be best for their own purposes. No doubt the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland would say that this was not his scheme, or that of the Government. How dared the hon. and learned Gentleman have a scheme at all? He had no business whatever to put forward a scheme for any county, even although he happened to represent that county in the House of Commons. The hon. and learned Gentleman could not sink his position as one of Her Majesty's Advisers, and as one of the Gentlemen whose advice the Lord Lieutenant was bound to take when he appointed this Commission. He should like to know what English Members would have said if the Attorney or Solicitor General had gone down to Taunton, or Durham, and said—"We disapprove of the scheme of the Commissioners?" What would have been said in England if such a declaration had been made—if the declaration received no disclaimer from Her Majesty's Government? It might suit the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland in that House to disclaim the action of Dr. Todd; but he did not disclaim it at the time, or before the Commissioners sent in their Report—which was the proper time to make it, if the disclaimer was to have any effect at all. It was only after the hon. and learned Gentleman found that the views of his representative had been adopted, and when the statements of Dr. Todd had been reported, and made the subject of adverse comment in the Dublin newspapers, that the hon. and learned Gentleman came out with a disclaimer. He (Mr. Healy) contended that the present scheme was tainted by the action of the hon. and learned Gentleman; and on that ground, if upon no other, he would ask the Government to send it back to the Commissioners, and call upon them to make a fresh Report, seeing that it was a scheme which had been obtained, to a large extent, by undue influence, if not by actual intimidation. What were the merits, or rather the demerits, of the original scheme? What fault was to be found with the original scheme? As far as he knew, no fault whatever could be found with it. The Commissioners said—and this was a remarkable point, to which he would call the attention of the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke)—that Mr. James O'Doherty, the solicitor, and others who represented the Nationalists, had contented themselves with saying that they were satisfied with the proposition of the Commissioners, and that they objected to any alteration of it. What was that but a sneer, with the intention of implying that the Nationalists had put themselves in the wrong by not proposing any scheme of their own? The Commissioners then went on to make a very remarkable admission. They said that the alternative scheme was supported by maps and Schedules, put forward by Mr. Lane, the solicitor for the Conservative Party, and by Dr. Todd, the

counsel for the Liberal Party. "Both of these schemes," they added, "concurred to a certain point." No doubt, both of them concurred in cutting off people of the barony of Loughinshollin from their co-religionists. Both Whig and Tory concurred in that; and, therefore, the Commissioners said that it would be an improvement upon their original proposal, and they agreed to provide that the barony of Kennaught should not be divided, as had been proposed originally. Probably the defence of the Government would be that the present scheme of the Commissioners only divided one barony; whereas the original scheme divided two. The right hon. Baronet had pointed out that the area of the Derry boundaries was divided only in one instance now. That would have been an admirable argument if the Government had adopted it in the case of Armagh, Donegal, Tyrone, or Down, or in any other single instance in connection with an Irish county; and if the right hon. Baronet put forward that make-believe and absurd argument, he (Mr. Healy) would only say that, on the Report stage of the Bill, he would call upon the right hon. Gentleman to re-propose the old divisions of Armagh, Donegal, Tyrone, and Down, or otherwise the argument would put him entirely out of court; and, certainly, what was sauce for the goose was sauce for the gander. The Commissioners went on to say that these detached parishes contained a population of 9,000 persons, and that, by leaving them united to their own baronies, a more compact division was formed. But where was the compactness of the division? He defied any Member of the Government to show in what the compactness consisted. The Commissioners said that the two baronies under the old scheme were divided by a high and almost uninhabited range of mountains; but was not that the case in the county of Donegal? How was that argument allowed to hold good in the case of Donegal? Kilmacreenan was separated by mountains, and utterly uninhabited spaces of ocean—visited only by herrings and seagulls from Innishowen, yet both were shamelessly united in one division. If that argument had been used in the case of Donegal, it would have been entirely worthless, in the view of the Government; but as this was a case in which the Government were anxious to suit their own purposes, they introduced the argument of separation by a range of mountains. It must be borne in mind that in no other case had such a ground been allowed to stand in the way of the connection of one district with another; and in this case, under the old scheme, the population was entirely homogeneous. It was a Catholic population, having intimate communications with each other—one in blood and in religion, and also in language; and also, from a geographical point of view, far more compact than the division which had been substituted for it. For the Commissioners, who scarcely spent an entire hour over the matter, to set up their opinion against that of the inhabitants of the district was simply hypocrisy and audacity. The Commissioners went on to state, in their Report, that the suggested improvement was one which recommended itself, and that it necessitated a corresponding reduction from Division No. 1, in order to make up and complete Division No. 2. Nevertheless, it was a remarkable fact that the parishes struck out were parishes containing a purely Catholic population, and that the two parishes put in from the barony of Coleraine contained a purely Protestant population. As a matter of fact, out of the barony of Coleraine, the Commissioners had taken the two most Protestant parishes of the entire division; and out of the original Northern Division they had struck out the two most Catholic parishes; and this course could only be defended by arguments which it was admitted had no force in regard to other counties—such as the counties of Armagh, Donegal, Tyrone, and Down. It was monstrous, then, that the Nationalist Party should be attempted to be stalled off by this miserable threadbare argument. First of all, he would state to the Committee the religious effect of the scheme. In the original scheme of the Commissioners the Southern Division had a majority of 3,000 Catholics. By the present scheme of the Commissioners, a majority of 3,000 Protestants had been secured. Wherever any change had been made in Ulster, time after time and in county after county, the effect of the change had been to put the Catholics in a minority; and therefore the action of the Commissioners and of the Government was capable of but one interpreta-

tion. These schemes bore the brand of infamy upon them, and so long as these boundaries were allowed to exist they would be a monument of the bigotry, the prejudice, and the partiality of the Commissioners appointed by Lord Spencer. In Derry, as in the case of Down, Donegal, Armagh, and Tyrone, every change which had been made told against the popular Party; and, bearing in mind that in no single instance had the Tory Party come forward and asked for an alteration which had not been adopted, it was impossible to draw any other conclusion than that the object was to keep the Nationalists down as far as possible. The two Whig Representatives and the two Tories upon the Commission had put their heads together to cheat and chouse the Nationalists out of the rights to which they were fairly entitled. How did the Government defend their scheme? They threw out the parishes of Learmount, Dungiven, and Moville, and put in their stead from the barony of Coleraine the Protestant parishes of Aghadowey and Desertoghill. He would ask the Government for some explanation upon another point—namely, why it was that they had taken so much of these parishes? Why was it that there were now 3,000 more persons in the South Derry Division than in the North Derry Division? Surely it was not necessary to take so large a portion of these parishes if they only wanted to equalize the population. In the original scheme the number in each division was nearly equal; but now, for the purpose of swamping the Catholics in the barony of Loughinshollin, they took out 3,000 Protestants from the barony of Coleraine. They had had mountains and lakes flung in their faces, compactness, the squareness of the barony, and everything except a frank admission, which, of course, the Government could not with decency make, that the design from first to last was to deprive the Nationalists of their rights by means of fraud and chicane. He viewed the boundaries now proposed by the Bill with all the more apprehension, because he believed that the Government had made them, although that assertion would, doubtless, be denied, not merely for the purpose of Parliamentary areas, but for the purpose of Local Government arrangements hereafter, so that not merely were the Nationalists to be swindled now, but later on they were to be equally swindled when the areas in connection with the Local Government Boards were formed. Lord Spencer appeared to have pointed out, in his secret instructions to the Commissioners, that these areas would be subsequently used for Local Government purposes; so that not only would the popular Party be swamped at the present moment in the constituencies in connection with the return of Representatives to Parliament, but later on, when the Local Government scheme was on the anvil, the areas now applotted would be rendered available for cheating the popular Party in the North in the matter of Local Government Boards. He believed that that was really one of the main reasons which had influenced the Government. He would only say, in conclusion, that turn where they might in the case of these counties—

"The trail of the serpent is over it all."

In all other cases in the South of Ireland, in over 90 constituencies, except Dublin, Kerry, and an island in Mayo, no change whatever had been made in the schemes of the Commissioners; but no less than 11 changes had been made in the nine counties of the North of Ireland. There were changes in Down, in Antrim, in Belfast, in Derry, in Tyrone, in Armagh, in Donegal—and only two practically throughout the rest of Ireland—namely, in Dublin and in the county of Kerry. What did it all mean? Could they ever succeed in eradicating from the minds of the popular Party the feeling that they had been choused and cheated, and defrauded of their rights? The boundaries of county after county in Ulster had been changed, and complaint after complaint had been made in that House by those who represented the popular feeling. The Tory Party and the Whig Party had no complaint whatever to make. It was the Nationalists alone, who were not represented on the Commission, who were compelled to stand up in the House of Commons and put forward their claims, and urge their grievances, although they knew beforehand that the compact which existed between the two Front Benches would prevent them from securing their rights or obtaining justice. He trusted that, at any rate, this debate would prove to the people of the North of Ire-

land that they had nothing to expect in the shape of justice from the Government of Dublin Castle, or from any Commission which Earl Spencer might appoint. They had been cheated once before by the Commission appointed under the Land Act. They were being cheated now by a Commission under the Redistribution Bill. Whatever Commission Lord Spencer appointed, it would be found that he was unable to give a fair and decent representation to the popular or Catholic Party. Every Commissioner was appointed in the Tory or Whig interest; and so long as these divisions lasted they would recall to the popular mind the unfairness, indecency, and fraud of the British Government in Ireland.

Amendment proposed,

In page 101, to leave out from the words "The Baronies of," in line 21, to the word "Shanlongford," in line 35, and insert the words "Barony of North-West Liberties of Londonderry."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Schedule."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan had stated once again what he had said before—that some secret instructions had been given by Lord Spencer to the Boundary Commissioners with regard to the alterations they ought to effect in the original scheme. If so, such instructions were so secret that he himself (Sir Charles W. Dilke) did not know of them. But even beyond that extraordinary secrecy with regard to himself, he was bound to say that Lord Spencer had authorized him to state that nothing of the kind had taken place. The hon. and learned Gentleman had alluded before to the presence at the inquiry of a legal gentleman, who said that he appeared for the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker). That statement was also inaccurate.

MR. HEALY said, that it had appeared in the public Press, where it had gone uncontradicted as having been made by Dr. Todd himself.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he had had some communication with the Members for the county of Derry, and they denied that they were in any way represented before the Commissioners. But however that might be, if his hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General for Ireland had felt inclined to attend before the Commissioners himself, he would have been altogether justified in doing so. For his own part, he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had been present at the inquiry which took place in regard to his own division; and, as a matter of fact, he had taken an active part in the proceedings.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, that occurred in England, and not in Ireland.

MR. HEALY remarked that, while the Liberals were represented upon the Commission, the National Party were not.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he would only say what, so far as he was personally concerned, was the fact. He now came to the merits of this particular case. There had been a Paper laid upon the Table of the House, in which the reasons of the Commissioners for making this change in their scheme were submitted. The alterations which had been made in the original scheme had been made in consequence of its being found that the maps, which formed the basis of the original scheme, did not show the physical conformation of the country. There was a range of mountains which ran North and South, and the present scheme followed the geographical arrangements. He did not think it was desirable to carry a division across a mountainous range; and there had been several cases in England where hills much less considerable had been taken into view by the Boundary Commissioners. The hon. and learned Member (Mr. Healy) complained that the result of the change had been to make a difference of 3,000 between the population of the Northern and of the Southern Divisions; but the Northern Division would contain three large towns, and it was necessary to allow for an increase of the population in those towns.

MR. HEALY remarked, that Londonderry had a Member already, and was not included in the county divisions.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he only wished to point out that the tendency of the population in the neighbourhood of large towns was to increase; whereas in the rural districts of Ireland the tendency was the other way. Certainly the decrease of population had been much less rapid in the Northern

than in the Southern parts of the county. It was said by the hon. and learned Member that the changes had been suggested by the Tory and Liberal agents.

MR. HEALY said, it was the Commissioners themselves who said that.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, it must be borne in mind that additional changes were suggested that were not accepted by the Commissioners. So far as the religious point was concerned, the Protestant population in the county was about 78,500; while the Catholic population was only 57,000, so that it did happen that the Protestant section had a majority in each division.

MR. HEALY said, that that would not have been the case if the first scheme of the Commissioners had been adhered to.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that the first scheme was exceptionally objectionable, and the moment it came to be inquired into it became evident that it must be changed.

MR. HEALY said, that the Catholics were always cheated in that way.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE continued. The hon. and learned Gentleman said that no change had been made in other counties; but in three Conservative counties changes had been made, and the reason why changes had been made from the scheme as originally prepared was owing to the evidence given before the Commissioners at the local inquiry. Presumably the present scheme was the best that could be devised. He altogether denied that there had been any intention on the part of the Government or of the Boundary Commissioners to make such a division of the county as would be adverse to either the Catholic or the National Party of Ireland. He must, therefore, oppose the Amendment.

MR. SEXTON said, that some reference had been made to the constitution of the Commission which had prepared the boundaries of the Irish counties. It was proposed, first of all, that these important functions should be entrusted entirely to military officers. He almost thought it might have been better if military officers had been allowed to do the work. Military officers were not, as was sometimes claimed for them, altogether free from political passion; but they usually gained their promotion for military and professional reasons, and if military officers solely had been employed in framing the boundaries, it might have been hoped that there would have been nothing in the character of the work to induce them to plan unfair divisions for the sake of pleasing their employers, or in the hope of obtaining more rapid promotion. As a matter of fact, however, the work of the Boundary Commission in Ireland was confided to three gentlemen, one of whom was a military officer; another an official, who, of course, would like promotion; while the third was a Queen's Counsel, who was not a Government officer now, but who doubtless expected to be one soon. He thought it was a mistake to transfer the work from military officers to civilians, either officials now or officials expectant. When the scheme of the Commissioners was originally proposed the popular Party, unfortunately, went through the ancient and time-honoured, though not very sensible, practice of "holloaing before they were out of the wood." The right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) now stated that no secret instructions were issued by Lord Spencer. Well, there were more ways than one of doing things at Dublin Castle. Of course, it was not necessary for Lord Spencer to put down on paper secret instructions to the Commissioners; but when he (Mr. Sexton) found, as he did find, that the boundaries were drawn in this county, and in other counties in Ireland, not in obedience to the public instructions of the Commissioners, but in contravention of them; when he found that the boundaries were drawn in conformity with some other instruction not included in the public instructions in order to minimize the influence of the Catholic population as much as possible in the Province of Ulster, it was open for him to assume that if Lord Spencer did not convey that desire by secret instructions, at any rate somebody on the part of the Government did convey such an intimation to the Commissioners, or, if not, they were appointed and selected from a conviction in the mind of the Government that they were men of such a complexion as not to need instructions, but that their own power of initiation would be stimulated by a lively sense of favours to come. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) appeared to disclaim

the position asserted for him of having been represented on the inquiry by counsel. He (Mr. Sexton) did not know whether it mattered very much whether the hon. and learned Gentleman was represented by counsel or not. Whether or not he was represented at the Derry inquiry, the hon. and learned Gentleman was in the House that day to represent himself; and he doubted whether the hon. and learned Gentleman, after hearing the statement which had been made, would have the hardihood to get up and say that he was dissatisfied with the division of the county which had been made by the Commissioners. The familiar argument of the maps not showing the configuration of the county had once more been trotted out. Did the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board really expect the Committee to believe, or hope to make them accept the statement, that these three gentlemen, sitting in Dublin, with all the resources of the Valuation Office at their disposal, with all the maps of every county in Ireland which had been taken officially during the last half-century deposited at their elbows—did the right hon. Gentleman mean to tell the Committee that these official gentlemen in Dublin went through the farce of dividing the county of Derry, without knowing from the Ordnance maps, from the geological maps, from the physical maps, and all the maps which had been produced from time to time, what every schoolboy knew, that this range of mountains cut the county from North-West to North-East? There was not an intelligent child of 10 in any National school of Ireland who was not acquainted with that fact, and there was hardly a map hanging on the wall in any school in Ireland which did not clearly show this range of mountains. When the right hon. Gentleman made use of a statement of that kind, he must credit the Irish Members with a degree of credulity which usually ceased in the human mind before a man arrived at the age which would enable him to enter that House. The first remark he (Mr. Sexton) had to make on the scheme of the Commissioners was that it afforded, perhaps, the most striking instance they had of the remarkable, and hitherto unexplained, fact that wherever the Nationalists had agreed to the first scheme of the Commissioners, the Commissioners immediately proceeded to alter it. If the Commissioners had no object, except the ardent performance of their duty, their attitude, wherever the Nationalists were concerned, was certainly most singular. If the National Party objected to a scheme, as they did in many cases, and said they were not satisfied with it, the Commissioners declared at once—"We are not able to satisfy you, but we stand to our scheme, and we will make no attempt to alter it." But if, on the other hand, the Nationalists said—"We think your scheme in a very good one, and we are quite satisfied with it," what did the Commissioners do then? They said at once—"If you are satisfied with our scheme, there must be something wrong in it;" and then they immediately proceeded to ascertain what the Whig and Tory agents had to say in regard to it, ultimately altering the scheme in accordance with the recommendations they received. It would be observed that this particular scheme had been unnecessarily kept back. The Commissioners were appointed in the month of December last year, but they did not produce this scheme until the month of February; and there was a shrewd suspicion in Ireland that the delay on the part of the Commissioners, who were alert enough in completing the other scheme for the Irish counties, was not altogether unconnected with the fact that the county had the honour to be represented in that House by Her Majesty's Solicitor General for Ireland. The Commissioners said the second scheme was more compact than the first. That was a matter that was capable of being judged by the human eye. The first division was marked by a blue line, which ran across the county. That blue line divided the county pretty equally from a point in the West to a point in the East. It left an equal area on both sides of the line. It gave an equal population to either side of the line; it almost left inviolable the well-known areas, and it only separated three or four parishes from a barony in one case. It was a division that was not open to any strong objection. In fact, Mr. O'Doherty, who appeared at the inquiry on behalf of the Nationalist Party, read a statement which had been drawn up at Dungannon on the previous day. That state-

ment was to the effect that the line fixed upon by the Commissioners, which divided the county East and West, met with their approval, and they gave their reasons for that approval. But the moment the Nationalists approved of the scheme, from that moment it was damned in the minds of its authors. The moment the Nationalists expressed their approval of any scheme, the Commissioners went a step further with respect to their scheme, and set about destroying it. In the original scheme of the Commissioners the creeds of the county were fairly divided; the non-Catholics had the Northern Division and the Catholics had the Southern Division; and by that arrangement the Commissioners had met the rough and general demands of justice. As the Committee was aware, the Whigs and Tories did not always agree in Ireland; but lately, in Ulster, they had been tending towards agreement, and the Whig and Tory agents, who appeared in Derry, agreed that the first scheme should be amended by taking four Catholic parishes out of the Southern Division, in order to swamp it with Protestants—both Parties agreed upon that. The next argument, so-called, he had to deal with was in the shape of a range of mountains, with respect to which he would observe that the mountain range was there, but no argument. The right hon. Baronet thought nothing of jumping over a range of mountains in Armagh—he thought nothing of jumping over a range of mountains in Donegal, between Boylagh and Kilmacrenan. But wherever there was an excrescence on the surface of the earth, were it but the size of an anthill, if it could be used as an argument to weaken the influence of the Catholic Body in Ulster, it immediately assumed the proportions of a range of mountains—but the Himalayas themselves, whenever the matter went the other way, would be diminished in the eyes of the Government. Having thrown the four Catholic parishes into the Northern Division, a number of Protestant parishes were thrown into the Southern Division. The first scheme of the Commissioners had respect to the barony boundaries; but in the second scheme the baronies were cut into pieces. Anyone who compared the two schemes would say that the first was intelligible and reasonable; and he would think that Mr. P. White, in claiming for the second scheme compactness, was guilty of an audacity which had not been manifested in other cases. The Protestant majority in the Southern Division was between 1,000 and 2,000. Considering that the Protestants were better off in the North than the Catholics, it was clear that this county had been jerry-mandered in such a way as not to lose one Protestant vote in the Southern Division, and so as to maintain Protestant ascendancy in the Northern Division. If the Commissioners had any desire to allow fair play as between the two creeds, why had they thrown 2,000 out of their own district? It was clear that the Instructions given to the Commissioners had been thrown aside. The Instructions which the Government had given them, from beginning to end, was the unconfessed but still operative and dominant one—to cut up the county of Londonderry in the manner they liked best; to have no regard to the sympathies of the people, or creeds, or local interests; to jump over mountains and to produce the result that the Catholics should be deprived of their fair proportion of representation, and that the Protestants should be allowed to predominate. It was a pretty scheme, but a contemptible one, and he ventured to doubt that it would be successful. He believed that there would be found a great number of Protestant voters whose sympathies were with the Nationalist Party, and whose interests lay on the side of those reforms which that Party advocated, and which both Whigs and Tories despised. He did not the Government could assure themselves that any success would result from these discreditable intrigues. He believed that intrigues more mean, more petty, and therefore more repugnant to a manly mind than this had never been engaged in by a Government; and he thought it would be found that as their various schemes for maintaining British Government and suppressing public opinion in Ireland had failed, so this device would prove the least successful of all.

MR. SMALL said, it was strange that this arrangement with regard to the county of Londonderry should have been made. In the case of Armagh, the Southern Division, under any possible arrangement, would go with the Nationalist Party; and it was only with re-

gard to the Mid Division of the county that any doubt existed. The Commissioners, accordingly, took every Protestant district out of that division, and threw them into the Southern Division. But in the case of the county of Londonderry, the Northern Division could not be captured for the Nationalists—it was the Southern Division only with regard to which any doubt existed, and hence the different action of the Commissioners in the two cases. The Commissioners here took a course quite opposite to that which they had pursued in reference to Armagh; in the one case they took the Catholic districts from the South Division, and threw them into the North Division; and in the other they took the Protestant districts out of the North, and threw them into the Southern Division. As the Commissioners had transferred several parishes from the Southern to the Northern Division of the county, it might be interesting to the Committee to know the relative proportion of Protestants to Catholics in those parishes. They contained Catholics to a number which was in the proportion of 50 per cent and 75 per cent of all other denominations. Three of the parishes were possibly the most Catholic in the entire county. Then, with regard to the parishes which the Commissioners had transferred from the North to the South, the position was reversed, the various denominations being enormously in excess of the Catholics; in fact, out of 14,115 Denominationalists there were only 4,773 Catholics. It did, indeed, seem strange that the Commissioners, who were said to be actuated by the best intentions, should have transferred from the Northern to the Southern Division parishes only where there were Protestants enormously in excess of the Catholics; and, on the other hand, that in all the parishes which they had transferred from the Southern to the Northern Division there should be a large majority of Catholics. It seemed to him that the Nationalists were fairly entitled to one seat at least for the county. By the Census of 1881 the Catholics formed 45 per cent of the entire population; and they knew that amongst the rest of the population there were as many Nationalists as amongst the Catholic Body. The Nationalists of to-day must, in his (Mr. Sexton's) opinion, form one-half of the entire population of the county; and he said that if there were to be two seats for the county, and the two Parties were balanced, it would have been only fair for the Commissioners to have made such a division as would leave one Member to the Nationalist and one Member to the non-Nationalist Body. rather than to give two Members to the non-Nationalists and none at all to the Nationalist Body. The Bill said that the North-West Liberties of Londonderry, except so much as is comprised in the Parliamentary borough of Londonderry, was to be included in the North-West Division, and the barony of Tikeeran, also, except so much as is comprised in the Parliamentary borough of Londonderry. Now, it appeared from this that the Parliamentary borough of Londonderry was not to be included for any purpose whatever in either of the divisions of the county of Londonderry; and that being so, he would ask the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland what he meant to do with the freeholders who voted in the City of Londonderry? Were they to be disfranchised? Because that would be the effect of the scheme as now framed by the Commissioners. Possibly the hon. and learned Gentleman would get up and say that the freeholders would vote in the City of Derry; but that was not the case, because if the freeholders were not enfranchised in the City of Derry, and if they were excluded from all the divisions of the county, they would not be allowed to vote either in the county or the city. He did not know whether the freeholders in question would be friendly to the hon. and learned Gentleman; but he rather thought that at the next General Election it would be found that they were not so on account of the way they had been treated in this matter; at any rate, the effect of the Schedule would be to disfranchise them. The hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) had pointed out that the barony of Loughinshollin was entirely a Catholic barony. That was the case, and it was also true of the adjoining baronies of Tikeeran and Kennaught. Other matters being equal, would it not have been fairer for the Commissioners to have joined the Catholic parishes to the Catholic baronies rather than joining them to Coleraine, and thus uniting Catholics with men who were alien to them in interest and religious feeling. Many meet-

ings had been held, and the people of Loughinshollin had unanimously protested against the scheme which joined them to the uncongenial inhabitants of Coleraine, rather than to those with whom they had sympathy of feeling and community of interest in the baronies of Kennaught and Tikeeran. The right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had endeavoured to prove that the revised scheme was better than the first scheme, as there was a chain of mountains between the two baronies; but was the right hon. Baronet aware that there was also a considerable chain of mountains between the barony of Loughinshollin and the places in Coleraine which it was, by the present Amendment, proposed to join to the other division? He could assure the right hon. Baronet that the mountains in the one case were as considerable as those in the other. But supposing that the obstacles between the two baronies were not so great, he would point out that there were other barriers of a far more serious character between the barony of Coleraine and the barony of Loughinshollin. He thought the Commissioners might have taken into consideration, as between the two baronies, the entire absence of intercourse, community of interest, and religious feeling. He trusted, therefore, that this scheme would not be agreed to by the Committee; but if it were, and notwithstanding that the Catholics in the county had been placed in a considerable minority, they would still be able to give a very good account of themselves; and when the next General Election took place it would, he thought, be seen by the Commissioners and the Treasury Bench that they might as well have left the people of the district in question where they wished to remain, and not have joined them with people they did not want to be associated with for the purpose of this Bill. Having proposed reasonable Amendments to the Government scheme in the case of Armagh, Donegal, and Londonderry without success, he and his hon. Friends would look with concern to the course the Government would take in respect of Ulster, in order to see whether any concession would be made to them when the name of that county was reached in the Schedule.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, he did not know why he should speak on this question at all, and he should not have done so were it not for the manner in which the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) had used his name—that was to say, as if he (the Solicitor General for Ireland) were to blame for the arrangement made by the Commissioners in respect of the county of Londonderry. The hon. and learned Member said he (the Solicitor General for Ireland) appeared by counsel before the Commissioners. But no counsel appeared before the Commissioners at all, and that statement of the hon. and learned Member had been met when the general question was before the Committee. He decided to take no part in the inquiry at the time, and had not appeared there directly or indirectly. But the agent of the Liberal Party in Londonderry had written to him on the subject, and his Colleague in the representation and himself had instructed him that they "did not think that we should interfere or take any part in the inquiry." That contradicted the statement that he had, either one way or the other, taken part in this matter. He did not know what scheme was proposed; he had not appeared, and he had instructed no counsel or solicitor to appear for him; and this arrangement with regard to Londonderry was not made at his suggestion. Of course, what he was saying did not touch the merits of the scheme which hon. Gentlemen opposite had discussed; but as regarded that scheme he would say that he thought it better it should have been made, because, in his opinion, the original scheme was wholly unsupportable from a geographical point of view, inasmuch as it did detach baronies and interfere with the compactness of the divisions, and put a range of mountains between the two baronies, as his right hon. Friend (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had stated. He believed that a proper division of the county had been made, and he should be going out of his way if he were to appear in that House to join with hon. Members opposite in condemning it. With regard to Mr. Piers White, everyone knew that he was a man of honour and integrity; and he would say, in conclusion, with respect to the scheme of the Boundary Commissioners, that he believed it was properly made; at any rate, he was prepared to acquiesce in it.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) was well known as a dexterous counsel, and he had proved his title to that reputation on this occasion by the defence he had just made. The hon. and learned Gentleman had said that Dr. Todd did not appear for the Liberal Party for Derry; but he had not sat down without saying that Dr. Todd represented the Liberal Party, for he had said that he had represented him, the Solicitor General for Ireland. As Louis XIV. said—"*L'etat c'est moi*," so the hon. and learned Gentleman might say under these circumstances—"I am the Liberal Party." The distinction the hon. and learned Gentleman sought to draw between Dr. Todd representing him and representing the Liberal Party was about as remarkable as the statement that counsel had not appeared, but only a solicitor. When the hon. and learned Gentleman had thought it necessary and proper to correct the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) upon the small fact that it was a solicitor and not a barrister that had appeared, he must have been very hard up indeed for an argument with which to defend his position. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) did not, generally speaking, deny the right of a Member of the Government to take part in the settlement of these matters. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had told them how, in his constituency, he had appeared and had justified, as he was entitled to justify, his action in the matter; but he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had ventured to interject that the right hon. Gentleman was speaking of England, while they were speaking of Ireland, and that the action of officials in England differed entirely from the action of officials in Ireland. The two things might be called by the same name; but they were, as a matter of fact, very different things indeed. Everyone knew that the official hierarchy in Ireland were able to exercise the pressure upon all proceedings in their country, judicial and otherwise, which officials could not exercise in England; and if he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had not been called to Order by a recent decree in the House for stating that such a thing was possible as a partizan Judge, he should say that even the Judges in Ireland were at the beck and call of the Executive Government. What did the hon. and learned Gentleman say in defence of this proposal? He professed to be shocked at the Irish Members bringing the question of religious creed into this matter. But, unfortunately, religion marked political differences in the North and in other parts of that country. He was sorry to say it, but such was the case. He hoped that the fact that religion did mark political differences would gradually disappear, and that there would be other divisions of opinion in Ireland in future than those marked out by Catholicism and Protestantism. But they must take things as they were, and unquestionably they could only tell a man's politics in Ireland from the religious creed he professed. It was not the members of the National Party in that House who had introduced this question of religious difference at all. Their whole effort and aim, in the course of the struggle they had been engaged in during the last four or five years in Ireland, had been to drive sectarian differences from the platforms, and nowhere had they made more strained and consistent efforts than in the sacred conclaves of the Churches. He thought that by this time they would have succeeded in welding men of different religious creeds into one political society, if it had not been for the malignant, and he was afraid he must say shameful, effort on the part of the Conservative Party in the North of Ireland to revive the dying and almost dead sectarian spirit in that part of the country. Therefore, no one would misunderstand him when he spoke of the difference of religious creeds being one of the elements at work in this matter. He hoped that, in spite of the fact that the Boundary Commissioners had thrown Catholics into Protestant divisions, and Protestants into Catholic divisions, for the benefit of Whigs and Tories, the only effect would be to draw to the Nationalists a considerable section of those who professed the Protestant religion. Several matters had been alluded to in the course of a discussion with regard to which he would like to say a word. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had said that the hon. and learned Member for Mona-

ghan (Mr. Healy) had stated that there were secret instructions issued by Lord Spencer to the Boundary Commissioners, and that the Lord Lieutenant had sedulously denied that statement. Well, his (Mr. T. P. O'Connor's) reply was that there was no necessity for issuing any instructions, either open or secret, to such Boundary Commissioners as had been appointed by Dublin Castle. Lord Spencer knew very well, when he selected the four gentlemen he did select, that there was no necessity on his part for preparing any instructions. He was perfectly sure that they would do the work of Dublin Castle without even a nod or a wink from him, or from anyone else in the Government. What was the character of these four gentlemen? He was not going to say anything about them personally, for he had no doubt that they were gentlemen of very high character indeed. But what he wished someone on the Treasury Bench to answer was this—Was it proper that in the appointments made representatives of the vast majority of the Irish people should be carefully excluded? Supposing they had been dealing with the case of England, and that the Commissioners had all been selected from the Conservative Party, would they not have had a howl from the Liberal Members of the House? Or, supposing all the Commissioners had been selected from the Liberal Party, would there not have been a howl from the Conservatives? Well, in Ireland the Nationalists outnumbered all other Parties in a way in which the Liberals could not claim to outnumber the Conservatives in England, or the Conservatives claim to outnumber the Liberals. The appointment of Boundary Commissioners in Ireland, as a matter of fact, seemed to have been regulated on the extraordinary principle that the only political Party which should not be represented should be the political Party representing three-fourths of the people of the country. When they heard the melancholy lay of the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) on this question, he supposed they would be told that the Boundary Commissioners in Ireland were not selected for a political purpose. The right hon. Gentleman might say that; but the Irish Members would reserve to themselves perfect liberty of action as to the amount of credence they might think it necessary to give to the statement. These gentlemen were selected because they did not profess certain political principles. They might not have been selected because they were Whigs, or they might not have been selected because they were Tories; but they certainly were selected because they were not Nationalists. Who were these gentlemen? Well, two of them were Engineer officers, he believed, and he would grant for the sake of argument that they had no pronounced political opinions. But what did an Irish Nationalist mean to an Engineer officer? Why, every Parnellite meant to such an individual a rebel. Every Nationalist in Ireland was a rebel—everyone who dared to follow the lead of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) was to an Engineer officer that which he was to the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton)—that was to say, a person who had more or less trampled on the Oath of Allegiance. As a matter of fact, Engineer officers did not require any instructions from the Lord Lieutenant at all; their duty, as they would interpret it, to the Queen and the State, was to do everything they could to put down what they would call the Party of Disloyalty and Disorder in Ireland. Who were the other two Commissioners? Why, there was Mr. Bourke, an Inspector of the Local Government Board, and to Government officials, as well as to Engineer officers, of course a Parnellite was a rebel. Mr. Bourke could, of course, be depended upon for doing what he could to weaken the Party of Disorder without instructions from the Lord Lieutenant. Then there was Mr. Piers White, who might be called the *pièce de resistance* in this matter. The moment the Irish Members raised any objection to the Boundary Commissioners, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke), and the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General, both got up in the most solemn and serious manner and declared that Mr. Piers White was a Roman Catholic gentleman, as if the Irish Members did not know that some of the bitterest and worst enemies of Ireland and her national rights were respectable Roman Catholic gentlemen. Why, if there were no respectable Roman Catholic gentlemen in Ireland—

if there were no bad Irishmen, they would have settled the Irish Question to their satisfaction long ago. What was Mr. Piers White? An eminent lawyer, no doubt; a Queen's Counsel, a man who had, he believed, a very large practice at the Bar. In fact, one of the last occasions on which he had seen the learned gentleman was as leader—he might say as bare leader—to his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) in a case in which he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) himself had some interest, and nothing could exceed the discretion and ability with which Mr. Piers White conducted his case. So eminent was Mr. Piers Whyte that he performed the same function to the Government in Ireland as the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) was once reported to perform to the Government in general—that was to say, he acted as maid of all work. He got all the jobs which were going which could not be attended to by the Law Officers of the Crown. Mr. Piers White, amongst other things given him to do, had been sent down to Derry on a previous occasion, and his action there was such as ought to have incapacitated him in the eyes of every impartial man from ever going within 50 miles of any disputed matter in Derry again. What did he do on that occasion? There had been a riot in Derry—a most unprovoked and shameful riot. Because the then Lord Mayor of Dublin (Mr. Dawson) had ventured to lecture to his co-religionists and brother politicians, he was sat upon by the Protestant Orangemen. This respectable Irish gentleman was sent down to inquire into the matter, and he had given all the merit to the Orange Tory mob, and had thrown all the blame upon his co-religionists. In his Report the learned gentleman said—"Mr. O'Donnell, solicitor, and others represented the Nationalists;" and he put the word Nationalists in inverted commas, after the style affected by *The Dublin Daily Express*. He acted under the delusion that those who called themselves Nationalists could only be described with the shameful and sarcastic addition of inverted commas. Mr. Piers White was, in fact, as anti-National as anyone in the House could possibly be. The triumph of the National Party was just as obnoxious to Mr. Piers White as it was to the right hon. and learned Gentlemen who represented the Irish Conservative Party on the Front Opposition Bench at the present moment (Mr. Gibson and Mr. Plunket)—in fact, Mr. Piers White belonged to the class of gentlemen who could never forget their Party, because they had been banished for ever from the political platforms of Ireland and from that House. In fact, he was sure Mr. Piers White would greatly prefer the time when an Irish constituency and seat in that House was the path of the dirt of corruption, and of treason to the dignity of the Judicial Bench. What had been the effect of the operations of the Boundary Commissioners on the city of Derry? Why, to disproportion, or very much diminish, the chances of the Catholics of the place finding a Representative in that House. He agreed with the remarks of the hon. Member for Wexford County (Mr. Small) in the able speech he had made on this question. The hon. Member was an Ulster Catholic himself, and could speak with feeling upon this question. He had spoken of the cruelty of separating the Catholics of three parishes from their co-religionists in the barony. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) had talked of the barrier of a mountain; but the hon. Member for Wexford County (Mr. Small) had very properly said there were barriers far more impassable and far more insurmountable in Derry and other parts of the North of Ireland than barriers of that kind. Did the inhabitants of these three parishes, whose convenience, forsooth, had been so consulted, object to be thrown in with their co-religionists on the other side of this mountain? Did they make any representation of the inconvenience that the mountain would cause them in going to the polling booth? Were they not, on the contrary, all protesting as one voice against being thrown in with men of a different creed to themselves? The hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had reminded him (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) that these people could have a temporary polling booth constructed for them on one side of the mountain, and that was perfectly true. But the barrier was not the mountain in that part of Ireland. The barrier was one of religious dissension and consequent political differences. He thought that in this matter the action

of the Boundary Commissioners had been something horribly cruel. He did not envy those hon. Members who would have to fight the Ulster constituencies. He certainly should not go through a contest in any of these places if he could possibly avoid it. Those who had the small, but disagreeable, experience that he had had on one occasion, marching, as he did, between two companies of soldiers and a large body of police drawn up at the railway station amidst a shower bath of bricks, would know that an election in the North of Ireland was about as ugly a business as any political man could be called upon to face. But in the future what would be the state of things when the Catholics, instead of being left alone, would be mixed up in this way with Protestants? If the Catholics had been congregated into one district, elections would have taken place in peace and quietness; but now there would be every incentive and stimulus to horrible political excitement, and a terrible disproportion would be established between the Catholics and the Protestants in the North of Derry. He did not exaggerate when he said that the lives of the Catholics would scarcely be safe. He did not know how the Government would be able to cope with the difficulty, although, of course, it would be their duty to protect those who were likely to suffer. An hon. Friend of his suggested that they would have to add an additional sum to the Vote in order to meet the expenses of the police. On the present occasion, he thought the Irish Members had made as reasonable a demand as had been made during the whole discussion of this question of the Seats Bill. The proceedings of the Boundary Commissioners had been most unjust and unfair; they had acted in the interests of the so-called Loyal Party in Ireland. One would have thought that by this time the Government of this country and all English Parties would have become alive to the fact that injustice was the best way to compel and extend a spirit of disloyalty amongst the Irish people. The only hope of the Irish Members was that their protest, even if it were futile so far as that Assembly was concerned, would be heard and attended to outside, and that it would give every true Nationalist in Derry, and in other parts of Ireland, another argument in favour of putting an end to the revolting system by which Irish rights were at the mercy of English jerrymandering and trickery.

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN said, it was, perhaps, useless to prolong the discussion—no good result seemed likely to be derived from it. They were appealing here to no tribunal. They had no verdict to expect from the Assembly on this question; because, as he had said on a previous occasion, the matter was one which had been already squared and settled between the two chief Parties in that House. The question they were now debating was a foregone conclusion, and nothing that hon. Members on those (the Irish) Benches could say would tend to alter it in the slightest degree. Nevertheless, they felt it their duty to make their protest against the arrangements which had been made in Ireland by the Boundary Commissioners, which the Irish Members, and he trusted the Committee, now knew were exceedingly unfair and dishonest to the National Party in that country. It was impossible for any impartial man, English or Irish, who had paid the slightest attention to the course of this discussion, not to see that in the North of Ireland, when the Commissioners reached debateable ground, they accepted the proposals of, and gave heed to, the arguments and representations put before them by the anti-National Party, and entirely disregarded the representations and claims of the National Party. The evidence upon that point was conclusive. How was it possible that the anti-National Party could be right in every one of their proposals?—and yet in every case their views had been acceded to. One could understand it if, in laying their cases before a fair tribunal, two or three or four decisions were given in their favour, and here and there others were given against them; but in these cases hon. Members were face to face with the remarkable fact that in every instance, with scarcely an exception, the claims of the anti-National Party had been accepted by the Commissioners, while the claims and pleadings of the National Party had been given to the winds. Not only was that the case, but, as had been already stated in the Committee, whenever the Nationalists objected to the schemes of the Commissioners, or to the schemes of the Tory Party, their objections went for nothing. Whenever the Nationalists had agreed with the Com-

missioners' schemes, and had said they would take no action in the matter—whenever the representatives of the National Party, in reply to the question—"Do you think this is a fair arrangement?" said—"We could wish for something a little better, but we do not expect to have everything exactly as we wish it, and therefore we do not object"—did they think the Commissioners had acted upon their own suggestion? Not they. Directly the Nationalists took up that course of action and seemed to be satisfied with the arrangement, the Commissioners appeared to lose confidence in their original scheme, and at once proceeded to alter it. These were plain and patent facts, and the conclusion to which they pointed must be obvious to every Member of the Committee. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland was an able lawyer and knew the value of evidence. Right well he knew the value of the evidence produced in this debate by the Nationalist Members. He knew that it was irresistible. He knew that if he had such strong evidence in every case in which he was engaged in Ireland for the Crown he would be able invariably to secure a conviction. Aye, on evidence less cogent and conclusive than that produced by the Nationalists in these cases, men had been hung in Ireland. But they had further proof of the fact that the Orange or anti-National Party in the North of Ireland had been unfairly benefited by the revised schemes of the Commissioners. Her Majesty's Government had been charged with a desire to make peace with their enemies and opponents in various parts of the world. They had made peace with the Boers, and they were now going to scuttle out of the Soudan. But they had done more than that; they had made peace with the Orangemen of the North of Ireland. There was not a word or a whisper against the scheme of the Boundary Commissioners in the North of Ireland, for the reason that the anti-Nationalists had got all they claimed. The Government, through their Commissioners, had made a complete surrender to this Party, and in this way peace had been purchased from the anti-National Party and the Orange and Emergency men of the North; but they had yet to learn whether the peace of Ireland would be promoted by the surrender to this Party. For himself, he did not think it would. He was of opinion that, by these unfair arrangements, a fund of trouble had been stored up both for Ireland and for England too. The arrangements, he felt convinced, would lead to the continuation of strife and heartburnings, because the consciousness was in the minds of the National Party that they had been unjustly treated, and that the divisions had been made without right and justice in consequence of the partizanship and political bigotry of the Commissioners appointed to deal with the matter. A good deal had been said about Catholics and Protestants; but he wished to say, and he believed the Committee recognized the fact, that the Irish Members had really no sectarian feeling in the matter at all. This was not a question of creed. The Irish Members merely asked for political justice and fair play in these arrangements, and they had not got it. Still they meant to fight a good battle for their rights in the North of Ireland, and it appeared to him that by-and-bye they would prove triumphant. However that might be, he was sure that the interests of justice and public peace and content would have been greatly advanced if the Commissioners had acted in an upright, honest, and impartial manner, instead of making a surrender to the advantage of one Party and to the disadvantage of the other.

MR. BIGGAR said, there was a Dr. Todd, a member of the Irish Bar, and a Mr. Todd, a solicitor, and therefore it was very easy for the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) to have confused one with the other. Now, the letter which was referred to by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) did not faithfully represent the facts of the case as far as Mr. Todd was concerned. He (Mr. Biggar) knew very little of Mr. Todd; but this he did know—that Mr. Todd had not obtained in Derry a reputation for truthfulness. It was generally accepted that Mr. Todd's word was not to be believed. Certainly, the letter which he had written, and which the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland had referred to, did not coincide with what Mr. Todd stated at the inquiry in Derry before Mr. White. Mr.

Todd stated at the inquiry that he appeared for the Liberal Party, and that he had a letter from Sir Thomas M'Clure and one from the Solicitor General for Ireland, and both those Gentlemen expressed themselves dissatisfied with the scheme propounded by the Commissioners, but they approved of the scheme which he (Mr. Todd) proposed on behalf of the Liberal Party. The proposition made by Mr. Todd was that the county, instead of being divided into North and South Derry, as proposed by the Boundary Commissioners, should be divided into East and West Derry. One of the points which Mr. Todd pressed upon the Commissioner, Mr. White, was that there was great community of interest between those who lived on the Eastern side of the county of Derry. Mr. Hunter, a wholesale grocer from Coleraine, was called to show that he was selling goods so far South as the town of Maghera, which was in the Southern part of the county. If Mr. Hunter's evidence was of any value at all, it had a closer connection with the towns of Kilrea and Garvagh, which were now placed in the Southern Division of the county. The tendency of Mr. Hunter's trade must be towards Coleraine. He (Mr. Biggar) knew quite well that the produce of Kilrea and Garvagh—two places which had been changed from the Northern to the Southern Division of the county—was taken to Coleraine and not to Belfast. There was no community of interest with these places and the Southern part of the county such as there should be if community of interest was the ground upon which the scheme was propounded. Evidence was given by parties who lived on each side of the mountain range near to the town of Dungivan to show that the connection was very strong between the inhabitants of the two sides of the range. He was not disposed, however, to press that point too strongly on the Committee; but what he did maintain was that the proposition to take from the barony of Coleraine the part which laid North of the town of Kilrea was a most reasonable one. The argument of the Government that the Southern Division of Derry should have a larger population than the Northern part, because of the possible or probable increase of the population of the town of Coleraine and the city of Derry, was quite untenable. The increase in the population of the city of Derry could never have any influence on the voting power of the county proper, for the very reason that the liberties of Derry extended far beyond the city walls. That part of the argument, therefore, had no weight whatever, and was not entitled to any consideration. Then, with regard to the expected increase in the population of the town of Coleraine. One of the arguments adduced by the hon. Baronet the Member for Coleraine (Sir Hervey Bruce) in favour of Coleraine being allowed to retain its Member, was that Coleraine was an ancient town. It was said that this ancient town was likely to increase its population by 3,000 within a very limited time. Now, the present population was only 7,000; so that at the rate of progress in times past they would have to wait for very many generations before the population reached 10,000. Reference had been made by some of his hon. Friends to the fact that Mr. White, the Commissioner who held the inquiry in Derry, was a Catholic in religion. He (Mr. Biggar) did not like to mention questions of religion, because he believed that, in time to come, a large proportion of the non-Catholics would vote with the Catholic Nationalists. But he was informed on very good authority that this Mr. White, who was sent down by the Government to act as their agent in Derry, went over to the Conservative agent at Kingstown in 1883, and made a perfectly bogus claim to a vote—a claim which was refused by the Revising Barrister. He (Mr. Biggar) thought that the Government, when they were making selections of gentlemen to represent them, should select gentlemen of a higher character for integrity than Mr. White seemed to possess. Taking all the circumstances into account, the Government ought to amend the scheme to such an extent as would bring the populations of the Northern and Southern Divisions more alike. By the original scheme of the Boundary Commissioners there was a very fair equalization of population between the Northern and Southern parts of the county; indeed, he was disposed to regard the original divisions as impartial and honest. The divisions as finally arranged were partial and dishonest, and could not be defended in reason by anyone. Even if the divisions

were altered as suggested, he believed that in both divisions there would be, according to present expectations, a majority against the popular Party; but then the divisions would be honest and reasonable, and capable of being defended. As far as compactness or any argument of that sort was concerned, the present scheme was perfectly outrageous. The Government ought to agree to a more compact and reasonable scheme, and one more in conformity with the Instructions to the Commissioners.

MR. KENNY said, he thought that the attitude of the Government in the case of Derry was extremely unreasonable. The divisions of Derry were entirely at variance with local opinion. It was contended, in support of the scheme, that the Commissioners had been forced to follow the natural boundaries of the county. It was perfectly true, as stated by the Boundary Commissioners, that they had had regard to the fact that a range of mountains naturally divided the two divisions. But there was this to be said in reply to such a contention, that, no matter in what direction they adopted boundaries in Derry, they would have to follow more or less some range of mountains, because mountains were so numerous; no matter what course was pursued, a range of mountains might be used for the purpose of making what would be called a natural division. If the contention of the Boundary Commissioners was worth anything at all, they should, instead of running the line of demarcation Eastwards, have pursued a line further Northwards. They would then have obtained two perfectly compact divisions. Furthermore, although the Commissioners were instructed to observe as far as possible the ancient divisions of counties, they had, in the case of the county of Londonderry, set those divisions entirely aside. He could not understand how the Boundary Commissioners believed that the scheme they had proposed would command anything like general consent, for they had adopted lines which were utterly at variance with anything which would make it possible for the divisions to be considered compact. As to the names of the divisions, they were forced, owing to the lines of division pursued by the Boundary Commissioners in Ulster, to use the terms North-West Londonderry and North-East Londonderry. If, however, the divisions had been made properly in accordance with the points of the compass, the names North or South or East or West Londonderry might have been used. It was perfectly clear that, owing to the peculiar position of Parties in the county, the lines pursued by the Commissioners were dictated more by political expediency than by any real regard to the Instructions issued to them by the Lord Lieutenant. Under the original scheme, it was very probable that for the Southern part of the county a Nationalist would have been returned. As soon as this was observed by the Whigs and Tories, the boundaries were altered so that the Nationalist element in the South should be split up. So strong were the Nationalists in Londonderry, that they were fully entitled to return one of the Members. The Government would do well to accept the Amendment, which he would support if his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Healy) carried it to a division.

MR. SMALL asked if it was not the fact that, owing to the new arrangements, the freeholders would be disfranchised for the city of Derry?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he thought the freeholders would vote in the city as borough voters.

MR. SMALL said, that if the right hon. Baronet would refer to the Return presented in 1883, he would find he was quite in error. The city of Derry was not a county in itself, as the right hon. Baronet seemed to imagine.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he was much obliged to the hon. Gentleman for mentioning the matter. He would make inquiries on the subject, and promise the hon. Member that the matter should be set right if a mistake had been made.

MR. HEALY said, that this was a very important point; because, if the freeholders were to be thrown into the county from the borough, a re-arrangement of the scheme of the Commissioners would be necessitated. It was impossible to let the matter stand as it was, for 300 or 400 people would be thrown into the county. They had, in this fact, a good reason for referring the entire scheme to the Commissioners, and he thought he and his hon. Friends must press the right hon. Baronet to promise them that the whole question should be referred back to the Commis-

sioners. This was not a trifling matter. A mistake had been made, and strange to say in the county for which the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) was Member. It was proper to assume that the voters thrown into the county would be Tories, and it would be very interesting to discover why the Commissioners had made the mistake. The right hon. Baronet had got a precedent in the case of Southwark, for referring the scheme back to the Commissioners.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he would undertake to make immediate inquiries into the matter.

MR. HEALY said, that the chief point involved was that the voters thrown into the county would unquestionably be Tories.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE asked if the allegation of the hon. and learned Gentleman was that the Boundary Commissioners had purposely made a mistake?

MR. HEALY said, he did not make such an allegation; but what he did maintain was that these voters, who were all Tories, would be disfranchised for the city of Derry. That was, no doubt, a very convenient thing for the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker), who was the Member for the county. When the Nationalists had been cheated by dodges, as they had been in Donegal, Tyrone, Armagh, Derry, Belfast, and Antrim, there was no reason why they should be chary in giving their opinion. The right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had hardly met the matter fairly; he stated he would look into the matter. That was not the way he met the case of the borough of Southwark. In that case he ordered a fresh inquiry. Surely, the people of Derry were quite as much entitled to a fresh inquiry as the people of Southwark.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that if the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Healy) preferred it, he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) would ask Sir John Lambert and Sir Francis Sandford to reconsider the matter and report upon it.

MR. HEALY said, there was an excess population in the division of 3,000, and there was no reason in the world why the figures should not be correct. The borough of Londonderry had increased; but as far as he could see the borough of Coleraine had not; if the population of Coleraine had increased, it had not done so by more than a score in the course of 10 years. Why should this fictitious reverence of the borough of Londonderry influence the Government? The overplus of 3,000 made a vast difference, and he appealed to the Government to bring about a balance of population.

MR. SMALL said, the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had expressed his readiness to reconsider the matter. That he should have time to do so, he (Mr. Small) begged to move that the Chairman should now report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again." — (*Mr. Small.*)

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I will make every possible inquiry, and if I can remedy the mistake, supposing one to have been made, I will be happy to do so.

Question put.

The Committee proceeded to a Division, and the Chairman stated that he thought the Noes had it, and, his decision being challenged, he directed the Ayes to stand up in their places; and 17 Members only having stood up, he declared the Noes had it.

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Schedule."

MR. HEALY said, the incident which had just occurred formed an admirable example of the way in which the Bill had been got up. The Commissioner when he went down to Derry alleged, as a reason for putting 3,000 more people into one division than into another, that the city of Londonderry would act as a counterpoise; and yet it had been shown that it was not included in the division, and that the freeholders of the city of Londonderry were excluded from the Bill altogether and deprived of their votes. The Irish Members, in calling attention to the shortcomings of the measure, were met in Committee by no single shred or scrap of reason for anything that had been done. And it had further been pointed out that the scheme for the two divisions of the county of

Londonderry was among the last issued by the Commissioners, and that it carried out, upon the face of it, the same principle of chicanery which had guided the House of Commons all through. Of course, the Irish Members were powerless in that House; and when they moved to report Progress in order to afford time for further consideration, the New Rules, for the first time since they had been passed, were put in force against them in Committee, and they were called upon to stand up in their places. That was an example of the way in which important Irish questions were always treated. The Irish Members were blocked and stopped by the Government and their majority in all their endeavours to obtain justice; but, at all events, they had convicted the Government and the gentleman deputed to conduct the Boundary Inquiry at Derry, not only of malignity, but of a conspiracy to deprive the Nationalist Party of their rights. They had also shown that so far as the Commissioner himself was concerned, he was in absolute ignorance of everything he professed to know so much about.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 59; Noes 17: Majority 42. — (Div. List, No. 116.)

On the Motion of Mr. SEXTON, the following Amendment made:—In page 102, line 1, leave out "North."

On the Motion of Sir CHARLES W. DILKE, the following Amendment made:—In page 102, at end of line 13, leave out "and."

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE, in moving, in line 14, after "Street," to insert—

"And in the parish of Clonbroney the townlands of Rinvanny and Cartronreagh, and in the parish of Grannard the townland of Castlenugent,"

explained that the object of the Amendment was to place in the Schedule three small townlands which had been omitted in the North Longford Division.

Amendment proposed,

In page 102, line 14, after "Street," insert "and in the parish of Clonbroney the townlands of Rinvanny and Cartronreagh, and in the parish of Grannard the townland of Castlenugent."—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. SEXTON asked if the Amendment would alter the scheme?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE replied in the negative. At present, these townlands were entirely omitted.

Question put, and *agreed to;* words *inserted* accordingly.

On the Motion of Mr. CALLAN, the following Amendment made:—In page 102, leave out, in line 21, the words "The Dundalk Division," and insert the words "North Louth."

Mr. CALLAN proposed an Amendment, in the North Louth Division, to insert, after "Lower Dundalk," "and the parish of Killaney, and that part of the parish of Louth included in the barony of Ardee." He said he did not anticipate any opposition on the part of the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill. It was not a matter which affected Party politics in the slightest degree. He saw that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket) had been speaking to the President of the Local Government Board, and he presumed that it was in reference to this Amendment. He could, however, assure the right hon. and learned Gentleman that his proposal would make no difference as to the state of Parties in the county, and that, however they might jerrymander and twist and turn the county of Louth, the result would be just the same.

Mr. PLUNKET said, the hon. Member (Mr. Callan) was under a misapprehension. He had not been speaking to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board in reference to this question at all.

Mr. CALLAN said, he was glad to find that his suspicion was unfounded; but he might add that no amount of jerrymandering to which the division could be subjected would prevent the return of Nationalist Members for the county of Louth, and his proposal only affected a matter which was deemed to be for the convenience of the inhabitants of the district. If hon. Members would look at the map, they would see that the parish of Killaney was 27 miles from the town of Drogheda, and only eight from the town of Dundalk, and he might almost offer a reward of £5 for every Killaney man who had

ever been found in the town of Drogheda, without ever being called upon to pay the money. No Killaney man was ever found there, except, perhaps, on a fair day. He made this proposal simply on the ground of convenience to the people of Killaney, who were separated from Drogheda by a river, and if a man wished to go to Drogheda from Killaney, he would in the first place have to travel for some miles through the county of Monaghan. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would accept the proposition, and would refer this point back to the Boundary Commissioners, in order that they might make report to him simply how the question stood as a matter of convenience to the people of the locality. He had no intention of pressing the Amendment now; but he would be prepared to accept the assurance of the right hon. Gentleman that the matter would be referred to the Commissioners. In return, he would assure the right hon. Gentleman that the proposal had nothing of a jerrymandering nature about it, but simply related to a matter of convenience.

Amendment proposed,

In page 102, after line 27, to insert "And the parish of Killaney, and that part of the parish of Louth included in the barony of Ardee."—(*Mr. Callan.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he accepted the representation of the hon. Member (Mr. Callan). So far as he could find out there was no objection whatever to the change. The district proposed to be added to the North Division was in the Northern part of the county, in the barony of Ardee; and, no doubt, the Amendment would give a clearer and a more compact boundary. The figures also would be left pretty nearly as they now were. That being so, he would be very glad to refer the matter to the Boundary Commissioners, and if the hon. Member would move his Amendment on the Report, he would have no objection to it.

MR. CALLAN intimated that he would withdraw the Amendment on the assurance just given that it would be referred to the Boundary Commissioners, and would be accepted if it were not considered by them to be objectionable.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

On the Motion of Mr. CALLAN, the following Amendment made:—In page 103, line 1, leave out the words "The Drogheda Division," and insert "South Louth."

On the Motion of Mr. KENNY, the following Amendments made:—In page 103, line 8, leave out "The," and after the word "Mayo," "Division;" in line 13, leave out "The," and after the word "Mayo," "Division;" in line 18, leave out "The," and after the word "Mayo," "Division;" and in line 23, leave out "The," and after the word "Mayo," "Division."

On the Motion of Mr. SMALL, the following Amendments made:—In page 104, line 4, leave out "The," and after the word "Meath," leave out "Division;" in line 12, leave out "The," and after the word "Meath," leave out "Division;" and in line 25, leave out "The," and after the word "Monaghan," leave out "Division."

Amendment proposed,

"In page 104, line 28, to leave out the words "The South Monaghan Division," in order to insert the words "South Monaghan," —(*Mr. Small,*)

—instead thereof.

Question, "That the words 'The South Monaghan Division' stand part of the Schedule," put, and *negatived.*

Question proposed, "That the words 'South Monaghan' be there inserted."

MR. WARTON said, that before the Amendment was agreed to, he wished to ask the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) what the effect of the Amendment would be? Would it not still be necessary to describe the division, when a new Writ was issued, as "The Southern Division of the county of Monaghan," so that it could not be strictly called "East" or "South?"

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that it was intended to insert a clause on the Report to explain this and other matters. For instance, in the case of Tullamore, it would be necessary, upon the Report, to show that that was one of the divisions of King's County.

MR. SEXTON said, there was no barony of Tullamore, and it would be

impossible to call a Member by that name; but it might be convenient to call him the Member for the Tullamore Division of King's County. In regard to the objection which had been taken by the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton), he saw no force in it. In this county there would be two divisions, "North" and "South," and two Members.

MR. WARTON said, he spoke of the full title which it would be necessary to give in moving a new Writ. He was not speaking of the name which would have to be given to a Member from the Speaker's Chair.

Question put, and *agreed to;* words *inserted* accordingly.

MR. LALOR moved, in Queen's County, to describe "the Upper Ossory Division" as "Ossory" only.

Amendment proposed,

In page 105, line 4, leave out the words "The Upper Ossory Division," in order to insert the word "Ossory,"—(*Mr. Lalor,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words 'The Upper Ossory Division' stand part of the Schedule."

MR. WARTON asked what was the ground for this Amendment? He did not profess to have a very intimate acquaintance with Ireland; but he always understood that Upper Ossory was a well-known place, and that it was known by that name in order to distinguish it from Lower Ossory. By the Amendment moved by the hon. Member there would be no distinction between the two.

MR. LALOR explained that there were both an Upper and a Lower Ossory at one time, but there was no distinction between the two now.

MR. SEXTON said, he wished to point out to the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Warton) that these names had been recommended to the Commissioner by two eminent Members of the Tory Party, of whom Lord Castletown was one.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That the word 'Ossory' be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

On the Motion of Mr. KENNY, the following Amendment made:—In pages 105, line 10, leave out "The," and after the word "Leix," leave out "Division."

On the Motion of Mr. SEXTON, the following Amendments made:—

In page 105, line 20, leave out "The," and after the word "Roscommon," leave out "Division;" in line 25, leave out "The," and after the word "Roscommon," leave out "Division;" in page 106, line 4, leave out "The," and after the word "Sligo," leave out "Division;" in line 9, leave out "The," and after the word "Sligo," leave out "Division;" in line 17, leave out "The," and after the word "Tipperary," leave out "Division;" in line 22, leave out "The," and after the word "Tipperary," leave out "Division;" in line 29, leave out "The West Tipperary Division," and insert "South Tipperary;" and in line 32, leave out "The," and after the word "Tipperary," leave out "Division."

Amendment proposed,

In page 107, line 4, leave out "The," and after the word "Tyrone," leave out "Division."—(*Mr. Small.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Schedule."

MR. CALLAN said, he desired, before the Chairman put the Amendment, to say a word in regard to the divisions of the county of Tyrone. He had understood the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) to suggest, at an earlier part of the debate upon the Schedules of the Bill, that if it was considered desirable to give a Member to the city of Drogheda, it would be necessary to withdraw one of the Members from the county of Tyrone, and therefore the divisions of Tyrone, instead of consisting of four, would only be three. He intended to make no Motion on the subject; but he took that opportunity of intimating that on the Report it was his intention to move that one Member should be taken from the county of Tyrone and given to Drogheda. Instead of Drogheda being constituted one of the divisions of Louth, Drogheda was the only borough in Ireland which was extinguished by the Bill in regard to which a strong desire had been expressed to preserve its representation. That representation, however, could only be preserved on the Report; and he wished the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board to be in a position to give Instructions to the Boundary Commissioners, so that if the House, upon the Report, should be of opinion that the

borough representation of Drogheda should be preserved, and a Member taken from the county of Tyrone, there would be the alternative of dividing Tyrone into three divisions instead of four. He did not wish to be met with the argument on the Report, presuming that the Committee was in favour of his proposition, that there was no time to do it.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that it was out of Order to discuss, in connection with this division, what they were to do with the borough of Drogheda. He would, however, promise the hon. Member (Mr. Callan), that when the question was raised on the Report, he would not raise against the proposal the argument the hon. Member hinted at in regard to time. At the same time, he could not hold out any hope that he would be prepared to accept the proposal. All that he had said was that the town of Drogheda had a better case for having its representation continued to it than some other boroughs. But that representation could only have been continued in the event of some general agreement being arrived at; and he had no reason to suppose that there was anything like a general agreement, even among the Irish Members themselves. However, as the Committee were not upon that point now, it was not necessary to discuss it further.

MR. CALLAN said, he did not wish to prejudice the merits of the case in any way; but all he desired was to take the first opportunity, now that they had reached the county of Tyrone, to intimate that it was his intention to make this proposal on the Report, and he certainly thought that he ought not to be met with the remark that the time was inappropriate for making the proposal. He quite accepted the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, which fully met his object in calling attention to the matter now.

Question put, and *negatived;* words *left out* accordingly.

MR. KENNY moved an Amendment for the purpose of fixing the boundaries of North Tyrone according to the original scheme of the Commissioners, instead of in the manner proposed by the Bill. He would, therefore, move, in page 107, to leave out—

"Strabane, Lower, and West Omagh, and so much of the barony of Strabane, Upper, as comprises the following Townlands in the Parish of Upper Bodoney, namely,—Aghalane, Ballynasollus, Bradkeel, Carnargan, Corickmore, Craigatuke, Cruckaclady, Dergbrough, Eden Back, Eden Fore, Eden Mill, Glencoppogagh, Glenga, Glashygolgan, Landahussy Lower, Landahussy Upper, Learden Lower, Learden Upper, Letterbrat, Lislea North, Lislea South, Lisnacreaght, Meenagarragh, Meenagorp, Tullagherin, and Tullynadall."

The effect of the Amendment would be to prevent the division of certain parishes and townlands in an objectionable manner. By the original scheme, the baronies of Stranorlar and West Omagh, which were united both commercially and physically with Lower Strabane, were connected, and the adoption of the Amendment would only have the effect of reverting to the original scheme of the Commissioners. He hoped his hon. Friend the Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson) would see his way to support the Amendment, and that it would also commend itself to the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill (Sir Charles W. Dilke). Certainly the simplicity of the arrangement was much more complete than that of the plan now proposed, and the original scheme had also the advantage of having received general approval from the people of the county of Tyrone.

Amendment proposed,

In page 107, to leave out from the word "Strabane," to the word "Tullynadall," in line 13, inclusive, and insert the words "Strabane Upper and Strabane Lower." — (*Mr. Kenny.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Schedule."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he had always understood that the original scheme for the division of the county of Tyrone was not very warmly advocated by Irish Members below the Gangway opposite, and he was not informed that there was any general agreement in its favour in the locality, but, on the contrary, that the people were rather favourable to the scheme as it now stood in the Bill. The hon. Member for Ennis (Mr. Kenny), who moved the Amendment for the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), intimated that there was a general agreement in the county in the direction of the proposal now made.

But that view was not borne out by the Report of the Commissioners, and before consenting to a change, it would be necessary to have complete information as to such general agreement. In this case also the districts were principally of the same character—namely, agricultural, but they were separated by a range of mountains. The population in all the four divisions would be about the same.

MR. PLUNKET said, that he had been consulted by his noble Friend the Member for Fermanagh (Viscount Crichton) upon this subject, and he had been asked to say a few words, as his noble Friend was not able to be present himself. Therefore, on behalf of his noble Friend and those who were interested in the county, he might say that they entertained a great objection to any alteration in the scheme after the very full and complete inquiry which had been made by the Commissioners, on the spot. The fact was that the principal towns in the baronies of West Omagh and Strabane would be separated from their natural surroundings and the district to which they were naturally attached, if the original proposal of the Commissioners had been adopted, and it was mainly on that ground that the original scheme was dropped, and this alternative scheme proposed. If any hon. Member would study the map, and the Report of the Commissioners, he would see that the original proposal would have been most inconvenient, seeing that, in point of fact, there was a mountain between two parts of one of these divisions, and the scheme, as finally adopted, would be in every way more convenient for the population. He put it entirely on the ground of the convenience of the people concerned; and, therefore, he must ask the Government to support the scheme of the Commissioners as it now stood.

MR. T. A. DICKSON said, that he possessed an intimate knowledge of this part of the county of Tyrone, and he only wished to say that the natural division would be to put West Omagh and Lower Strabane in the same division. They were connected in every way, both in pursuits and in religious views, and neither politically nor otherwise would it make the slightest difference. From his own knowledge, he was able to say that one division of the county of Tyrone ought to include both West Omagh and Strabane.

MR. SEXTON said, it was quite reasonable to expect that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket) would support the scheme as it appeared on the map, because the person who appeared before the Commissioners on the inquiry, and suggested the alteration of the scheme, was the representative of the Tory Party in Tyrone, which Party were represented in that House by the right hon. and learned Gentleman. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had spoken of the existence of a range of mountains; but that was becoming a threadbare argument. Anyone who had attended to the progress of the discussions upon the Bill would find that the Commissioners made use of the argument respecting the existence of a range of mountains in one way upon one occasion, and in an entirely different way upon another, and with equal facility. In Donegal, a range of mountains was no reason for bringing persons together; but in that case it was desirable not to interfere with the baronies of Raphoe and the selected preserves of the house of Hamilton. Therefore, the Commissioners attached no importance, in that instance, to the range of mountains argument. But it was altogether different here, although it might be said that the county of Tyrone consisted of mountains altogether. In one case, the Commissioners appeared to think that a range of mountains was no drawback, so they threw in a river. In another instance, one of the arguments raised was the existence of a tramway. It was pleaded that as between the boundary of West Omagh and Castlederg there was a tramway, it was therefore urged that the whole of that district should be added. In regard to compactness, there was nothing to choose between the two divisions. Anyone who would compare the red with the blue lines would see that the divisions they comprised were of equal compactness. Both were straggling, and there was not one iota of argument in favour of one more than the other on that ground. He did not expect that the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board would favour any Amendment which had been placed on the Paper by the hon. and learned Mem-

ber for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), because the professional gentleman who appeared before the Commissioner at Omagh said he appeared for one of the Members for Tyrone; and he (Mr. Sexton) presumed that he meant the hon. Member opposite. Of course, that learned gentleman said he thought the scheme proposed by the Commissioners was the best that could be suggested; both as to equalization of population, and in following the lines of the baronies most closely. He said, further, that it had its defects, because West Omagh and Lower Strabane would be together. Under these circumstances, he (Mr. Sexton) was not surprised to find the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson) now supporting his scheme. The right hon. Baronet in charge of the Bill said that it had not been shown that the feeling of the inhabitants of the county was favourable to the Amendment. That was not so, and it proved more conclusively than any other case which had yet come before the Committee that when the Nationalists, with extreme frankness, ventured to express an approval of any scheme, from that moment there was no chance whatever of its being adopted. It was condemned from the moment they gave it their fatal approval. Mr. Reynolds appeared for the National Party before the Commissioner, and he certainly did not speak in complimentary terms of the alteration proposed by Mr. Symonds, and he said he did not think the Commissioners would pay much attention to it, because it was proposed only in the interest of an expiring Party. Dean Byrne, a well-known clergyman, appeared before the Commissioner, and also expressed his unqualified approval of the Commissioners' original scheme; and the parish priest of Donoghmore (the Rev. Mr. Macarthy) said that he was chairman of a meeting of delegates from the entire county, which was held at Omagh, and at which the plan of the Commissioners, and the alternative plan, was discussed, when an unanimous opinion was arrived at to abide by that of the Commissioners. What did the right hon. Baronet say to that as an expression of the opinion of the locality? All these three gentlemen —Mr. Reynolds, Dean Byrne, and Father Macarthy—were in favour of the scheme originally put forward by the Commissioners, and the last gentleman was able to say that the unanimous voice of the assembled delegates, representing the various parishes of the county, was in favour of it. There certainly could be no political object in resisting the Amendment. Take the test of creed, which was no test at all in this case, because whatever Protestants might vote with the Nationalist Party no Catholic would vote against them; but even upon that test, there were in these baronies 27,000 Catholics and 21,000 Protestants.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the figures given by the hon. Member for Sligo were not accurate.

MR. SEXTON said, he took the calculation from *The Belfast Morning News*, and he believed it to be approximately correct.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the numbers were 31,000 and 19,000.

MR. SEXTON said, that made the case still more favourable from his point of view; but taking the most favourable view for the other side, let them divide, sub-divide, and cut up these four baronies how they liked in order to form two divisions, it was perfectly obvious that two Nationalist candidates would be returned, unless the Whig and Tory Party had a great deal of money to spare, and did not care how they spent it. There was only one division, in which the Protestants numbered 24,000, and the Catholics and non-Protestants 23,000, in which there could possibly be the semblance of a decent fight. He, therefore, did not see why the opinions of the people of the locality should not receive attention at the hands of the Committee, especially as the interests of no political Party would be advanced by adhering to the proposal put down in the Bill.

MR. HEALY said, it must have been a great satisfaction to the right hon. Baronet in charge of the Bill (Sir Charles W. Dilke) to hear that for the Northern Division of Tyrone there would be a Catholic Member. But, unfortunately, there were 80 per cent of Catholics in the county, and by no possible means could the division be jerry-mandered. The Commissioners had found it necessary to bring two or three baronies together, and accordingly they had used up the parishes in a very remarkable way. He called attention to the fact that they had taken 22 Protestant townlands out of the barony of

Strabane Upper, and put them into the North Tyrone Division. Of course, that was pure accident; but all the other townlands were left in the Mid Tyrone Division, where they were not wanted. In whatever direction one looked there was shown the same disposition to cheat the Catholics. He was not suspicious or afraid of the politics of his fellow-countrymen; on the contrary, he looked for their votes in favour of the Nationalist Party at the next General Election; he merely pointed to facts, and left the public to draw their own conclusions from them. It appeared that three Liberal gentlemen had put up as candidates for Tyrone County; and he would be glad to know if the right hon. Baronet could explain how it was that Andrew Dunn, of London, expected to be returned, as well as Mr. Herdman and the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. T. A. Dickson)? Seeing that there were 80 per cent of Catholics in the county, the hopes of the hon. Gentleman seemed to surpass all notions of probability. The scheme of the Government presented the fact that at the inquiry the Liberals and Tories were once more in coalition, and the Nationalists on the other side. They adopted the proposition of Messrs. Moore and Wilson; Mr. Wilson supported Mr. Moore's scheme, and Mr. Simmonds supported the other. He observed that the hon. Member for Tyrone was not as hopeful over this coalition as were some of his friends; but he (Mr. Healy) would inform him, as he had taken the trouble to inform the other Member for the county, that not a single Whig would get in over the whole of Ireland, unless by the goodwill and pleasure of the Party to which he (Mr. Healy) belonged. Under the new electoral scheme, the Liberals and Conservatives would not be able to secure more than 20 seats in Ireland, of which the Conservatives would obtain nine; but, independently of the Party represented on those Benches, Liberals would not be returned for the remaining 11 seats. It would not be forgotten that the hon. Member for Tyrone had used his influence with the Government to support the scheme of the Commissioners. The hon. Member had already received some proofs that in his county the Nationalists had been able, to some extent, to make a good fight even before the franchise was extended; and yet he ventured to come forward at that time and support this scheme, knowing, as he did, that the people who put him in for Tyrone were in the bitterest manner opposed to it. The hon. Gentleman would not deny that it was by Catholic votes he held a seat in that House—he would not deny it, because he (Mr. Healy) regretted to say that, at the time of his election, the Catholic Party supported him instead of the Nationalist candidate; and, therefore, it appeared to him that the hon. Gentleman showed considerable indiscretion in getting up in that House to support the Government in their scheme, seeing that at the next election he would have to ask for the support of the very men whose Representatives were antagonistic to the scheme proposed. He, no doubt, expected to get the whole of the popular Party with him in South Tyrone; but he might be assured that his support of the Government scheme would not be forgotten at the next election, because in the minds of the popular Party that scheme was based on fraud. They had a right to expect that hon. Gentlemen who represented the Nonconformists of the North of Ireland would have made some return for the support they received in the past; but they had shown themselves ungrateful, they had trampled under foot the favours received at their election, and they had said—"As long as we were able we used you; and now that we have you in our power we shall back up the Government in putting you down—we have done with you, and we expect in future to do without you." But, as he had said, no single Whig would get into Parliament for the North of Ireland. He and his hon. Friends would not forget the treatment they had received in connection with this Bill.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he had been astonished, in taking up this scheme, to find that even in a county with 80 per cent of Catholics, the Boundary Commissioners had not scrupled so to jerry-mander the constituency as to take away nearly half the Catholics from it. His hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Healy) had been severe upon the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson); but he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) would call attention to the fact that he was under the impression that a sort of coalition had been formed between the Tories and the Whigs in the North of Ireland. He did

not know whether that was true or not; but he remained satisfied that the Liberal Member for Tyrone would be no party to such coalition. If he understood the hon. Gentleman rightly, he repudiated such connection, and denied it entirely, and he was glad that he had disclaimed an alliance of the kind. When some hon. Members on those Benches pointed out that the Catholics in Derry had a right to one of the seats for the county, the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) got up and said that the Protestants were in a considerable majority, and that it was by no means unnatural that they should have two seats; but now, when they came to Tyrone, where the Catholics were in a majority of 80 per cent, the right hon. Baronet considered it not at all extravagant that the right of the Catholics to two seats should be considerably endangered. This was, he believed, the last question that would be seriously debated on this Bill in Committee, and he regretted that they must wind up the discussion by saying that wherever an opportunity had' presented itself, the Catholics had been filched of a great portion of what belonged to them.

MR. CALLAN said, as a Railway Director of many years' experience, he had heard with astonishment the statement that one reason for placing part of the barony of Strabane in the position which it occupied was that a range of mountains separated it from the barony with which it ought to have been united. What justification Mr. Macpherson had for putting the barony into North Tyrone altogether passed his comprehension. Probably he was a Scotchman, and wanted to give his Scotch friends a chance for Tyrone. At any rate, he would challenge the hon. Member opposite (Mr. T. A. Dickson) to get up and justify the arrangement on any but political and religious grounds. If on his honour he considered it a fair division, he would accept his declaration to that effect; but, until he so declared, he (Mr. Callan) should regard it as one of the most disgraceful divisions that had been made in the country.

MR. T. A. DICKSON said, the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) had not the serious cause of complaint with regard to the scheme which he would have had if the baronies of Dungannon had been separated.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 50; Noes 18: Majority 32.—(Div. List, No. 117.)

Amendment *negatived.*

On the Motion of Mr. SMALL, the following Amendments made:—In page 107, line 14, leave out "The," and after the word "Tyrone," leave out "Division;" in line 17, leave out "The," and after the word "Tyrone," leave out "Division;" and in line 22, leave out "The," and after the word "Tyrone," leave out "Division."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that two townlands were in a detached portion of West Waterford, whilst the rest of the division was in East Waterford. These two divisions in West Waterford contained only 25 people in all, so that it was not a very important matter.

Amendment proposed, in page 108, line 6, after "Clonea," insert "(except the townlands of Ballyrandle and Kilgrovan)."—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. HEALY said, that with regard to this Amendment, he wished once more to ask the Committee exactly how they stood? It was monstrous that they should have in a Bill such words as these—

"And the barony of Decies without Drum (except so much as is comprised in Division No. 2, as herein described)."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, these places would not be shown on the maps, as they were detached portions; and they would not be shown in the clause.

MR. HEALY asked whether a map of the entire country would be prepared by the Government, showing the divisions on a large scale in the manner in which the districts could be divided in the Ordnance map?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the question was one of cost. He had done all he could to meet the hon. and learned Gentleman's complaint that the public would not be able to procure the necessary map by purchasing the Returns containing all the information. He was afraid the hon. and learned Member would not be able to get what he wanted without a very strong impression on the part of the House in favour

of it. The expense would be very great.

MR. CALLAN said, that there seemed to be a difficulty in the way of spending a little money in order to convenience hon. Members. The Government, however, did not hesitate to spend any amount for the acquisition of American steamers in the case of a threatened war.

MR. HEALY said, that if they could not get these maps published for general use, at any rate the Government might see that one was prepared for use in the Library, with all divisions marked out on it. It would not be necessary to prepare a new map, but some Engineer officer could very well mark out on the old Ordnance Survey map the divisions as they had been laid down in the Bill.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I think that can be done. I will consult with those officials who would have to perform the duty on the matter.

MR. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman let us have a map showing the English divisions marked in the same way?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Yes, it could be done; but, probably, when the map was prepared, it would not show such small details as those which we are now discussing.

MR. CALLAN said, the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Charles W. Dilke) might put himself into communication with the publishers of *United Ireland*, who had prepared a map showing the manner in which seats would be distributed in Ireland. He did not suppose that the hon. Members for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) and the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), who were part owners of that paper, would have any objection to give the right hon. Baronet the used-up wood-cuts of these maps so as to enable him to supply hon. Members with what they required. He thought it did not look seemly on the part of the Representatives of a large Department of the Government to talk about expenses in matters of this kind, seeing that a spirited newspaper had set them the example of publishing these maps as a supplement, and supplying them gratis. If the right hon. Gentleman could not get a copy of this newspaper, and of the maps, in order to form an opinion upon them, he (Mr. Callan) should be happy to supply him with one. It would only cost him 1*d.* He could supply the right hon. Baronet with one of these maps, showing the divisions of a county. It was a farce to talk here of expense——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

MR. HEALY: Rule!

MR. ACKERS: I do not rise to a point of Order——

MR. CALLAN: If the hon. Member does not rise to a point of Order, he has no right to rise at all, for I am in possession of the Committee. I was suggesting that it would be desirable, and that there would be no objection in regard to expense, if we were supplied with these *United Ireland* maps. If we were supplied with proper maps, it would tend to shorten the discussion on Report. I do not suppose the Treasury would object to the plan proposed.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Question is, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. ACKERS again rose, and

MR. CALLAN also rose.

THE CHAIRMAN: The speech of the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan) is irrelevant, and I must ask him to resume his seat.

MR. HEALY: You have not declared it.

THE CHAIRMAN: I declare it now, and I ask the hon. Member to resume his seat.

MR. ACKERS said, he wanted to make an appeal to the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill to reconsider the question of maps. In reply to the request of the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), the right hon. Gentleman had said that everything the Committee desired had been done, and that a full statement had been published; but he (Mr. Ackers) was happy to find that the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan was not satisfied with that, and had again raised the point. The hon. and learned Member was very anxious to get that which, no doubt, the Committee was also desirous of obtaining—namely, maps showing all the alterations made in the divisions, so that at the end of this great Bill, which would be one of the greatest Acts passed for many years, they might have an exact record of the divisions.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he should be very glad to give further consideration to the matter; and he had already told the hon. and learned Mem-

ber opposite (Mr. Healy) that he should give the subject further attention. If they were to have county maps, he thought the alterations which would have to be made would not be very numerous. By far the larger number of alterations had been made in the boroughs. Of course, the Committee would bear in mind that the set of maps now in the hands of hon. Members did not show exactly all the divisions in the county. They only showed the divisions that the Commissioners had had to divide. Therefore, a set of maps prepared on the lines of the set already in the hands of hon. Members, showing the alterations effected in Committee, would not give a complete view of the whole case. Sixty-eight maps had been circulated in a large book, showing the proposals of the Commissioners; but many of those had not been adopted.

MR. HEALY said, that the Ordnance map relating to Ireland was so minute that even the fences in different fields were shown upon it. If a tenant altered a fence, the alteration was shown on the next Ordnance map prepared.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that would apply to the Ordnance Survey map, which he had said might be put up in the Library. He was not sure that the suggestion could be complied with; but it would be done if practicable.

Question put, and *agreed to;* words *inserted* accordingly.

MR. P. J. POWER said, that, no doubt, the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan would be content with the undertaking just given by the right hon. Baronet. They now came to an Amendment relating to the county of Waterford, which, he was happy to think, would not meet with opposition from any quarter. He did not think it would offend either the Nationalists, or the Whigs, or the Tories, and he proposed it merely with the view of the convenience of the inhabitants of the parish of Seskinan. The Boundary Commissioners, in following their Instructions, had divided the county of Waterford into two divisions, and in making those divisions they had had regard to population. They had endeavoured to make the population of the two divisions as nearly as possible alike; and to carry out that object they had had to cut up this parish of Seskinan. By this process they had made the population of West Waterford to exceed that of East Waterford by 635; and the Amendment which he proposed had for its object the placing of a part of Seskinan, which the Commissioners had put into East Waterford, into West Waterford, increasing the difference that already existed to about 1,435. The Committee would naturally ask, why not place the portion of Seskinan, which was in the West Waterford District, in the East Waterford District, thereby equalizing the population in the respective divisions? But he wished to point out to the Committee that all the interests of the parishioners of Seskinan lay in the West Waterford District—all their market interests, their fair interests, their dispensary interests, and their Poor Law Unions. As he had said before, the Amendment he proposed to give effect to would be of the greatest possible convenience to the inhabitants of the parish, and would not make the least difference to any particular Party. In moving this proposal, he felt that it was quite unnecessary to point out to the right hon. Baronet in charge of the Bill what the effect of it would be. The matter was one of detail, and the right hon. Baronet had made himself such a perfect master of every detail of the most complicated matter contained in the measure that it was quite unnecessary for any Member in any part of the House to point out what the effect of any Amendment would be. He trusted hon. Members on both sides of the House would see the reasonableness of the Amendment he proposed, and that the Government, as represented by the right hon. Baronet, would have no difficulty in agreeing to it.

Amendment proposed, in page 108, line 7, leave out "Seskinan."—(*Mr. P. J. Power.*)

Question proposed, "That the word proposed to be left out stand part of the Schedule."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that in the case of an Amendment relating to Louth, moved by the hon. Member for that place (Mr. Callan), there was no objection raised to the proposal, and he had not heard any objection raised to the proposal the hon. Member had now made. He should be very glad to accept it, provided that before the Re-

port the Boundary Commissioners did not offer any strong objection to it. So far as he knew, there was no objection to it. It would possess the advantages the hon. Member had pointed out; but it would have the drawback of making the population rather less equal than it was at present. As the hon. Member had stated, the population of the Western Division would be 44,000, while that of the Eastern Division would be only 39,500 odd. He had no other objection to the proposal; and if, before Report, no one raised a protest against it, he should propose to take the same course with regard to it as he had taken in the case of Louth.

Mr. CALLAN said, that supposing the Amendment was agreed to by the Boundary Commissioners as to East Waterford, what would be the result? The Amendment was, in page 108, line 7, to leave out "Seskinan;" and if Seskinan was left out, it would not be included anywhere. Unless it were included here, the inhabitants of Seskinan would be disfranchised.

Mr. P. J. POWER said, the hon. Member was quite wrong.

Mr. CALLAN: No; unless it was included here in West Waterford, the people in Seskinan would not be able to vote at all.

Mr. WARTON said, he should like to make an observation here, because the mistake which the hon. Member who brought forward the Amendment had fallen into was the result of the eccentric drafting of the Bill, to which he had had occasion to call attention before, and to which the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill so persistently adhered. The hon. Member below the Gangway (Mr. Callan) seemed to be under the impression that if Seskinan disappeared from East Waterford, it would go nowhere. If they took the trouble to look at another part of the Bill they would find that Seskinan would go into West Waterford, because the barony in which it was situated formed part of that division. This was one of the results of neglecting to show the divisions in the Bill. The Bill had been drawn in a most slovenly manner. ["Order, order!"] It was not out of Order to say that. He was entitled to say that the Bill had been drafted in a slovenly manner. He had said it before, and he would probably have to say it again; and he should certainly not be put down by any amount of roaring. The draft of the Bill had given great dissatisfaction to other hon. Members besides himself. He thanked the right hon. Baronet for intimating that, in all probability, the House would be supplied with a Return of all the integral parts of parishes and divisions as finally laid down in the Bill; he thanked the right hon. Baronet for the promise, and also for the performance when he made it. He wished to point out that when they were put in this position, that certain parishes forming part, say, of a barony or Petty Sessional Division, were put into one division of a county, and they found that that division was expressed in another division of the county in very general words, such as "except so much as is comprised in Division No. 2," it would be convenient to have that division in which the parishes were named first, stated first without regard to No. 1 or No. 2. References of this kind had no meaning or sense, and only served to disfigure the Bill. It seemed to him that it would have been far better to have taken the East Waterford Division first, for then they would have the places relating to the barony of Decies set out; and they would then have had, secondly, the remaining part of the parishes mentioned in a less general manner put in. If they were to have this style of drafting it was as well to mitigate, as far as possible, its evil effects when they had the chance. They should do this in dealing fully, in the first instance, with the divisions in which the parishes were enumerated; and, secondly, in dealing with the divisions in which only, so to speak, the surplus part of the parishes were inserted. He mentioned this because it was possible that before Report the right hon. Baronet might desire to change the order of these places in the Waterford Divisions.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, he should be happy to consider the suggestion of the hon. and learned Member.

Mr. P. J. POWER said, that as to the number he had stated, he should like to inform the right hon. Baronet that he was not positive in saying that 800 were the exact figures. He had not been able to ascertain the number precisely before leaving Waterford; but he

had been told that that was the number, or about it. As to the question raised by the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan) with regard to disfranchising a portion of the parish, if the Amendment were carried——

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Oh, that is all right; we understand that point.

MR. P. J. POWER: Yes; I think that question need not be gone into.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for the City of Dublin (Dr. Lyons) has the following Amendment on the Paper:—Part 3, page 109, line 26, insert,—"Royal University of Ireland | Two Members." I have considered the Amendment, and I must say that as this is a Schedule relating to counties, a proposal to insert in it a provision constituting a new University constituency is not in Order.

DR. LYONS said, that the Amendment in question appeared in the Paper through an inadvertence for which he was not at all responsible. He merely wished to give Notice that he would put the Amendment on the Paper for consideration on Report.

Further Amendments made.

Schedule, as amended, *agreed to.*

EIGHTH SCHEDULE.

FIRST PART.

Mr. SEXTON rose for the purpose of moving an Amendment, in page 110, line 5, to leave out "33 & 34 Vic. c. 38 | An Act to disfranchise the boroughs of Sligo and Cashel," when——

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he would ask the permission of the Committee in order to make a statement in regard to the Schedule, which, he thought, would relieve the hon. Gentleman the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) from the necessity of moving his Amendment. This question had been raised on Clauses 26 and 27. On Clause 27 the question as to what disfranchisement should be given to the electors reported on by the Commissioners in 1880 arose, and the Government accepted a proposition which came from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes), to the effect that the penalty imposed on these voters should be seven years' disfranchisement from the date of the Report—for an offence at one election, and one election only. That was the view of the House—it might have been right or it might have been wrong, but they proceeded upon that principle; and, so far as he could gather, rather hoped that by dealing mercifully with those voters the House would not be encouraging corrupt practices for the future. In the same Bill, by Clause 26, they had to deal with electors who had been made the subject of legislation in times past. They had been of two classes—namely, those who had been scheduled for disfranchisement for a certain period, and those scheduled for disfranchisement for life—so as not to vote in a certain constituency for life. There were many of these people scheduled; and considering that they proposed to impose a penalty of only seven years upon those reported on in 1880, they could not maintain the heavier penalty on those who had been disfranchised now for 14 years. The result would be that in the new constituencies the disfranchised voters would be restored to their voting power, and those of the boroughs of Sligo and Cashel would be included. There were about 9,000 names on the Election Commission Reports; but that number, it was computed, must have been so reduced by death and change of dwelling-place, that no more than one-third of the original number now remained. Therefore, he did not think the Committee would be running any risk in acceding to what he thought was a consistent way of dealing with old offenders. On the Report, therefore, he would move an Amendment to Clause 26, to strike out the first part of the Schedule altogether. He made this announcement now in order to save discussion; but the matter would have to be practically dealt with on Report.

MR. SEXTON said, that of course the undertaking given by the hon. and learned Member opposite was satisfactory to him to the full extent of his Amendment. In that Amendment he had not dealt with cases other than those of Sligo and Cashel. As an Irish Member, he had not felt competent to deal with English cases. He would make no comment upon the fact that in moving this proposed alteration the hon. and learned Gentleman would be granting

an amnesty to greater offenders than he (Mr. Sexton) was interested in. When he had put his Amendment down, he had felt that it could not be seriously contended for a moment that the remnant of the few people reported on in 1869, and disfranchised in 1870, should be still excluded from the franchise. The number of persons scheduled in Sligo was 27, and the number scheduled in Cashel, 100. These people had been scheduled 16 years ago, and disfranchised 14 years ago; and, seeing that that was the case, he considered that there could not be any very great impropriety in giving them the privilege of voting. He thanked the hon. and learned Gentleman for his statement.

MR. WARTON said, that before the Schedule was put, he had an Amendment to propose which had not been removed by what the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General (Sir Henry James) had stated. He begged to propose the omission of the word "Knaresborough" from the Schedule. He did so on the ground that Knaresborough stood in a perfectly different position to every one of the other boroughs mentioned in the Schedule. It would be in the recollection of hon. Members that at the last General Election there was a close contest in the borough of Knaresborough—that a Liberal, whose name it was not necessary to mention, was returned by the narrow majority of 26 over the Conservative candidate, that an Election Petition was presented, and that the Judges reported that the borough had been a guilty borough. The result was that Commissioners were sent down; but, contrary to what was done by the Commissioners in the cases of Boston, Canterbury, Chester, Gloucester, Macclesfield, Oxford, and Sandwich, the other places mentioned in the Schedule, they found that a hasty conclusion had been come to by the Judges, and their Report was eminently favourable to the character of Knaresborough. Two of the Commissioners were Liberals and the third a Conservative; so it could not be said that their Report was prompted by political considerations. The Commissioners agreed in their Report, and they distinctly stated, referring to the way in which the Election Petition was tried, that the counsel for the respondent asked permission to refute some of the charges made; but the Judges declined to hear them, on the ground that the inquiry was finished. Hon. Gentlemen knew perfectly well how Election Petitions were conducted. Owing to the extraordinary way in which things were conducted in election cases, if a single case of bribery was proved, the sitting Member lost his seat, though he might not himself be morally guilty. The most trumpery case of bribery was quite enough to unseat a man; the question between the political Parties was settled if one clear case of bribery was made out. But it was a very different thing when the honour of the borough was at stake. The Judges reported somewhat hastily that Knaresborough was corrupt; but the Commissioners, after a cool and quiet investigation, found—

> "That corrupt practices did not extensively prevail at the Election in 1880. Corrupt practices," the Report went on, "did exist to some extent, but they were not carried out upon any system or premeditated plan on either side. The cases of direct bribery were few and slight, and the treating was not of the serious nature as would appear from the *ex parte* evidence given before the learned Judges."

Not only, therefore, did the Commissioners say, in one page of their Report, that the Judges refused to hear the contrary evidence, but they said the same thing again in other words upon another page; they complained of the complexion given to the case from the *ex parte* evidence laid before the learned Judges. Why, the total amount proved to have been spent during the Election, including the sums paid by persons who were mere volunteers, did not exceed £120, a perfectly trivial sum as compared with the money spent in some boroughs with which even the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General (Sir Henry James) was acquainted. Knaresborough came out of the investigation with a reputation of almost perfect purity. At the following election their late much-respected Friend, Mr. Tom Collins, was returned, also by a narrow majority—374 to 335. Indeed, the Commissioners, who went somewhat at length into the history of the borough, found that Parties were so evenly balanced that it was with them pretty much turn and turn about. He (Mr. Warton) knew very well what the answer would in all probability be. The right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) might say that all they were

trying to do was to provide certain punishment to certain individuals who were scheduled by the Commissioners. That, however, was unjust to the borough of Knaresborough. Under this ruthless Bill, Knaresborough was one of the ancient boroughs which was to lose its separate representation. If boroughs having a history of many centuries were to be deprived of their political rights, they ought, to say the least, to be allowed to preserve their good name. He must say that in comparison with the other scheduled boroughs Knaresborough stood out distinguished for its purity—in fact, it might be said that Knaresborough stood in a very enviable position. It had, it was true, been found guilty; but it had been found that the acts of bribery committed within it were exceedingly small. To put Knaresborough amongst the corrupt boroughs was exceedingly cruel; and therefore he thought it his duty, in justice to the borough, to move its omission from the Schedule.

Amendment proposed, in page 110, to leave out the word "Knaresborough."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'Knaresborough' stand part of the Schedule."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that, as far as he could judge, a great deal of what the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Warton) had said was perfectly irrelevant. The fact of the matter was, that certain persons in Knaresborough were guilty of corrupt practices. No doubt, if they had let the borough alone, the mass of voters would have been pure. Why should the guilty persons at Knaresborough be pardoned any more than the guilty ones in any other of the scheduled boroughs? If the place was as pure as the hon. and learned Member had said, those who did bribe could not have been led away by the impurity of their surroundings. Their offence must have been all the more deliberate and intentional; and, therefore, there could be no special reason why they should be pardoned.

MR. BULWER said, he agreed with much the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) had said. He would not mention any borough in particular, but boroughs with which hon. Members, not even excepting his hon. and learned Friend (the Attorney General), were all familiar were far more corrupt than Knaresborough. It was mere prudery to talk of corruption in Knaresborough, when there was not more than £120 spent during the election. He should be very much surprised if any Representative of a borough, after inquiry into the matter, would be able to say that in his borough a much larger sum was not spent corruptly at the last Election. [HOME RULERS: English boroughs.] He did not wish to wound the susceptibilities of the Irish Members; he understood that they did not resort to bribery, but to intimidation. He would confine his remarks to this side of the Irish Channel, and would challenge the Representative of any English, Scotch, or Welsh borough to rise in his place and say, of his own knowledge, that in his borough £120, or a good deal more, was not spent corruptly on one side or the other at the last Election? Everybody knew that there was more or less corruption, though, of course, nobody could prove it. He agreed with his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bridport that no sufficient case had been made out for the inclusion of Knaresborough in the Schedule.

COLONEL STEBLE supported the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Warton). He did not rise to make a speech, but simply to repudiate the statement of the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Bulwer) that bribery prevailed in every constituency. He could assure the hon. and learned Gentleman that Scarborough was perfectly pure at the last Election.

MR. MORGAN LLOYD said, he also protested against the remark of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Bulwer) that at the last General Election corruption universally prevailed. So far as Wales was concerned, he could say with confidence that at the last Election there was no corruption whatever, nor had such a thing been known in the Principality in modern times, except in one borough which would now cease to return a Member.

MR. WARTON said, the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General (Sir Henry James), with that acuteness which distinguished him on all occasions, had given the go-bye to his (Mr. Warton's) principal argument, which

was that it was perfectly unfair to put in this disgraceful Schedule Knaresborough, pure and innocent, as compared with any one of the other seven boroughs mentioned in the Schedule. To that argument the hon. and learned Attorney General did not condescend to reply. Perhaps it was as well he should remind the hon. and learned Gentleman and the Committee how the bribery began. It began in a Liberal club. About 70 or 80 gallons of beer was distributed amongst the people. What did 70 or 80 gallons of beer amongst the people of Knaresborough amount to? And what mitigated the crime was, that a good deal of the money with which the drink was paid for was subscribed by persons who were at the time sharing in the drink, so that these corrupt voters were treating themselves after all. He could only say that if the hon. and gallant Member for Scarborough (Colonel Stebble), whom he was glad to find supporting him, would tell with him, he would certainly press the matter to a division.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 76; Noes 15: Majority 61.—(Div. List, No. 118.)

Question, "That the Schedule stand part of the Bill," put, and *agreed to*.

Question proposed, "That the Bill, as amended, be reported to the House."

THE CHAIRMAN: The Question is, "That I report the Bill, as amended, to the House."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: It is not unusual, at the close of a Committee on a Bill of this importance, to thank the Committee for the assistance they have given in regard to certain details of the Bill. I have to thank hon. Members in all quarters of the House for the manner in which they have worked on the Bill, and to express the hope that the result of our labours may not be unworthy of the attention which has been given to it.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman when he intends to take the Report stage of this Bill; and when the Bill will be in the hands of Members reprinted?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I have expressed a strong desire that the Bill be circulated unstitched to-morrow; but, if not circulated to-morrow, it will be on the following day. I propose to fix the Report stage on Monday, with a view of taking it on Tuesday or Wednesday.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered upon *Monday* next, and to be *printed*. [Bill 134.]

MOTIONS.

—o—

POLICE AND SANITARY REGULATIONS SELECT COMMITTEE.

Ordered, That Four be the quorum of the Select Committee on Police and Sanitary Regulations.—(*Mr. John Talbot.*)

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (STANDING ORDER, PUTTING THE QUESTION).

RESOLUTION.

MR. BIGGAR, in rising to move—

"That the Standing Order of the 27th November 1882, relating to Putting the Question, be amended by leaving out the following words, 'it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of Ways and Means in a Committee of the whole House, during any Debate, that the subject has been adequately discussed, and that it is the evident sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the Question be now put, he may so inform the House or the Committee, and, if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,'" and inserting the following words instead, "a Minister of the Crown shall declare to the House, or to a Committee of the whole House, during any Debate, that, in his opinion, the subject has been adequately discussed, and that it is the evident sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the Question be now put, and shall thereupon make a Motion, "That the Question be now put.'"

said, the Amendment prevented the necessity of the Speaker or the Chairman of Ways and Means coming into conflict with any Member of the House or any section of the House. That was a very unfortunate position for the Speaker or the Chairman to be in, especially as it was the special function of those Officials to protect the minority in that House. The position of a Speaker and a Chairman should be purely judicial, and all such things as allegations of Party or partizanship should be avoided as far as possible by those functionaries.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 22nd April, 1885.

MINUTES.] — PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*) — *Third Reading*—Waterford, Dungarvan, and Lismore Railway,* and *passed.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered* — *First Reading*—Parliamentary Elections and Corrupt Practices Consolidation * [135]; Submarine Telegraph Cables * [136].

Second Reading—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 1) * [128]; Registration of Voters (Ireland) [110]; Registration of Voters (Scotland) [132]; Municipal Corporations (Ireland) (Borough Funds) [81]; Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (No. 2) [74], *debate adjourned;* Public Health (Members and Officers) [114]; Municipal Corporations (Quarter Session Boroughs) [133], *debate adjourned;* Highways [89]; Barristers Admission (Ireland) [95]; Private Lunatic Asylums (Ireland) [60], *negatived.*

Committee — Waterworks Clauses Act (1847) Amendment [7]—R.P.

Committee — Report —Burial Boards (Contested Elections) * [106].

QUESTIONS.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: May I ask the right hon. Baronet opposite whether he can tell us what the arrangements will be now as regards the Business of the House? We have to consider the Registration of Voters Bill to-day, and we shall be glad to know what Business will be taken to-morrow and on Friday? I should be glad, at the same time, to be allowed to take this opportunity of expressing my regret that I was not in the House when the Redistribution Bill was finally passed through Committee. I should have liked to express my high sense of the great ability, tact, and good humour with which the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board has conducted the measure in its progress through the House. I should be glad also to know whether it is probable that any other Papers will be presented to us besides what we have already before we consider the Vote of Credit on Monday next?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I have to thank the right hon. Gentleman for the kindness with which he has referred to my own exertions in connection with the Redistribution of Seats Bill. Having done so, I have to say that it is not in my power to state whether any further Papers can be presented before the Vote of Credit; but I will communicate with my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister on the subject in the course of the afternoon. With reference to the course of Business, it is intended to take Supply first to-morrow—the Civil Service Estimates. A doubt was expressed, however, last night as to whether it would not be desirable to report Progress at 10 or 11 o'clock, and to continue the discussion on the next stages of the Scotch and Irish Registration Bills. That depends upon the progress made to-day, and on the feeling expressed by the Committee on the subject. It is also proposed to continue these Bills on Friday, on the Motion that the Speaker do leave the Chair, but probably not with the intention of going on with the discussion of the clauses of these Bills in Committee. My right hon. and learned Friend the Lord Advocate does not propose to take the clauses of the Scotch Bills this week, in order that the people of Scotland may have time to consider them. Probably the same course will be taken with regard to the Irish measure.

MR. WARTON asked when the Corporate Property Bill would be proceeded with?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he could not state when it would be possible to go on with it. He saw no prospect of going on with it for some time.

MR. SEXTON said, he understood that the Redistribution of Seats Bill was to be put down for Monday for its Report stage. It had not been circulated as reprinted.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the Bill would be circulated to-day. It would be put down for Monday, but he did not see much chance of the Redistribution of Seats Bill being proceeded with on that day. Perhaps it might be proceeded with on Tuesday or Wednesday.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—SIR PETER LUMSDEN'S DESPATCHES.

MR. O'KELLY asked whether the Government would consider the advisa-

bility of laying on the Table the suppressed despatch of Sir Peter Lumsden?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: There is no suppressed despatch. Sir Peter Lumsden is in daily communication with Her Majesty's Government, and as many as four, five, and six telegrams come from him every day on various points of detail. The despatch presented last night is the only telegram going over the whole ground and giving an account of the engagement near Penjdeh.

MR. O'KELLY: The despatch I refer to is the long one which was announced to the House, but not laid before us.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: That despatch is only one of the series to which I have alluded, and it gives no facts which are material beyond those contained in the despatch presented yesterday.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I shall be glad to know if there is any fresh news which the Government can communicate to the House?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: No, Sir; there is no news at all.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND) BILL.—[BILL 110.]

(Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made. and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—*(Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.)*

MR. PLUNKET: It is not my intention to oppose the second reading of this Bill, so far as it is an attempt to apply the existing Law of Registration in Ireland to the actually qualified voters that will exist under the Franchise Bill; but I must call attention to the fact that Clause 3 of the Bill, which enacts that dispensary relief shall not in future be a disqualification for the franchise, is an entirely foreign element introduced into such a Bill. It has nothing, practically speaking, to do with the Registration Bill. I am not going into the merits of the question at present, or to say how far the clause is an advantage or a disadvantage. I only wish to take note of the circumstance that this Bill is not—as is the English corresponding Bill—a simple attempt to apply the Registration Law, as it stands, to the new circumstances that will arise under the Franchise Bill, and to point out that an effort is made by this Clause 3 to introduce a new principle of qualification and disqualification of voters in Ireland.

COLONEL NOLAN said, he wished to remind the House that the clause was moved twice in the discussion on the Franchise Bill, and that they were then told from the Front Bench that the Registration Bill would be the proper place for its introduction; and on that occasion no objection was offered by the Opposition. It was an absolute necessity that the clause should be introduced here. It was altogether hopeless for Irish Members to attempt to remedy their grievances by a separate Bill, amid all this press of Business, and wars and rumour of wars taking up so much time. This Clause 3 was the most valuable and essential part of the Bill; and without it two-thirds of the new voters would be practically disfranchised. It should be remembered that the greater part of the people of Ireland paid poor rates, and thus they contributed to this very fund which brought them medical relief. Some did not actually pay poor rates, perhaps; but then they paid it in the form of rent to the landlord, the landlord paying the actual rate. This was a system which English rule had encouraged. The dispensary system was a very good system in Ireland. The people had adopted it, and now it would be cruel in the extreme to disfranchise them because they had adopted the method which the Government had recommended to them. He wished to point out the distinction which existed between Ireland and England in this respect. In the latter place the people had doctors of various degrees. They could get their half-crown or five shilling doctor. He believed that every Irish doctor charged 20*s*. He did not know an exception. Passing away from this clause of the Bill, he would take exception to that clause in the Bill which cast the cost of registration upon the local rates. It was essentially an Imperial

question, for it was owing to registration that they came to that House for an Imperial purpose. Though they liked it not, they were told that it was for the general interest of the Empire; and it was necessary for their coming there that there should be registration, and hence this was an Imperial question simply. There might be some argument in favour of throwing the cost upon the local rates if the Local Bodies had any power to keep down cost in this direction. This, however, was not so, for the whole scale was fixed by the Local Government Board, and the Local Bodies had no authority to alter it. All they had to do was simply to raise the money. The present local rates were burdened with half-a-dozen other taxes —such as that with regard to explosives —which were not really local rates at all. He was sure that if the Ministry would give this matter consideration, and take these burdens off the Poor Law altogether, they would confer a great benefit on the people.

MR. WARTON said, he thought that this Bill, in its present shape, would give rise to endless litigation. Instead of leaving the Revising Barrister to state a case, if he was in doubt, the individual voter was to be allowed to go through the whole form of getting a rule *nisi* and going through the other stages. The 1st clause of the Bill was really a breach of the understanding which had been come to with the House, as it practically made the Franchise Act date back a whole year.

MR. LEWIS said, it seemed to him that this Bill had better have been confined to the question of registration, and not extended to the question of franchise. As he understood, the object of the Bill was to assimilate the law of Ireland with regard to registration with the law of England. As he understood the law of England, the receipt of medical relief was a disqualification for the franchise; yet this Bill proposed to make a different law for Ireland. He would deal with this point further in Committee. He thought it desirable to press on the Government the necessity for securing purity of registration in Ireland, and he would call their attention to what was now going on, and what was likely to go on. At a very recent meeting of the Athy Board of Guardians, a proposition was made that the persons to be appointed to make out the new lists of voters under the Franchise Act should be the local secretaries of the National League Branches in every parish in the union. It was pointed out that the ordinary course was to appoint rate collectors, whose public office would be likely to secure independence, or, at any rate, responsibility; and a very reasonable suggestion was made that the extraordinary course of appointing the secretaries of the National League should not be adopted without notice. This moderate idea was, however, scouted by the Guardians, and the Land League secretaries were appointed straight off. Now, if that were the way the extension of the franchise was to be carried out in Ireland, good-bye to the smallest chance of the Loyal Party having any representation in that House at all. The Local Government Board had power in the matter, and he had fixed responsibility on the Government by bringing the matter to their attention. He hoped an Amendment would be introduced in this Bill meeting such an abuse which, if attempted in England, would meet with the severest censure.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) thought the matters which had been brought forward were all subjects for Committee, and he suggested that the hon. Member for Derry City should prepare an Amendment.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—[BILL 132.]

(*The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

MR. PRESTON BRUCE said, he did not think there would be any opposition in Scotland to this Bill, although there might be some disappointment on finding that it did not deal with certain questions connected with registration,

which, he supposed, were considered to be of too contentious a nature. He only rose at present to remark that this Bill had only been circulated to Members this morning, and that, therefore, although he did not propose to take any objection to the second reading being passed to-day, he would like to suggest to his right hon. and learned Friend (the Lord Advocate) that there ought to be allowed an interval before taking the clauses in detail, in order that the various persons interested in the subject in Scotland might have an opportunity of examining the Bill and making suggestions upon it.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): My hon. Friend the Member for Fife has touched on the reasons for which the Government do not propose to enter into the larger questions of registration to which he has referred. I think it was explained by the Prime Minister, and it has been more than once explained, that these Registration Bills were not intended to cover the whole ground of the questions bearing on that most important subject, but merely such parts of them as are essential to bring into speedy and effectual operation the Act for the Representation of the People, and accordingly this Bill has been limited to that. In regard to what my hon. Friend further stated, as to the Bill being only circulated to-day, I may repeat the explanation I gave before, that we thought it right, in a matter of so highly technical a kind, in regard to which it was very important to have the views of those who have practical experience of the framing of the Register, to communicate with the assessors in the largest and most populous counties in Scotland while the Bill was in draft. Accordingly, some delay has arisen in that respect; but I may state that, while I propose to put down the Bill for Committee to-morrow, and if an opportunity is offered to ask that you, Mr. Speaker, should leave the Chair, I shall postpone the taking of the clauses till next week, so that there will be time to have the Bill sent down to Scotland, and to have the views of those interested in it obtained. I hope the hon. Member will be satisfied with this explanation.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS (IRELAND) (BOROUGH FUNDS) BILL.—[BILL 81.]

(*Mr. Gray, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Meagher.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House will, To-morrow, resolve itself into a Committee on the Bill."—(*Mr. Gray.*)

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "To-morrow," in order to insert the words "upon Monday next."—(*Mr. Lewis.*)

Question put, "That the word 'To-morrow' stand part of the Question."

The House *divided:*—Ayes 67; Noes 5: Majority 62.—(Div. List, No. 119.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Committed for *To-morrow.*

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (No. 2) BILL.—[BILL 74.]

(*Sir Joseph Pease, Earl Percy, Mr. Tremayne, Mr. Charles Palmer.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. T. Richardson.*)

MR. WARTON, in rising to move the rejection of the Bill, said, of all the rapid surprises which had ever come under his observation this was far and away the most surprising; and he greatly regretted to find becoming infectious the habit so persistently pursued by those who sat in front of the hon. Gentleman—namely, that of placing measures before the House without offering any observations whatever in explanation of their purport. Here was a great, a grave, and an important question, whether the sale of liquor on Sunday throughout England should in a great measure be suppressed; and the Government, who were responsible for the conduct of Public Business, had their minds so occupied with foreign questions that they failed to give their supporters a hint to avoid wasting valuable time at this period of the Session, and in the midst of a war-impending crisis, in promoting the discussion of Bills of a frag-

mentary character. One Member ventilated his hobby by proposing legislation for Durham; another took Northumberland in hand; a third directed his attention to Cornwall. In point of fact, they had quite a plethora of those narrow-minded and exasperating schemes interfering with popular rights and privileges. He was under the impression that the Bill which the hon. Member for Hartlepool (Mr. T. Richardson) silently sought to pass through the House was one of those local county Bills—how could it be otherwise when no explanation was given of its object?—but he now found that it was a general measure applying to the entire length and breadth of England, and of the most arbitrary character. It was a most disreputable mode of proceeding, and paying a very bad compliment indeed to the common sense of the House to ask it to accept such an important measure without offering one single argument in favour of the deteriorating and unjust alterations of the existing law for which he demanded Parliamentary sanction. Why should any trade or interest be perpetually harassed or vexed in this cruel manner? The law recognized the highly honourable but anxious occupation of the publican. On the faith of British law the licensed victualler devoted his energy, time, and capital to the carrying on his business in a respectable manner, yet they found that the trade was more harassed than any other by perfectly well-meaning Gentlemen bringing forward Bills of this description with the object, as they foolishly imagined, of preventing drunkenness. Men tried to signalize themselves, and some liked to appear at least better than other people. In this country there was a great deal of hypocrisy; but he was quite at a loss to know what were the arguments on which the hon. Member for Hartlepool, whose name, by the way, did not appear on the back of the Bill, sought to justify the legislation he now asked. It was nothing short of hypocrisy on the part of those who took a glass of drink, and had every comfort around them in their homes, good cellars filled with wines of the choicest vintage, comfortable clubs to go to when they pleased, not only on week days, but on Sundays at all hours of the day and night, to say that the labouring man or the hard-struggling clerk should not have the opportunity at reasonable hours of getting on the Sabbath whatever liquor or refreshment was required. He did not know what were the personal habits of the hon. Member for Hartlepool. He might be either a thorough abstainer or a moderate drinker; but, regarding him as an impersonal abstraction, he was driven to ask with what object he had brought forward this Bill? Some people, no doubt, were entirely opposed to the consumption of intoxicating liquors; but it should be remembered that there were others of an opposite opinion. In his view, it was little short of narrow-minded despotism for hon. Members, because they abstained themselves, to seek that those who moderately indulged should be placed in the same category by legal enforcement. Such an assumption of virtuous morality was neither more nor less than downright tyranny, based on an affectation of moral superiority, and a monstrous invasion of the rights of individuals. In the absence of explanation from the hon. Member for Hartlepool, he was driven to speculate and to look at this question as one which might be brought forward in the interest of those who were called total abstainers. But the hon. Gentleman possibly might belong to those who thought temperate drinking permissible. If that were so, he appealed to him as a moderate drinker to know what right had he to lay down any rule as to the restriction of Sunday drinking? Beer was the Englishman's natural drink. Some time ago one of the Liquor Alliance Leagues offered several large prizes, ranging from £700 down, to the person who would produce the best non-alcoholic beverage to take the place of beer. In spite of those repeated and, as they were considered at the time, brilliant offers, the League never succeeded. There was no liquor so suitable, so palatable to the English taste, so pure, so invigorating, or so cheap as beer. It was, therefore, in his opinion, nothing short of absolute cruelty to deprive the public from getting beer when they required it on Sundays. The poor man was unable to afford laying in a stock of bottled beer, and malt liquor purchased on a Saturday night for consumption on Sunday lost its excellent flavour and became flat, if not tasteless. In fact, those who proposed such an arrange-

Mr. Warton

ment displayed an utter ignorance of the national habits, and he was inclined to assume that the hon. Member for Hartlepool participated in that ignorance. At present public-houses on Sunday were regulated by law, and certain hours were fixed, both inside and outside the Metropolitan Police district, as well as throughout the country, for the sale of liquors. These rules and limits were arrived at after careful examination, and might be regarded as the result of compromise. He did not ask that public-houses should be kept open the whole of Sunday; but what he contended for was that there should be at seasonable periods ample time given for the purchase of beer, so that the comforts of an Englishman's family might not be in any degree either encroached upon or interfered with. On the principle of Christian charity, they ought to shrink from curtailing the pleasures of the thousands of young men, clerks and shopmen, in London who resided in lodgings. How often did they find the arrogance of science united with the fanaticism of religion? They knew how medical opinion changed on this subject of liquor. Some doctors prescribed a good deal of brandy as likely to benefit the patient. At other times they pronounced brandy to be poison. On one occasion the physician said it would be well for the patient to drink whisky; within 24 hours he declared it must not be touched. It need not be said that all over the world some form of exhilaration was required. The necessity and the habit of taking some stimulant was ingrained in many people's constitutions. They knew there was a virtue in generous liquor, and that it did them good and not harm. Were they to be put on the same level as persons who drank to excess for the mere sake of drinking, and simply because a number of fanatics drank nothing at all? Whichever of the latter two classes it was that was represented by the voiceless Gentleman who had charge of this Bill, he had very little respect for them. He should like to know what the hon. Gentleman would think if a Bill were brought in to compel him to drink so much liquor? The hon. Gentleman would doubtless say it was a terrible violation of private rights; but it would be only a fair counterpoise to the action of the teetotallers; for if A had a right to say that B should not drink at all, surely B had an equal right to say that A should drink a certain quantity. What he (Mr. Warton) wanted was a fair recognition of individual and personal rights. If a man drank too much and made a noise in the streets, he rendered himself amenable to the police; but if a man did not interfere with the public order, he ought not to be meddled with. Moreover, the effect of this kind of legislation had been to increase rather than to lessen drunkenness, and there was far less excuse now for introducing these Bills than there was five years ago. The House knew what had happened in regard to Wales. There was more Sunday drunkenness in Wales since the passing of the Sunday Closing Act in that country than ever there was before. In Cardiff, Swansea, Denbigh, and Flint Sunday clubs had increased immensely, and the police all testified to the evil results of the Act. At Cardiff there had been disgraceful disclosures. Two or three Catholic clergymen came forward and gave the most revolting evidence as to the dens of infamy which had grown up in Cardiff since the Act came into operation. The advantages of drinking in a public-house over drinking in these secret dens were obvious. In the one case, there were the securities of law and order; in the other, there was every facility and incitement to law-breaking and crime. At Cardiff it was shown that young girls were debauched at these so-called clubs, and the priests to whom he had referred called attention to it in the interests of humanity. The private drinking clubs in Wales had quintupled since the passing of that wretched pharisaical piece of Sunday legislation; and hon. Gentlemen who brought in these Bills year after year showed a strange disposition to shut their eyes to the facts. Looking at the deserted condition of the Treasury Bench at the present moment, he thought it was rather disgraceful that no Member of the Government was present. He would particularly like to see the Home Secretary in his place, in order to remind the right hon. Gentleman of the answer which he gave some time ago with regard to the Police Report from Flint. The right hon. Gentleman suggested that because the Mayor of Flint was interested in the liquor trade, therefore the Inspector's Report as to the

tremendous increase of Sunday drunkenness was not deserving of attention, and must be pooh-poohed in the Home Secretary's grand manner. But he (Mr. Warton) strongly objected to that manner of answering a Question, and he now quoted the incident as having a bearing upon the subject under discussion. He did not know whether any Welsh Members would take part in this debate—he noticed that most of them had discreetly kept away; but he challenged them to deny that since the passing of the Act there had been an immense increase of drunkenness, and terrible scenes had taken place. Hon. Gentlemen who promoted these Bills did not seem to understand human nature, or they would know that prohibition often lent a stimulus to enjoyment. The fact that Sunday drinking was prohibited and difficult would make lots of people more anxious to drink on Sunday, for "stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant." To be told not to do a thing was a great temptation to go and do it. He advised hon. Gentlemen to study the fable of the hen and her chicken. The hen warned the chicken not to go near the well. The chicken would not have thought of going there; but, of course, directly he was told not to do so, he went and tumbled in; and his dying words were—

> "Hadn't it been for prohibition
> I ne'er had been in this condition."

The hon. Member who brought forward the Bill seemed now to have retired into an obscure corner of the House. He hoped they should have a few words from the hon. Member, and he would appeal to him to try and grapple with those facts with regard to Wales. Personally, he felt bound to condemn the Bill as an unnecessary and unwarranted interference with a great and respectable trade, an infringement of private rights and liberties, a measure incompatible with the spirit of true Englishmen, and inspired only by a canting, fanatical, and sanctimonious hypocrisy. He moved that the Bill be read a second time that day three months.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. Warton

Mr. H. G. ALLEN: The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) has referred to the operation of the Sunday Closing Act in Wales, and has incidentally alluded to myself in relation to that matter; but I have to state that the information I possess on the subject leads me to take a totally different view from that expressed by the hon. and learned Gentleman. It is very true, as he has stated, that in Cardiff, which is a place where certain exceptional circumstances may be cited as against the operation of the Sunday Closing Act, the measure had not been so successful as I have every reason to believe it has been throughout the rest of the Principality of Wales. I can certainly say, without hesitation, that within the limits of my own constituency the Sunday Closing Act is regarded as an incontestable boon. There is hardly a single person in my constituency, unless among the publicans—and I am told that there are many even of them who appreciate the advantage of having a holiday on Sunday—but, at any rate, I believe there is hardly anyone in my constituency, and very few to be found in the constituencies of other hon. Members representing the interests of the people of Wales, who do not regard the Sunday Closing Act as a measure which has been productive of great and most valuable results. With respect to the town of Cardiff, which has very naturally been put in the forefront of the argument used by the hon. and learned Member for Bridport, there are, as I have already stated, peculiar circumstances which have caused the Sunday Closing Act not to be so successful there as it has been in other parts of the Principality. The hon. Member was, no doubt, quite right in saying that a great deal of drinking goes on in unlicensed houses, such, for instance, as sham clubs, which it will probably be the duty of the Legislature to put an end to, if the means of so doing can be found without further interference than is desirable with the convenience of the public. Among the peculiar circumstances that exist in Cardiff, one of the most noticeable is that there is in that town a large and constantly floating population, composed of seamen from all parts of the world, who do not know what to do with themselves on the Sabbath day, and who

indulge, to a great extent, in the pernicious habit of drinking. In this respect Cardiff undoubtedly differs from most other places in Wales; and there is another circumstance which tends to place that seaport in an exceptional position as compared with other places in the Principality—namely, that the town is situated within about a mile and a-half of the English Border, so that on Sunday, during the hours the public-houses are open in England, it becomes a sort of amusement and bravado on the part of certain portions of the Cardiff population, finding the public-houses in their own town all closed, to walk across the Border into the neighbouring county of Monmouth for the purpose of having a drink. There can be no doubt that this custom has engendered a certain amount of drunkenness, and that a certain number of persons who thus go into England, and who begin to drink by way of joke, often end in taking a good deal more than they intended when they first set out from the place in which the Sunday Closing Act is enforced. In this way a good deal of drunkenness among the Cardiff population may be accounted for; but, notwithstanding the energetic appeal made to me by the hon. and learned Member for Bridport, I am not able to say what the total effect of the Sunday Closing Act in Wales has been. No doubt there is some evidence in support of the view the hon. and learned Member has taken. He is right in saying that one of the Roman Catholic pastors in Cardiff has made statements adverse to the Sunday Closing Act; but I may mention that after the Easter holidays I happened to be returning to town, through Cardiff, by train, when several gentlemen of that town, one or two of whom I was well acquainted with, got into the carriage in which I was, and I asked them what they considered to have been the effect of the Sunday Closing Act in Cardiff. I am sorry to say that their opinion was that, as to Cardiff, mischief had been done in the way of promoting the establishment of the sham clubs and unlicensed houses, and thus producing a good deal of Sunday drinking. Two of the gentlemen I have referred to, whose testimony I think I could rely upon, said, notwithstanding the statement of the reverend gentleman, or any other evidence that may have been adduced, that they believed that on the whole the Sunday Closing Act had been productive of a balance of benefit. In Cardiff, as I have already shown, the matter stands on peculiar and exceptional grounds; but in other places throughout the Principality—and I do not think that even Swansea can be termed an exception, although as a large seaport with a great many sailors constantly reckoned among its population it might be so—I am of opinion that there is no exception to the general rule. I am quite confident that, for the reasons I have mentioned, whatever may be the case with regard to Cardiff, the Sunday Closing Act throughout the whole of the rest of Wales is greatly appreciated by the inhabitants. As the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) did me the honour to refer to me, I have thought it right to give my testimony on the question; and, in conclusion, I may express my belief that the more the matter is inquired into, as far as the operation of the Act in regard to Wales is concerned, the more clearly will it be shown that I am right in the views I have expressed.

MR. MONK said, he thought the House would agree that there could be no two opinions as to the inconvenience of an hon. Member moving the second reading of a Bill of which he was not in charge. Up to the present moment the House had had no explanation whatever of this Bill, and the two hon. Members who had addressed the House had been discussing a different measure from that which was before the House. He would proceed, therefore, to tell the House what this Bill was. It was a misnomer to call it a Sunday Closing Bill. It was really a Bill for further restricting the hours during which public-houses should be opened on Sunday. A distinction was drawn between public-houses in the Metropolitan district and in towns and populous places; but he could not find that the expression "a town or populous place" was defined in any part of the Bill. He was of opinion that if it was desirable that public-houses should be opened for the sale of liquor during a portion of the Sunday in a populous place, it was desirable that they should be permitted to be open throughout the country for the same purpose. However, this Bill provided that if the premises were situated in the Metropolitan district

they should be open on Sunday afternoons from 1 to 3 o'clock, and on Sunday evenings from 7 to 10; and he did not suppose that anyone would take exception to that limitation. If the premises were situated outside the Metropolitan district, but within the Metropolitan Police district or a town or populous place, then they were to be open from half-past 12 to half-past 2, and from 7 to 9. That he thought was a very reasonable limitation, and so far as it went he could support the Bill. But then it was provided that if the premises were situated outside a town or populous place they should be closed altogether, except for the sale of liquor to be consumed off the premises. There might be a considerable divergence of opinion as to whether that was not too large a limitation. He must ask those in charge of the Bill to define what they meant by a populous place, whether it was a place of 1,000 or 2,000 inhabitants, and to undertake to insert that definition in the Bill? If the hon. Member for North Durham, whose name was on the back of the Bill, would give an assurance that in Committee Sub-section (*b*) of Clause 1 should be extended so as to allow the sale of liquor off the premises in rural districts during the same hours as its sale was permitted in towns, he would not oppose the second reading. But if he found that this Bill was merely another phase of the Alliance Bill, and was meant to prevent the sale of liquor throughout the country on one of the days of the week, he would oppose the second reading.

MR. TOMLINSON said, he thought that the House had some reason to complain of the manner in which this Bill had been brought forward. The general subject of Sunday closing had been discussed; but that question did not really arise, because they were considering a Bill which, proposing a certain definite change in the law of licensing, did not attempt to bring about the complete closing of public-houses on Sunday. That, therefore, was not the question they had now to consider. The Memorandum which had been printed with the Bill in order to explain the measure stated that it was not proposed to alter the present law relating to the *bonâ fide* traveller or to railway refreshment rooms; but he found no exceptions of that nature in the Bill. The fact was a Memorandum on a Bill of this character was out of place, and they ought to have had the Bill explained by some hon. Member who was responsible for its production. The whole Bill had been drafted in the most vague terms possible, and it was difficult to forecast what its exact effect would be, while its Preamble entirely misdescribed its objects. Moreover, he was of opinion that a question of this kind was far too large a question to be taken up by one or two private Members. If anything of the nature of Sunday closing or the alteration of hours on Sunday was to be carried out, it ought to be by the Government; and the House would be perfectly justified in resisting, without reference to the merits of the proposal, any attempt in this direction by a private Member. The truth was that these so-called Temperance Bills went upon a wrong principle altogether. More good would be done by cultivating a taste for non-intoxicating liquors than by continually interfering with the sale of intoxicants. He suggested that an inducement should be offered to the keepers of public-houses and refreshment-houses, by allowing them longer hours for the sale of non-intoxicants, which would be an inducement to them to improve the quality of those beverages. He objected altogether to the way in which licensed victuallers were regarded by the promoters of these Bills, who appeared to look upon them as a sort of criminals, or, at any rate, as persons only to be barely tolerated. Hon. Gentlemen appeared to wish to make licensed victuallers as uncomfortable as possible, and to drive all the best men out of the trade. He thought that was a most unfair and unwise policy, and that Parliament ought not to lose sight altogether of the interests of the licensed victuallers. In putting the trade under restrictions they ought to have regard to the conditions under which the licensed victualler carried on his business, and they ought not grievously and without due reason to hamper him in the exercise of his trade. The scheme proposed by the Bill was a crude one, and if adopted would lead to considerable inconvenience. He should, therefore, vote against the second reading of the measure.

MR. CHARLES PALMER said, the second reading of the Bill being moved

to-day had undoubtedly taken the House by surprise; and he could not but regret that the other hon. Gentlemen whose names were on the back of the Bill were not present to take part in the discussion. The hon. Member who had just sat down had devoted the whole of his speech to criticizing the manner in which the Bill had been drawn. He (Mr. Charles Palmer) did not wish to follow him in that respect. He wished to say, as his name appeared on the back of the Bill, that those who had brought it forward regarded it as a sort of compromise between the existing condition of things and the extreme measure of total Sunday closing. When hon. Members saw on the back of a Bill the names of Members on both sides of the House, they had no difficulty in believing that there was some likelihood of its being generally accepted. He could assure the House that if it was allowed to pass the second reading stage there would be no difficulty in amending it in Committee, so as to put it in such a form that it would meet with general approval. He did not propose to go into the whole question of Sunday closing; but this he might say, that the question was one which affected the working classes peculiarly, and that if he did not think that the majority of working men—especially in the North of England—were in favour of such a measure as this, he should be the last to recommend it. If even a large minority of working men were against it, he should not be found supporting it; but he believed it was accepted by them as a move in the right direction — towards temperance. As a large employer of labour, he could only say that if they could get rid of this Sunday drinking it would conduce very materially to their men coming to work with certainty and regularity on Monday mornings. That, however, was a very large question, and he did not propose to go into it. He only wished to assure the House, as one whose name was on the back of the Bill, that if it was allowed to go to a second reading, he should be quite prepared to assist in amending it so as to meet the general wishes of the House.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN): I had no intention of taking any part in the discussion when I came down to the House this afternoon; and I am sorry to say that so little did I think the Bill would be taken to-day, that I did not read it before coming down. However, I have read it since I have been here; and as there is no one else to speak upon it from this Bench, and as the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) has made allusion to what he calls the failure of the Welsh Sunday Closing Act, I ask the indulgence of the House whilst I make two or three observations. The hon. and learned Gentleman is altogether incorrect in his statement, and I agree with what has already been stated to the House with regard to the Welsh Sunday Closing Act — namely, that it has proved a great boon to Wales. It is, indeed, felt—particularly in the Border Counties, one of which I have the honour to represent—that it does not go far enough. That opinion, I believe, is also entertained in Cardiff. The evil consists in people going for drink from the Welsh counties, where the public-houses are closed on Sundays, into the English counties, where the public-houses are open. They walk sometimes four or five miles, and think at the end of the journey that they have a right to indemnify themselves for it by drinking more than is good for them. Such increase of drunkenness as there has been on Sunday has, I believe, taken place in districts which are within easy reach of public-houses which remain open on Sunday. But to come to this Bill—it really is not a "Sunday Closing Act" at all. It establishes three different systems of closing. In the Metropolitan district it fixes the closing hours at from 7 to 10. It specifies another closing time for other populous places; and it is only in the rural districts where public-houses are to be closed during the whole of Sunday, except for certain purposes. With regard to the alleged difficulty of defining the words "populous places," I think the fears on that head are altogether groundless. My impression is that the words have received either a statutory or a judicial interpretation; but if not it will be easy to find an acceptable definition when we get into Committee. On the whole, I do not think the Bill is open to the objection which has been taken to it. At any rate, the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Charles

Palmer), who is the only Member present whose name is on the back of the Bill, has met hon. Gentlemen who are inclined to take exception to it in a very fair and liberal spirit. He has promised that all the Amendments which may be put down for the Committee stage shall be carefully considered, and that modifications may be introduced. Under the circumstances, the Bill being a fair one, as well as a short and simple one, I think the House should affirm its principle by giving it a second reading, and should leave all objections to it to be dealt with in Committee.

Mr. SAMPSON LLOYD said, that if it were proved that the great majority of the working classes were desirous of having the Bill passed, he would not say one word against it. He had taken the trouble to search in the Library for Petitions respecting it, and he had found one Petition signed by one person in favour of it, and one Petition signed by one person in opposition to it. Under those circumstances, how could it be said that the masses of the middle and the working classes were in favour of this Bill? He spoke with all due deference of, and even with sympathy with, those who desired to promote temperance in this country. In fact, all right-minded people were in favour of promoting temperance. But what Members present but teetotallers were there who did not take wine or beer on Sundays? Let them have no hypocrisy on that subject. If the Act were brought to bear upon public-houses, and the working and the lower middle classes were to be deprived of their beer or their spirits on Sundays, then let the Clubs — the Carlton, the Reform, the Devonshire, and others—be closed. Public-houses were the clubs of the poor; and a certain amount of political capital was being made out of this question by the one side or the other, which ought not to be the case. Were they prepared to apply that restriction of liberty provided by the Bill for one class of the community without applying it to the others. If so, why did they not say so? The truth of the matter was that they dared not do so. It was a dangerous thing to make laws to prescribe the liberties of any one class, while they did not apply them to themselves and to other classes. While he believed if all others as well as the working classes agreed to go without intoxicating liquors on Sundays they would be none the worse for so doing, at the same time, so long as Members of that House thought fit to drink wine or beer on Sundays, they had no right to object to the middle and the working classes being in a position to get their beer, wine, or spirits on Sundays. He should oppose the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. GOURLEY, in moving the adjournment of the debate, said, he could not understand why, if the rich man could have wine and beer or spirits at his house on Sunday, the middle and the working classes should not be allowed on that day to procure such beverages at the only place where they were in a position to obtain it. He could not support the Bill, because it was only of a partial character — it merely aimed at partially closing public-houses on Sundays. He was not only in favour of the total closing of public-houses on Sunday; but he was, also, in favour of Local Option as advocated by the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), whose absence and the cause for it they all so much deplored. At the same time, he was not in favour of such a measure as the present. He begged to move the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. P. H. MUNTZ, in seconding the Motion, said, that so long as there were several millions of men who were interested in the subject who had not been consulted, and who had had no voice in the matter, it was only fair that the debate should be adjourned. The Bill, as presented to the House, was of a hybrid, imperfect character, which ought not to be allowed to pass in its existing form. If they were to stop drinking on Sundays let them begin at home. Let them begin at that House. [*Laughter.*] Well, let them begin at the Clubs. Why were the Members of the Clubs to have their beer, wine, and spirits, while the poor man was not allowed to go for a walk into the country and have his glass of ale or spirits?

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Gourley.*)

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *Wednesday* next.

The Judge Advocate General

PUBLIC HEALTH (MEMBERS AND OFFICERS) BILL.—[Bill 114.]

(*Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Long, Mr. Cowen.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. ACLAND, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, the points raised by the Bill were that the officers and members of Local Authorities might be exempted from certain penalties which were now, in such a manner as to entail grievous public inconvenience, attached to their having any interest in the sale, purchase, lease, or hiring under contracts, with particular Companies of which they were shareholders, or in respect of advertisements in newspapers in which they might have some interest.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Acland.*)

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL said, the Bill had the entire concurrence of the Local Government Board.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Friday.*

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS (QUARTER SESSION BOROUGHS) BILL.

(*Mr. Dodds, Mr. John Bright, Mr. Barran, Mr. Jackson.*)

[Bill 133.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. DODDS, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, its object was to repeal the 2nd section of the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Dodds.*)

Mr. HIBBERT said, that the Bill had only been issued this morning, and the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department was engaged in a Committee upstairs. He would therefore suggest that the debate should be adjourned.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Hibbert,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *Monday* next.

HIGHWAYS BILL.—[Bill 89.]

(*Mr. Acland, Mr. Elton, Viscount Ebrington, Mr. Cheetham.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. ACLAND, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, explained that the object of the Bill was to enable Highway Boards to take proper care of the fences and the trees overhanging highways, and to act for this purpose in such a manner, and at such times, as might be most useful for the purpose, and most convenient to the ratepayers and other inhabitants of their districts. By the present law owners and occupiers only could be compelled to act for this purpose during part of the year, and that part was not the spring or summer.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Acland.*)

Mr. ELTON said, that he had assisted in drafting the Bill, which had the unanimous support of the people of the West of England.

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL said, the Bill had the assent of the Local Government Board.

Mr. WARTON objected to this Ministerial way of moving the second reading of a Bill, and he objected also to the Bill, which embodied a mischievous interference with the rights of property.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT wished to know what was the present state of the law?

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL said, the Bill had been carefully considered by the permanent officials of the Local Government Board, and it extended to the whole year what could only now be done during part of the year. The Bill was permissive only, and enabled Local Authorities to charge upon the rates, if they thought proper, the costs of carrying the Bill into execution.

Mr. P. PHIPPS said, the Bill, though short, contained a pernicious principle. The rates were already too heavy on houses and landed property. He protested against hasty legislation of this kind, and intimated his intention to vote against any measure which put an additional burden on the rates. Common decency called upon the promoters of

the Bill not to press for a second reading that afternoon.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 87; Noes 28: Majority 59.—(Div. List, No. 120.)

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Friday*.

MOTION.

—o—

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE.

SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE said, he begged to move the adjournment of the House. He did so on the ground that the Registration Bills, which were understood to be the Business of the day, had been disposed of.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Sir William Hart Dyke.*)

MR. CALLAN expressed his surprise at a Motion of this kind being made at an early hour of the afternoon (3.25). He was also greatly surprised to find that the Motion was proposed by a prominent Member on the Front Opposition Bench. He did not think that tactics of this kind were at all seemly, because they gave the appearance of a desire to shirk the discussion of subjects intimately connected with Ireland. There were three questions on the Order Paper of great interest to Ireland—the appointment of a Select Committee on the industries of Ireland, the consideration of a Bill affecting barristers in Ireland, and a measure dealing with private lunatic asylums in that country. The Motion to appoint a Select Committee for the purpose of inquiring into the industries of Ireland had been upon the Paper for some time, and the hon. Member who had introduced it had obtained leave to bring it in on Wednesday. Now, when there was a fair chance of the Committee being appointed, and the Business portion of the day was over, an effort was made to prevent the Committee from being formed. On these grounds he objected to the Motion for Adjournment.

MR. HEALY said, he thought that a Motion of this kind indicated a want of faith in the power of talk which had hitherto characterized hon. and right hon. Gentlemen of the Conservative Party. In regard to measures which were looked upon with disfavour by the Tory Party, the practice had hitherto been to talk against time; but now different tactics were adopted. What was the reason of this falling-off in the powers of talk of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen? He had never known them on previous occasions to display so much powerlessness. He believed that the real motive of this Motion was to prevent his hon. Friend bringing forward his Bill admitting barristers to practise in Ireland without the necessity of their coming to England to eat their terms. Being Wednesday, a count could not be moved until 4 o'clock, and they did not wish to keep the Speaker in the Chair until that hour. The right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) occupied a very distinguished place at the Bar of Ireland; and he did not think that he would have been a party to moving the adjournment of the House when a Motion which so much concerned Irish Law students was upon the Paper. As private Members got so few opportunities of bringing forward legislation on Wednesdays, he appealed to the right hon. Baronet to withdraw his Motion until, at least, the Irish Business was disposed of.

MR. GIBSON said, he believed that his right hon. Friend who moved the adjournment of the House did so, not because he had been prompted, but because he himself thought it right, and accordingly he had introduced the topic himself in his usual clear, precise way. The hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) said that the Conservative Party appeared to have "lost credulity in their powers of talk." That was a serious charge.

MR. HEALY: I said your own powers of talking.

MR. GIBSON said that this was a more serious charge still; for to suggest gravely that an Irishman had lost faith in this power was to suggest that he had lost faith in the gifts of his race. He would not attempt to pursue the hon. Member in the various topics which had been introduced, and he did not feel inclined to discuss the various Bills which had been referred to. The next Bill which he saw on the Paper was one dealing with sporting lands in Scotland, which he did not know very much about. There was also a Bill about the River

Thames. One of the reasons why he supported the Motion for Adjournment was that on that day there had been a rush of Bills through the House. Some of them had been passed without any discussion, and some with only a few observations from hon. Members. Now, if Bills were to be rushed through in that way legislation would be reduced to an absurdity. With regard to the Bill of the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan) for the admission of barristers, he might, of course, say that he knew something about it. The Benchers would, he believed, discuss the matter that day; and but for the lamentable death of the late Lord Chancellor (Sir Edward Sullivan), an eminent Irish Judge, he believed the matter would have been discussed some time ago. It was obvious that the matter was one for the calm consideration of those who were concerned in the administration of justice, and the government of the Bar and law students in Ireland. With regard to the other matter—the Motion for the appointment of a Select Committee upon Irish industries—that was a Motion upon which they were all agreed that there would be no difficulty whatever in the hon. Member bringing on the Motion to-morrow night or any other time.

MR. LYULPH STANLEY hoped that the Motion for the adjournment of the House would be withdrawn. It would be vexatious to interfere with the discussion of the Bills of private Members.

SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE disclaimed having made that Motion at the suggestion of his right hon. and learned Friend. He had done so simply on the broad ground of policy. They had met to discuss the two Registration Bills, and they having been disposed of they found themselves face to face unexpectedly with a number of private Members' Bills, and at the mercy of the Movers of these Bills. He would, however, be the last man to go against the general feeling of the House on such a matter.

MR. SPEAKER asked whether the right hon. Baronet wished to withdraw his Motion?

SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE: Yes, Sir.

Question put, and *negatived.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

BARRISTERS ADMISSION (IRELAND) BILL.—[BILL 95.]

(Mr. Callan, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. Healy, Mr. Leamy, Mr. Kenny.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. CALLAN, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he thought it would be necessary for him to say a few words as to the object and scope of the Bill. A similar Bill was read a second time in 1874 by a majority of 56 on a division; but the General Election taking place just afterwards, it did not reach a further stage. In 1881 the Bill was read a second time again; but again circumstances arose which prevented it being proceeded with. Once more it came before Parliament on the present occasion. The object of the measure was to repeal an Act of Henry VIII., made perpetual by an Act of Queen Elizabeth, requiring Irish Law students to come within the Realm of England for the purpose of studying Law. At the time those Acts were passed there was no School of Law in Ireland, and no Law lectures were delivered there. But now Professorships of Law existed in Trinity College and King's Inn, Dublin, and students preparing for the Irish Bar were compelled to attend lectures, to pass an examination, and to pay fees in Ireland; and yet, after all that, they must come to London, enter one of the English Inns of Court, and make further payments of fees. That system involved an interruption of the studies of the person whom it affected, and also entailed on them a useless expenditure of time and money. Those Irish Law students had to eat and pay for six dinners at four different periods of the year in London, but they were not required to attend lectures or to pass an examination in London; and he could not, therefore, see any possible reason why such an absurd and inconvenient practice should be continued. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the senior Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket) had asserted on a former occasion that the old practice of requiring Irish Law students to eat a certain number of dinners in the English

capital was found to work very beneficially. For himself, he could not understand how that should be so; although, if the dinners were eaten in the salubrious air of Brighton, the case might perhaps be rather different. The right hon. and learned Gentleman, he believed, was a Director of the London and North Western Railway Company, and perhaps the existing system of compelling Irish Law students to travel to and from England for the purpose of keeping their terms here promoted the interests of that Company. Perhaps that was the reason why he looked upon those half-a-dozen dinners as being so beneficial? Now, those dinners were eaten just at a time when the music halls and theatres were open, and the students were prevented attending the music hall, though probably they would prefer the higher class of entertainment which was to be found at the theatre. A Petition numerously signed by Law students in Dublin had been presented to the Benchers of the King's Inns praying that the present system might be done away with. In 1881 the Benchers unanimously decided against the Bill; and the Chief Secretary of that day (Mr. W. E. Forster) stated in the House that he could see no reason why the practice should exist of Irish Law students having to eat a certain number of dinners in London. On that occasion the Chief Secretary threw over the Solicitor General and the Benchers, and the Bill was read a second time. If the system was to be maintained, why should there not be reciprocity? Surely it was as essential that English barristers should know Ireland as that Irish barristers should know England? If English students were sent to Dublin he could promise them a kindly and hospitable reception. He begged to move that the Bill be read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Callan.*)

MR. GIBSON said, that the hon. Member had made his Motion with great good humour, as if he cherished pleasant memories of the good things provided for him at the King's Inns, and possibly also of the good things provided in the Inns on this side of the water. He should much have preferred seeing some Members of the Government representing Ireland in their places on that occasion, and he certainly should have liked to see the Solicitor General for Ireland present, as the hon. and learned Gentleman was a Bencher of King's Inn. He was anxious that the Benchers of King's Inn should have an opportunity of being heard on the question. He gladly admitted that the education provided for Law students in Ireland was extremely good; and it might, at first sight, appear that there was no occasion for their visiting the English Schools of Law. He feared, however, that if the measure were passed without reservation or qualification it might be regarded by some as tending to the lowering of the character of the Irish Bar. [*Laughter from Irish Members below the Gangway.*] He meant that with some the Irish Bar might afterwards be viewed as a Provincial Bar instead of as part of the Bar of the United Kingdom. Irish Law students had distinguished themselves greatly at the English Inns, and obtained Law studentships and many of the greatest prizes there, and their sojourn in England had often been attended with many advantages. The hon. Member had mentioned a Memorial signed by Law students in support of the Bill. Such a Memorial had, it was true, been presented to the Benchers of the King's Inns; but a counter Memorial signed by a still larger number of students had also been presented in opposition to the measure. The whole subject would have been considered by the Benchers a week ago had their meeting not been adjourned out of respect to the memory of the late eminent Lord Chancellor of Ireland, Sir Edward Sullivan. As it was, subject was being considered by them that very day. That being so, he held that it would be reasonable, before coming to a decision on the Bill, to wait for the opinion which those whose duty it was to supervise the education of Law students in Ireland would shortly announce. He, therefore, begged to move the adjournment of the debate.

MR. WARTON said, he would second the Amendment. Personally he had derived much pleasure from the Society of Irish students in the English Inns of Court. The dinners of the Inns of Court would lose all their salt without the Irish students, and he, for one, should be very sorry to lose them. A practice which was founded on an Act

of Parliament passed in the Reign of Henry VIII. should not be lightly laid aside. He thought the House would do well to wait, before agreeing to the second reading, until the Benchers of the King's Inns should have made public their views on the matter.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Gibson.*)

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, that this was not a question as to which Her Majesty's Government had any direct responsibility, or over which they sought to control. He confessed that he had no strong prejudices on the subject one way or another; but it would certainly appear at first sight that the burden of proof rested with those who sought to maintain the present system, which was necessarily in itself an artificial system. He was not, however, prepared to say whether it was advantageous or disadvantageous that the present system should be continued; but he thought there was great force in the observations of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dublin University (Mr. Gibson). As he said, it was now proposed to change a custom which had prevailed for a long period, and as to which there was a difference of opinion. The persons most interested and most entitled to form a judgment on the subject were the Benchers. They had received Memorials both for and against this change, and had met to discuss the subject; but owing to the melancholy death of the Lord Chancellor their meeting had been adjourned. As the Bill had been reached unexpectedly that afternoon and the meeting of the Benchers had been adjourned through no fault of their own, he thought it would be discourteous in the House of Commons to proceed with the Bill until it was in possession of the views of the Benchers on the subject. Under these circumstances, he should be prepared to support the Motion for the adjournment of the debate.

MR. HEALY remarked that he was extremely glad that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had at last come out in his true colours. He was delighted to find him supporting the Motion for Adjournment. In 1881, in the middle of the Coercion campaign, even the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), in the teeth of the unanimous opposition of the Benchers, supported this Bill, and it was read a second time without a division. Now, four years afterwards, simply because the Benchers chose to let three months pass without coming to a decision which, when it would be come to, nobody would regard as being worth twopence, the Chief Secretary stood up there and supported a Motion to shelve this matter. The question had been before the public for some years, and everyone knew what the Benchers' opinions on the matter were. He ventured to think that this question was one not for Benchers, barristers, or students, but for the general public to pronounce an opinion upon; and it was well worthy of the present Chief Secretary that, disregarding the course taken by his Predecessor, he should stand up and support the miserable subterfuge of the right hon. and learned Member for Dublin University, in order thereby to insure the defeat of this Bill. It was of importance to the people of Ireland, who were prevented by the present mediæval arrangements from going into the Profession in large numbers, that this Bill should be passed.

MR. R. T. REID said, he did not rise for the purpose of denouncing the Chief Secretary for Ireland; but he thought it was a matter very much to be regretted that he should offer any opposition to this Bill until he knew the opinion of the Benchers. He had some experience of Benchers. They were an excellent body of gentlemen, no doubt; but they were a body of men who had no more right to speak on behalf of the Bar than they had to speak on behalf of the House of Commons. This was a matter on which, in his humble opinion, the House of Commons were as competent to form an opinion as the Benchers or anybody else. If they had to wait until they had the opinion of Judges and Benchers for legal reform, they would have very little reform indeed. As regards the attitude taken up by the Chief Secretary, he would like to know what the right hon. Gentleman would say if no advocate could be called in Scotland until he came up to London to eat a certain number of dinners? Why, the Scotch would rebel against such an idea. Yet that was what now happened in the case of Ireland, and the reason for it probably was that in former

days it was presumed there was no adequate legal training to be had in Ireland. That reason had disappeared, and it was admitted that there were now admirable means of legal training in Ireland. For his own part, seeing the many distinguished men who raised themselves to positions at the Bar, notwithstanding great pecuniary difficulties, he did not understand why this burden should be left upon Law students in Ireland, especially when they get nothing in return for it.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND said, that he happened to be a Bencher, and he was glad to see that his hon. Friend opposite (Mr. R. T. Reid) still believed that there was some excellence left in Benchers. He did not think that the regulation complained of in this instance should still be maintained; and he ventured to hope, therefore, that his right hon. and learned Friend would withdraw his Motion for the Adjournment. His hon. and learned Friend behind him (Mr. Warton) said he had not made up his mind; but he (Sir Henry Holland) had made up his mind, and he was dead against Henry VIII., in whose reign this absurd regulation was made. There was no doubt that excellent legal education was now given in Ireland, and it did seem preposterous that in this 19th century Irish barristers should be compelled to come to London to eat a certain number of dinners before they could practise their Profession in their own country.

MR. EDWARD CLARKE said, he did not propose to go into the merits of this Bill; but he agreed with his hon. Friend who had just spoken in appealing to his right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gibson) to withdraw his Motion. The reason accepted and enforced by the Chief Secretary for the adjournment of the subject seemed to him to be against it. He understood that the Benchers of the King's Inns had met that day to express their opinion on this matter. If they decided in favour of the change, the adjournment of the debate now would render it impracticable for the Bill to be passed this Session. On the other hand, if the Benchers were against the Bill, the entire force of the two Front Benches in the House could be brought against the Bill on its third reading.

MR. ELTON said, that he, too, was dead against Henry VIII. The reasons given in support of the Motion for Adjournment were totally inadequate, and the House would not consult its dignity by upholding a Motion meant to kill a Bill which they might expect received the support of the barristers and students of Ireland. He agreed with the remarks which had been made with respect to the Benchers. They were a self-elected body, and in this country so little represented the views and interests of the Bar that they had to be assisted by a Committee elected by the Bar at large.

MR. O'CONNOR POWER remarked that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin would have been more successful in his plea for delay if he had omitted expressing any opinion on the merits of the Bill. When, however, he told the House that the Bill would tend to lower the Bar of Ireland, he showed that there were other grounds on which he opposed the Bill. He hoped, however, the result of the division would give a direct negative to the opinion of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. If the Chief Secretary succeeded in getting this Bill defeated today, he would be bound to provide facilities for legislation later on in the Session. A great deal had been said with regard to the opinion of the Benchers. As a Member of the Middle Temple, he had had plenty of opportunity of forming an opinion as to the estimation in which the Benchers were held. No one having any knowledge of the views and wishes of the Bar would think of bending to the authority of the Benchers for a single moment on questions of reform. The Irish Benchers, he had no doubt, occupied a like position, and on a question of reform no one would think of asking the opinion of the Benchers either in England or Ireland.

MR. PLUNKET said, that this question was, no doubt, of considerable importance to those who were immediately interested in it. He could not, upon a Motion for Adjournment, enter into the merits of the proposal; but his opinion was that the advantages of the present system were very obvious. He supported the Motion for Adjournment on the ground that the question was now under the consideration of the Benchers in Dublin; and it was perfectly plain that the Bill had been brought on quite by surprise. He had the honour to be one

of the Benchers of the only Inn of Court there was in Ireland—the King's Inns—and the statement that the Benchers were not a good authority to pronounce an opinion and give advice on this subject seemed to him to be one of the most extravagantly Radical propositions he had ever heard. The Benchers knew the practice and working of the Bar in Ireland, and he was quite sure that they enjoyed the confidence and represented the general opinion of the Bar. [*Cries of* "No!"]

MR. SEXTON: They refused to admit A. M. Sullivan to the Bar.

MR. GIBSON: He was admitted to the Bar in Ireland.

MR. CALLAN: After he was admitted to the English Bar.

MR. PLUNKET said, it appeared that a Petition had been presented by certain students who desired to have the law changed; but a Petition on the other side, rather more numerously signed, had also been presented, and he thought it would not be decent under such circumstances to pass over and take no notice of the opinions of the Judges and distinguished members of the Bar upon the subject. They were told that because the Chief Secretary supported the adjournment that he had appeared in his true colours, and that he desired to tyrannize over the Irish people. The imputation was perfectly ridiculous. It did not in the least matter to the Irish people what the opinion of the Chief Secretary on this particular subject might be. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Hon. Members said so over and over again. He hoped the House would agree to the very reasonable proposal for adjournment, which did not decide upon the merits of the case, and that the debate would be delayed until they received the opinion of the Benchers.

MR. ONSLOW said, he entirely disagreed with the two right hon. and learned Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench. He wished to point out that this question had been discussed on a previous occasion; and the Bill had not, therefore, taken them entirely by surprise. If the students could get a proper education in Ireland without coming to this country he failed to see why the Bill should not be read a second time. It appeared to him that no facts had been adduced to show that the Bar would in any way suffer by the change contemplated. This was an Irish grievance which ought to be remedied, but it was evident that the Bill could not be brought on again this Session if the House now carried the Motion for Adjournment.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY said, he hoped the Motion for Adjournment would be withdrawn. The question was not a new one. The Bill afforded an opportunity of removing a very irritating grievance felt by the Irish people, and the House had now an opportunity of doing what was just and right. The opposition to this Bill had always been in inverse ratio to the social and legal position of those who had spoken about it. The people who felt the grievance were the students, who had to go to the expense of coming to England. The Judges and Benchers did not feel the grievance, because they had obtained rank and emoluments, and did not wish to make admission to the Bar too easy. He hoped, under these circumstances, when there was an opportunity to agree to popular wishes which were reasonable, the Chief Secretary would not support the proposal of an adjournment. If anybody proposed at this moment to impose the restriction now sought to be removed no one in the House would support it; but when there was an opportunity of removing it, distinguished legal Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench opposed it. If they were successful it would be a great disappointment to the bulk of the Irish Members.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 30; Noes 122: Majority 92.—(Div. List, No. 121.)

Original Question put.

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday* 30th April.

WATERWORKS CLAUSES ACT (1847) AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 7.]

(*Mr. Daniel Grant, Mr. Torrens, Mr. Sclater-Booth, Mr. Arthur Cohen, Mr. Ritchie, Mr. William Lawrence, Baron Henry De Worms.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Mr. Torrens.*)

COLONEL MAKINS appealed to the hon. Member not to press the Motion at

that time, as the House had been taken entirely by surprise, and many hon. Members who desired to take part in the discussion were absent. There would be other opportunities for proceeding with the measure; and he would venture to suggest to the hon. Member that if he would fix a day for taking the Committee stage those who were opposed to the Bill would be prepared to discuss it then. He might also point out that the Bill seriously affected the interests of the Water Companies. In the funds of these Companies many Trustees had invested on the faith of Acts of Parliament; and there was no precedent of such a Bill being passed in opposition to the views of the Water Companies.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that, as the House was aware, the Government supported this Bill; but, in the present circumstances, he would suggest to his hon. Friend to be content with the Motion he had made, and not to insist on taking the clauses that day, as he thought it was desirable that the House should have time to consider what Amendments should be moved.

MR. RITCHIE pointed out that private Members could only get their Bills forward when they were fortunate enough to obtain such an opportunity as the present. If hon. Members were taken by surprise they had only themselves to blame. The Bill had now been a very long time before the House, its principle had been approved, and he could not see why the right hon. Baronet should appeal to his hon. Friend to postpone the clauses.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS said, he hoped that the hon. Gentleman the Member for Finsbury would comply with the appeal that had been made to him. He had blocked the Bill for some time past, as it was a Bill on which a considerable amount of discussion should take place. No fair hearing could be given to the opponents of the Bill when it was brought on as unexpectedly as it had been that day. If the hon. Member in charge of the Bill would agree to postpone this stage, and give due Notice of the day when it would be taken, he would agree to remove his block, and to use his influence with his Friends to do the same.

SIR EDWARD WATKIN hoped that the hon. Member for Finsbury would be content with getting the Speaker out of the Chair, and would then report Progress at once. That would be a step gained, and was all that the hon. Gentleman could desire under the circumstances.

MR. W. M. TORRENS said, the Bill was read a first time last year, and the present Bill was identical with that, and was virtually the same Bill. The hon. Member for East Kent (Mr. Akers-Douglas) said that he had blocked the Bill with the object of obtaining for it a fair hearing; but he was under the impression that the process of blocking a Bill had exactly the contrary effect. As, however, he had been appealed to by the President of the Local Government Board and his hon. Friend the Member for Hythe, he was quite willing to yield to what appeared to be the general wish of the House, and would move to report Progress as soon as the Speaker had left the Chair.

MR. COOPE, who had given Notice that he would move, as an Amendment—

"That the Bill be referred to a Hybrid Committee:—That the said Committee do consist of Eleven Members, Six to be nominated by the House, and Five by the Committee of Selection. That all Petitions against the Bill, presented not later than three clear days before the sitting of the Committee, be referred to the Committee, and that such of the Petitioners as pray to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, Agents, or Witnesses, be heard upon their Petitions, if they think fit, and Counsel heard in favour of the Bill, against such Petitions:—That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records:—That Five be the quorum of the Committee;"

said, the Bill affected property to the value of about £30,000,000, and it proposed to adopt an entirely new system of rating for water. It had been decided over and over again that the annual value of property was the only fair means of levying the rate. As hon. Members were aware, parochial rating was considerably under the real value, and it would be very unfair to adopt it in this instance. He held that it would be unjust to go into Committee on the Bill without first giving all parties interested in its provisions the opportunity of making their views known by counsel.

MR. WARTON seconded the Amendment. The Water Companies, he said, understood at the time of their establishment that they were to have the right to charge according to the value of the houses supplied with water. In

the Dobbs case the Judges had laid down that the annual value of property was its net annual value. The Companies' charges must, consequently, be based on such net annual value. But it was a mistake to suppose, as the framers of the Bill appeared to do, that this meant the rateable value of houses for parochial purposes, for the net annual value of premises was almost always greater than the rateable value. It was far better that the Bill should go before a Committee, which would examine it dispassionately, than that hon. Members should be tempted to give an unjust vote in order to court popularity.

Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the Bill be referred to a Select Committee."—(*Mr. Coope.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

COLONEL MAKINS, in supporting the Amendment, said, that he did not join in the view taken by the hon. and learned Member for Bridport, who was a little too lavish in imputing motives to Gentlemen on the other side. He believed that the House, if it did inflict an injustice, would do so from ignorance or inadvertence. His reason for supporting the Amendment was that, if the Bill passed, it would affect different Companies very differently. The method of rating was very different in various parts of the Metropolis. In some places the rateable was equal to, or even more than, the annual value; in other parts it was considerably less. Therefore, if the Bill were to pass it would not affect one Company at all, while another might be very severely handled. It would be only right that all these points should be carefully examined by a Select Committee, with the aid of gentlemen representing the different Companies of the Metropolis. He hoped the hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill would consider that point and accept the Amendment, which could not in any way prejudice the passing of the measure he had in hand. If it were passed after an inquiry at which the Companies were heard they would not feel that they had been ill-treated by legislation behind their backs without getting an opportunity of explaining their position.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 147; Noes 15: Majority 132.—(Div. List, No. 122.)

Main Question again proposed.

MR. WARTON rose, and was addressing the House, when——

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE rose to Order, and said that the hon. and learned Member had exhausted his right of speech by having seconded the Amendment which had been negatived.

MR. WARTON: That does not exhaust my right.

MR. SPEAKER said, that the hon. and learned Member was out of Order.

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *considered* in Committee.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Friday* 1st May.

PRIVATE LUNATIC ASYLUMS (IRELAND) BILL.—[BILL 60.]

(*Mr. William Corbet, Mr. Mayne, Mr. Dillwyn, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Richard Power.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. W. J. CORBET, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, the present measure dealt only with private lunatic asylums in Ireland; but a Bill had been introduced in "another place" with regard to English asylums, and had much the same scope as the present Bill. This Bill aimed at gradually getting rid of the vicious principle of keeping private lunatic asylums for pecuniary profit, which was at the root of all the evils connected with private asylums. The Earl of Shaftesbury, Chairman of the Lunacy Board, the highest living authority on the subject, stated before a Select Committee of the House in 1859 that the evils of the system could hardly be exaggerated. One could not conceive how, in the face of all that had occurred, and all the evidence recorded against them, private lunatic asylums kept by individuals for personal gain had so long been tolerated. There had recently been some very notable cases of attempts made to shut up persons who were not insane in establishments of this kind. There were three classes of lunatic asylums in Ireland—asylums for charitable purposes, the district lunatic asylums, and the private

asylums. The first two were satisfactory, although he believed the ratepayers should be represented on the Board of Governors. If capital for the purpose of building asylums to be under the management of Government, in which the medical and other officers should have no pecuniary interest whatever beyond their salaries, could be introduced into the country, or procured from some public fund, such as the Church Surplus Fund, it would be a blessing to the country and to the insane.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. W. J. Corbet.*)

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: said, he fully recognized the pains which the hon. Member had taken in this matter, and his earnest desire to improve the arrangements affecting the management of lunatics in Ireland; but the Government could not assent to the second reading of the Bill. In the first place, the Government had introduced a Bill into the other House for England, which indicated the general lines on which he thought legislation should proceed in this matter. That Bill did not apply to Ireland, and it would be impossible for the Government to be legislating at the same time upon one system in the other House, and upon another system in this House. The two countries, although their circumstances were different, ought to be dealt with on substantially the same lines, making allowance for the difference of their circumstances. The system in Ireland was far from perfect; there was a deficiency of inspection and control by Local Authorities; but the Bill would intensify these evils by centralizing the management of the asylums, which would be a step altogether in the wrong direction. He knew and admitted all that could be said in favour of doing away with private asylums; at the same time, to get rid of them in a summary way would raise large questions of compensation. To transfer in a summary way all the private asylums to the Central Executive Government would be an unfortunate step. He looked forward to the time when there would be in Ireland Local Authorities who could take charge of asylums. The hon. Member assumed that asylums would be self-supporting if they were erected; but money would be required to erect them. The hon. Member said he would get it from the Church Fund Surplus; but, to the best of his belief, there was nothing to be obtained from that source, and that would be a considerable obstacle to the successful operation of this Bill.

In answer to Mr. WARTON,

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, it would be impossible to put Ireland in the Bill now before the House of Lords, because the details of the two countries were so different; but that Bill indicated the general lines on which the Government thought it desirable to proceed.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 42; Noes 77: Majority 35.—(Div. List, No. 123.)

MOTIONS.

—o—

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS AND CORRUPT PRACTICES CONSOLIDATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. HARDCASTLE, Bill to consolidate the Law of Parliamentary Elections and Corrupt Practices therein, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. HARDCASTLE and Sir ALEXANDER GORDON.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 135.]

SUBMARINE TELEGRAPH CABLES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. HOLMS, Bill to carry into effect an International Convention for the protection of Submarine Telegraph Cables, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. HOLMS and Mr. CHAMBERLAIN.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 136.]

House adjourned at ten minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 23rd April, 1885.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (London) * (79); Elementary Education Provisional Orders (Birmingham, &c.) * (80).

Second Reading—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Public Health Act) (No. 1) * (63); Drainage and Improvement of Lands (Ireland) Provisional Orders * (70); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 2) * (71); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 3) * (72);

Federal Council of Australasia (69); Royal Irish Constabulary Redistribution (75); Egyptian Loan (74).

Committee — Report — Local Government Provisional Orders * (66); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) * (67).

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN — RUSSIAN ADVANCE UPON HERAT—FORCED LABOUR.

QUESTION.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, with reference to a Question he put the other day as to the road which it was reported was being made by the Russians by means of forced labour from Sarakhs through Penjdeh in the direction of Herat, Whether he had received any information on the subject?

EARL GRANVILLE: I have received no information.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH asked whether the noble Earl would make inquiries?

EARL GRANVILLE said, that a Question on the subject might be put on the Paper.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—EXPLOSION AT THE ADMIRALTY.—QUESTION.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Perhaps the noble Earl will allow me to ask him without Notice, Whether he has any intelligence to communicate to the House as to the explosion stated to have taken place at the Government Offices; and whether it is true that there has been serious injury sustained by Members of the Civil Service?

EARL GRANVILLE: There has been an explosion at the Admiralty, and a certain amount—not a great amount—of damage has been done to the building. But I regret to say that it has seriously wounded a much esteemed public servant, the Assistant Secretary to the Admiralty.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Is it true that there have been two explosions?

EARL GRANVILLE: I have not heard of any other. The First Lord of the Admiralty will be able to give more details of the occurrence. As far as I can understand it, the explosion at the Admiralty seems to have come from the inside of the building.

FEDERAL COUNCIL OF AUSTRALASIA BILL.—(No. 69.)

(*The Earl of Derby.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE EARL OF DERBY: My Lords, I rise to move the second reading of this Bill; and your Lordships will expect from me some explanation of its object, of its nature, and of the circumstances under which it has been brought in. Before I state what the Bill is, I may as well explain what it is not. It is not a Bill which deals in any way with that question of Imperial Federation of which we hear so much. It does not touch, except indirectly, the relations existing between the Colonies and the Mother Country. It is not even a measure for Intercolonial Federation in any complete and organized shape. It simply provides, as the title states, for the creation of a Federal Council, charged with certain duties, which are described and defined in the clauses. Further, it is not a compulsory, but an enabling Bill. No Colony is bound by it to join in the arrangement which it sanctions unless that Colony spontaneously decides so to do. The initiative must be taken by the Colony itself; all that the Imperial Legislature undertakes is to give its sanction to a scheme which would be *ultra vires* for the Colonial Legislatures to deal with on their own unassisted authority. Under this Bill five Colonies—Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, West Australia, and Tasmania—will be enabled, and are now prepared, to become federated for certain purposes. Two Colonies, New South Wales and New Zealand, have hitherto declined to join. Of these two Colonies so standing aloof, one, New Zealand, is so far distant and so little connected with the affairs of the Australian Continent, that its continued separation, if it should remain in the same mind as at present, would not, as I conceive, affect the working of the scheme. It will be entirely a question for New Zealanders themselves; their junction or their abstention will not interfere with the other States concerned. In the case of New South Wales, I cannot deny that a good deal turns on whether that Colony comes into the Federation or not. It is the

oldest of the Australian Colonies; it holds a central position; it is the rival of Victoria in importance, having a rather smaller population; but a larger amount of trade, of revenue, and of territory. I do not deny that the continued standing out of New South Wales would be a serious, possibly a fatal, blow to the organization which we are creating. But I entertain a sanguine hope that the objections of the New South Wales Legislature will not be permanent. I believe the feeling there to be one rather of doubt than of hostility; and it is mainly in order to remove, as far as possible, any obstacle to the accession of New South Wales that I have inserted in the Bill the Proviso in Clause 31, by which any Colony which may on trial be dissatisfied with the arrangement is enabled to secede. That Proviso has been the subject of much discussion, and it would not have been inserted if complete agreement among the Colonies had been arrived at, or if this were to be considered as the final form which Intercolonial Federation is likely to assume. But the whole scheme is tentative; it is experimental, and, in a certain sense, it is provisional; and, under these circumstances, it seems expedient to leave large facilities for future change. I should be merely wasting your Lordships' time if I argued for the importance, and, indeed, the necessity, of some union such as that proposed between the various Colonies of the same group. With contiguous territories, with a homogeneous population, and as population increases having more and more intercourse with one another every year, it is obvious that they have, and must have, many interests which cannot be dealt with in a satisfactory way except by joint concerted action; and the only practical question is in what manner the means of joint action shall be provided. Now, I am dispensed from the necessity of contending that the scheme embodied in this Bill is of all schemes the best possible, because it comes before you with this special recommendation—that it is the scheme on which the Australian community has decided for itself. The history of the movement is probably familiar to many of your Lordships. In 1883 a Conference was held at Sydney on the subject, attended by Representatives of all the Colonies concerned. It sat for several weeks; it considered and discussed minutely every point of the proposed Federal arrangement. The result was a Bill differing in but few particulars from that now on the Table, and subsequently the recommendations of the Conference were referred to and were considered by the Legislatures of the various Colonies, with the result which I have already mentioned—that two Colonies dissented, and still dissent, and that five have concurred. But I ought, perhaps, to mention that in New Zealand the question was never brought to an issue, the Government of the day preferring not to submit the matter to the local Legislature. In New South Wales the measure was actually carried in one House, and in the other was lost only by a majority of one. I mention that fact as justifying my expression of a hope that the refusal would not be final. Now, I may be asked in what respects the Bill on the Table differs from the draft adopted by the Conference at Sydney. I do not notice, of course, mere verbal alterations. In Clause 5 the number of the Council is made capable of extension, but only at the desire of the Colonies themselves. As the Bill originally stood, the Council could not have consisted of more than 14 Members, even if every Colony joined. The change is all in the direction of giving more freedom to the Colonies as regards its composition. Without that change fresh Imperial legislation would probably be required within a few years. We have added Clause 15—a general power to the Council to deal with any matters not specially provided for which the Queen by Order in Council may refer to them; but this power of extension can only be exercised with the consent of each Colony interested. We had proposed a clause dealing with the question of expenditure involved in the action of the Council; but on reference to the Colonial Governments that was objected to, and it has been dropped out in deference to their objections. The result will be that no decision involving expenditure can have effect given to it without the consent of the Legislature of each Colony. That is a point on which they have laid great stress; and the omission, in fact, reduces the power of the Council in all cases where expenditure is involved to that of an advising or recommending body. The last altera-

tion which we have made is that to which I have already referred, giving the power of secession. On that point Colonial opinion, as I said before, is divided; and I believe that the Colonists will be content, as I shall, to accept the decision of Parliament upon it. The Agents of some of the federating Colonies have sent me a statement of their reasons against it, which I promised them should be laid before Parliament. It only reached me to-day, but I will have it printed in time for the Committee. I will only observe now that since the Colonial Governments have struck out of the Bill all compulsory powers of taxing any Colony to pay for carrying into effect the decisions of the Council—which was their doing, not mine—the importance of this question is very much lessened either way; for obviously a Colony desiring to secede and not allowed to do so would decline to contribute towards the cost incurred, and so bring the whole machinery to a deadlock. Where you have no compulsory taxing power, but only voluntary contributions to rely on, the whole thing rests on a voluntary basis. I do not believe that anyone here is likely to be opposed to the principle of Federation in the abstract, and I need not, therefore, defend the Bill against attacks from that side. The criticism which I anticipate is rather on the score that this Bill gives Federation only in a very rudimentary and imperfect form. That I admit; and I agree that it would be much more satisfactory to all of us if we could deal with the question in a more effectual and conclusive manner. A federated Australia, forming, as Canada does, a single State, united for all except purely local purposes, would be a new Power in the world; and, both in regard to its relations with England and to the relations of its various component parts among themselves, the advantages and conveniences of such a complete union would be incalculable. But the thing is impossible so far as the present time is concerned. The mere difference of fiscal policy would prevent it. The Colonists themselves do not wish it, do not think themselves ripe for it. They are the best judges of their own affairs, and we must go at their pace, not at ours. It would be madness to reject a plan on which they are agreed, and to tell them to take it back and bring us a better one in its place. The probable result of that procedure would be that we should get no plan at all, and that deep and widespread irritation would be created. Details will be better discussed in Committee. I think enough has been said to induce your Lordships to agree to the second reading.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª." —(*The Earl of Derby.*)

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: My Lords, as far as the Bill is concerned, I think there will be no difference of opinion on one side or the other as to its expediency. As the Colonial Secretary has said, it is the result of Colonial action. It is the result of a Conference held at Sydney, at which the matter was discussed, and that result is a compromise. The Bill has been truly said to be of a limited nature. It provides, in the first place, for the creation of a Federal Council; but that Council is not formed on an entirely new principle. As in the case of the United States Senate, each Colony, no matter what its size may be, is to have two Representatives. I have no objection to offer to that. The difficulty is as to the powers which are comprised in the 15th clause, and which will require very careful consideration. The 31st clause is really the central point of the whole plan. That clause gives, as has been stated, the power—the singular power—to any Colony which has entered the Union to withdraw at pleasure. On the admission or omission of that clause hangs the fate of the Bill, and the whole chance of union between the Australian Colonies. It is rather difficult to discuss this question, because two of the leading Colonies are opposed with regard to it, Victoria desiring the omission of the clause, New South Wales desiring its retention. With Victoria are united in that view the Colonies of Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, and the Crown Colony of Western Australia. They object to the presence of this clause on the not unreasonable ground that to allow one Colony to withdraw once it is admitted is making preparation for the breaking up of the Confederation. Those who hold that view say that there was no such provision to be found in the Act for the Federation of the Dominion of Canada, nor in the measure which I had the honour of car-

rying through this House in 1877 for the contingent Federation of the South African Colonies. It is perfectly true that there was no such provision in that measure; and if Confederation were a real and complete Confederation, such a clause would be inadmissible. But anyone who studies the subject will see that the powers given to the proposed union of the South African Colonies were much fuller and larger in every sense than those contained in this Bill, which is of a much more limited and tentative character. If this clause is allowed to stand part of the Bill, Victoria, and the other Colonies which dissent from it, may be no party to this proposed Confederation, and may withdraw altogether, and so the scheme may come to nothing. It is perfectly possible that that may be the result. It lies in the hands of Victoria and her sister Colonies. I trust that, upon consideration, they will not accept the view of their more energetic advisers and counsellors. I honour and admire the two great Colonies, Victoria and New South Wales, too much to suppose that either of them, when this present controversy is over, will show itself in the slightest degree unreasonable. But just as Victoria, and the sister Colonies who agree with her, have the power to destroy this Union, so New South Wales has equally the power to destroy it. I have stated very briefly indeed the Victorian argument in this matter. Let me state more briefly still what I understand to be the position of New South Wales—it is that she may possibly be outvoted by Colonies whose interests are not altogether identical with her own. There is a greater community of present interests among Victoria and the Colonies which agree with her than between them and New South Wales. There is a clause which assigns the powers to be given to the Council, and the first power comprises all the relations between the Continent of Australia and the Islands of the Pacific. Now, this is an enormous power. Your Lordships should bear in mind that the great bulk of the shipping is owned by New South Wales and New Zealand—the greater proportion, I believe, by New South Wales. If, therefore, the control of that shipping is to be vested in the Council, at which these two Colonies may be outvoted, there is some reasonable ground for New South Wales holding her hand before entering into a union in which she would be irrevocably tied. The fact is, that New South Wales and New Zealand in this matter really hold a position from which they cannot practically be dislodged. I think it is absolutely necessary that any scheme of this sort for Australian Federation should be one which invites, and not compels. I do not attempt to decide which is right in this question, New South Wales or Victoria; I do not think you must look upon it as a matter of rights, but as a question of facts. It has been said that if we were to allow this Council to be formed, with the power of withdrawal to the Colonies represented on it, the threat of withdrawal would so paralyze the action of the Council that there would be no wholesome or satisfactory legislation. I do not doubt, however, that the Members of the Council will act as reasonable men; and I do not anticipate that the business of the Council will be carried on by threats and menace. When men representing these great Colonies are brought face to face round a table they will, I think, feel that upon their union depends the success of their legislation. It is both disagreeable and painful for anyone who has the progress of these Colonies at heart to vote or speak against the wish of any single one of them; and if I do so to-night in supporting this 31st clause, it is in the simple and single belief that the clause is, upon the whole, for the general interests of the Colonies. If you were to strike that clause out, you would entirely postpone for many years to come, and possibly defeat altogether, the Federation of the Australian Colonies. I believe that the union of these Colonies grows closer every year. The postal system, the railway system, the telegraph system, the coasting steamers, and last, but by no means least, those important Conferences which have been held for several years past on subjects essential, and almost vital, to the interests of the Australian Colonies, such as the question of defence—these, with many other steps, are leading—and very quickly leading—to a union, not only among themselves, but also a closer union to this country. I value that union greatly, even in the form in which it comes before us; I value it for its own sake, but still more as a stepping-

stone towards much better relations with this country. I believe it is a true policy to go rather slowly than hastily in this matter. In politics it takes a long time to achieve large results. I think no stone should be left unturned to achieve a union closer than that which the Bill represents; but I am inclined to accept it as an instalment, and I look forward to the results with great satisfaction. I believe that every effort made to promote this union will be seconded by this country with a hearty and cordial feeling of affection and sympathy.

LORD NORTON said, he had no fear that this measure would fail; indeed, he thought it had every prospect of bringing about a growing union between all the Colonies and the Mother Country. The questions alluded to by the noble Earl who had just spoken were questions which might well be raised in Committee, and would, no doubt, be brought forward when the Bill reached that stage. The secret of the success of this measure was that it was the Bill of the Colonists themselves, and under a sense of their own necessity. A dread of Foreign Powers annexing adjacent lands, and the sending of some of their worst criminals into their neighbourhood, gave them a sense of a common danger and common interest, and from that sprung the present Bill, which had been drawn up by the Colonists themselves. Queensland attempted to annex part of New Guinea to Her Majesty's Dominions without consulting Her Majesty herself. This the Colonial Minister rightly refused to sanction; but he said, at the same time, that he hoped soon the Australian Colonies would combine together and provide the cost to carry out such measures of annexation as Her Majesty might think it expedient to adopt. Then came the Conference at Sydney, when this Bill was drafted. The intervening Correspondence between the Colonial Minister and the Agents General of the Colonies illustrated exactly the kind of Imperial consultation and co-action which alone was practicable and effective. This subject, which was of Imperial concern, and in the interest of the United Empire, was first discussed in the local Parliaments. The proposal was communicated to the Home Government by the Queen's local Representatives, the Governors. The plan was then discussed between the Colonial Agents and the Secretary of State. Legislation first emanated from a local Convention, and came to the Imperial Parliament for final approval. The Federal Council, resulting from this complete Imperial discussion for dealing with matters of common Australasian interest, was itself valuable as setting in practical contrast Colonial Federation with vague talk about Imperial Federation. The Federal Council would probably lead to complete Intercolonial Federation for Australasia, such as had been effected in Canada. This would not only strengthen the Empire at large, but increase the power of the Colonies for their own defence, removing the internal jealousies and rivalries which impeded the development of their strength and prosperity. It would be a poor compliment to such revived loyalty to treat it as something new, forgetting the same fellow-enlistment against French Armies in America. It would affront the Australians to accept them as allies. They wished to form part of the Imperial Army. He hoped the next practical result of this Federal Council would be the formation of an Australian Squadron under Her Majesty's Flag. It might be said that Colonial Squadrons could act only in local seas; but even that meant that there would be, in the aggregate, an Imperial Navy in all parts of the world. We were now witnessing how local Land Forces would combine for any common Imperial necessity. He would reserve for Committee some comments on points of detail, and would only add that, as a whole, the measure seemed a matter of congratulation on the part of the nation at large, happily coinciding with other circumstances at this moment in the promise of revived Imperial strength.

VISCOUNT BURY said, that the Bill was a step in the right direction; but it was rather a leap in the dark until we knew what New South Wales would do in the matter. A Federation without New South Wales and New Zealand would be like the play of *Hamlet* without the Prince of Denmark. He could not help thinking that the clause which had been the subject of so much comment on the part of his noble Friends (Clause 31) was a very necessary one; indeed, he thought it did not go far enough. As New South Wales and

New Zealand were pre-eminently shipping Colonies, and their Mercantile Marine might be affected by the action of the Federal Council, it was not only right that they should have the power of secession provided for, but that they should have the power of claiming indemnity if their interests were prejudicially affected by the action of the Council. He could not disguise the fact that opinion in the Colonies had been unanimous when such important omissions had to be allowed for; and he could only hope that the operation of the Bill might be more satisfactory than he was able to anticipate it would be. He congratulated the noble Earl at the head of the Colonies upon the opportunity of making such a proposal, and he hoped that the Bill would be successful and useful.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Thursday* next.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY REDISTRIBUTION BILL.—(No. 75.)

(*The Lord President.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that under the existing law the Lord Lieutenant had the power to distribute the force every five years. It was desirable that he should have the power at once of making a supplementary redistribution, which would have the effect of relieving some localities of extra charge and increasing in them the quota of the free force.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord President.*)

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House *To-morrow.*

EGYPTIAN LOAN BILL.—(No. 74.)

(*The Earl Granville.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

EARL GRANVILLE, in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said: Your Lordships may remember that in 1882 the English and French Controllers in Egypt were of opinion that the financial state of Egypt was such as to require a suspension of the Law of Liquidation, and that at the beginning of last year a Conference met in London to consider the subject. This Conference arrived at certain conclusions—the necessity of raising £8,000,000 to restore the finances of Egypt, the expediency of suspending the Sinking Fund, and the urgency of certain administrative expenditure; but there was a difference of opinion as to the amount of Revenue which could properly be raised. The Conference was brought to an end by an ultimatum proposed by the French Government, which, unfortunately, it was not possible for Her Majesty's Government to accept. Last Autumn Lord Northbrook went out to Egypt, and made most valuable and exhaustive Reports, and negotiations were renewed among the Powers, which lasted nearly five months. The result was that the Powers agreed again as to the normal administrative Expenditure of Egypt, including £200,000 for the cost of the Army of Occupation; and they agreed to the sum to be raised being extended from £8,000,000 to £9,000,000, this loan being raised on a joint and several Guarantee of the Powers. This Guarantee is of a sum of £315,000 per annum until the whole loan is repaid, and is to be the first charge on the Revenues assigned to the Debt, and received by the *Caisse.* The difference between the interest in each year on the Debt outstanding and the £315,000 is to be carried to a Sinking Fund only applicable to the present loan. This Sinking Fund may be increased by 1 per cent out of the future surplus of the general Revenue Fund. This Agreement has been embodied in a Convention which forms the Schedule of the present Bill. The first Article of the Convention enables the Egyptian Government to raise a loan of £9,000,000 at a rate not exceeding 3½ per cent, and provides that the Khedive shall by a Decree fix the rate, the conditions, and the dates of issue. The remainder of the Convention carries out the provisions which I have already mentioned, with the necessary technical details. Your Lordships will have observed that this Agreement, carried out after much discussion, contains concessions on both sides. Those made to us are considerable. In the first place, the

Powers have accepted as a basis our figures of the Revenue of Egypt instead of the French. Secondly, they have agreed to a reduction of interest to the bondholders, though to a less extent than we had originally proposed; and, thirdly, they have agreed to the taxation of foreigners in Egypt. They have agreed that there shall be no inquiry for two years, and that the contribution to the Army should be £200,000 instead of £120,000. These are five concessions over the proposals made by France, and adopted by several of the Powers at the Conference of last year. The only concession, if it can be so called, is that the Guarantee of the £9,000,000 Loan should be a joint and several Guarantee by the Powers. If the same objections are urged such as have been already stated against this Joint Guarantee, it will be the duty of one of my Colleagues or myself to repeat the replies which have already been made on this subject.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl Granville.*)

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, the course which this House ought to adopt with respect to a Bill of this character is one of some considerable difficulty, because the consequences of our acts would go far beyond the immediate effect on Egyptian finance, and would touch the interests of this country and its relations to Foreign Powers at a time when those relations are the subject of considerable anxiety. My Lords, I confess that the further opportunity I have had of studying this Bill the less satisfied am I with the view which Her Majesty's Government have taken, and with the considerations which they have obtained for concessions which the noble Earl himself describes as trivial, but of which my principal complaint is that they are doubtful and ambiguous, and may entail consequences of the most vital character. The advantage gained by this arrangement is of a very small and unimportant kind. There is a power to tax the coupon 5 per cent; there is a power to tax the foreign bondholders. I quite agree that the foreign bondholder might be taxed, and I quite agree with the noble Earl in wishing to tax him more. But the advantage gained by submitting him to taxation is one of a purely pecuniary character, and will probably not be much felt by the Egyptian finances at a future time at no great distance. Another advantage is that the foreigner himself may be taxed, and there is no doubt that the inability of the Egyptian Government to tax foreigners residing in their domains was a great abuse. I do not believe that the claim to exemption from taxation was a just claim. There is no doubt that the exemption has grown up as a matter of custom, and it is a matter of very serious reproach that it has been allowed to last so long, or that foreigners who reside in Egypt and get all the advantages of government should be exempt from contributing to the burdens of the country. It is really a reproach to the Christian nations that they have insisted upon forcing such a concession upon a Mahommedan Power. These are the only two advantages, as far as I can see, which the noble Earl tells us that the Government have obtained. When the noble Earl said that there was to be no inquiry for two years, I could not see what concession there was in that. What right have the Powers to any inquiry at all? Inquiry is entirely a matter for Her Majesty's Government. They are not bound to admit it now—they will not be bound to admit it two years hence, unless the circumstances then should be very different from those which prevail now. I earnestly hope that nothing like an International inquiry is understood to be one of the results of the passing of this Bill. Difficult as our present position is, I should not feel it consistent with my duty to vote in favour of the Bill if I thought it involved, as a necessary consequence, that in two years we should hand over Egypt practically to be governed by an International Commission. But the real cause which forced this financial operation on the Government was that most imprudent admission of the liability of Egypt to make good the results of the operations at Alexandria which the Government fell into two years ago. It was entirely the consequence of a verbal subtlety on the part of the Prime Minister. Usually his verbal subtleties have no further effect than to minister to the amusement and entertainment of Her Majesty's subjects. But in this case, because he chose to lay down that the operations we were engaged in were not war, but only "military operations," the consequence was that what took

place at Alexandria was not treated as the result of war, and the Egyptian Government has had to do what is never done as the result of warlike operations —namely, to make good to private individuals the losses and injuries which they have sustained. I do not mean to say that, as a matter of compassion and humanity, those who have suffered from the Alexandria bombardment and consequent fire should not have some relief. But the burden which has been placed upon the unfortunate taxpayers of Egypt has been exceedingly heavy, and it has been the necessity of finding so much money which has thrown the Egyptian finances into that state of confusion which has forced the noble Earl to have recourse to this measure. The loan has been obtained. It was necessary chiefly because of the Alexandrian Indemnities, but not solely on that account. The loan, however, might have been obtained with equal facility by the Guarantee of this country, and could have been raised at quite as easy a rate of interest. What is it that has induced Foreign Powers to step in and say that this country should not undertake itself, as apparently the noble Earl originally wished, to use its credit for the purpose of assisting the Egyptian Government, but that it should obtain the assistance of the credit of all the other European Governments? That is a point to which the noble Earl did not allude. He tells us that was hardly a concession. He admits that it is the one thing for which the Foreign Powers pressed, though in the Papers the noble Earl has laid before us there is no trace of that pressure, there is no indication of the demand to which the Government have yielded. If it was a small concession, why was it pressed with so much energy by Foreign Governments? What is the advantage of not making the Guarantee alone? Is there something in itself so exceedingly attractive in being allowed to incur a portion of a debt that all our dear friends on the Continent should have crowded together and said—"Our generosity will not allow you to bear the burden alone, and we insist on contributing the advantage of our valuable and unquestionable credit." The noble Earl has never attempted to explain what is the real meaning of this outburst of generosity. There is nothing to account for it, except the attribution to various Foreign Governments of sentiments of a most high and almost impracticable character; and it is wonderful that the suspicions of the noble Earl should not have been excited. I envy the noble Earl the childlike generosity and simplicity of his disposition. He evidently thinks it was nothing but emotions of this exalted character which induced the dear Allies to rush in with their assistance in order to relieve English finance from the burden. I suppose it must have crossed the noble Earl's mind that possibly there was another motive. It must have crossed his mind that there was a desire on the part of some of the Foreign Powers to make this offer of a Joint Guarantee the ground of a claim for subsequent interference. And how is the noble Earl disposed to deal with such a claim? Will he give us an absolute denial that any such claim exists? Will he put on record a positive statement that there is no claim whatever arising from which any of the Foreign Powers can take advantage on account of the Guarantee which they have given to this loan for being formally permitted to interfere in the conduct of the affairs of Egypt? I should like to hear such a statement from the noble Earl; and I hope that, before the debate closes, something of that kind may fall from his lips. I confess that I should be glad to have something more formal still. If matters had been as they were when this Bill was in the House of Commons, I should have been disposed to ask your Lordships to record, on passing this Bill through its formal stages, that, in giving your assent to it, you did not recognize the acquisition of any power of interference in consequence of the Guarantee that is given. At the same time, I confess that it is not a good thing for a Legislative Assembly as a rule to interfere in diplomatic proceedings; and there is no doubt that, at the present moment, the noble Earl has negotiations of considerable difficulty on hand which deal with this very question. If any Foreign Government should wish to interfere in Egypt, I earnestly hope that the noble Earl will maintain the rights of the Egyptian Government and of this country intact, and that he will not give way to any unreasonable proposals. But while entertaining that hope, we are bound to do nothing that might make the noble Earl's task more difficult;

and if we took any formal action in that respect—although it might be desirable to have a decision of that kind—it is possible that his hands might be in some degree embarrassed, and that we should not be consulting the true interests of the Public Service. Although, therefore, I feel strongly the imprudence of this measure, and although it is impossible to conceal from one's self that at some future date what we are doing now may add to the difficulties of the Foreign Minister of the time, yet, on the whole, as a balance of considerations, I think it is better that we should pass this Bill without any qualifying vote as it stands, and should leave to Her Majesty's Government the responsibility which naturally belongs to the Executive Government for any consequences with which we ourselves, as a Legislative Body, cannot deal. But, in doing so, I must earnestly impress upon your Lordships that we are parting with the means of extracting from the Government some statement of their policy with respect to Egypt. I earnestly hope, however, that we may persuade them, in spite of that generosity on our part, to treat us with a little more frankness and a little more candour than they have hitherto done with respect to the intentions they entertain as regards the duration of their position in Egypt and the policy they intend to pursue there. They have reserved to themselves an absolute freedom; they have refused to indicate clearly whether they intend to stay in, or whether they intend to go from the Soudan; they have refused to give any security for any lengthened continuance of the power of this country in Egypt; and in doing all these things they have infinitely multiplied the difficulties with which England has to contend in that country. They have refused to give any assurance as to the duration of their stay in Egypt, and of their intentions with respect to the Soudan. Now, to do as they have done, leaving these things in ambiguity, to hide under a veil of doubtful and equivocal language the policy on which they have resolved, is really to announce to every tribe and to every officer in Egypt that, as a matter of safety, they cannot venture to be friends or supporters of England. They are announcing to all the tribes of the Desert, who look to us to know whether, with a due consideration for their own future security, it is possible for them to range themselves under our banner, that they can give them no assurance, and that there is a fair and very probable prospect that if those who are the least fanatical among them should help us, and make easy for us our military operations, or our civilizing mission, the results to them will be an early abandonment of our position, and their exposure to all the vengeance of the fanatical co-religionists and co-nationalists whom they will be accused of betraying. I believe that there is no duty that is more incumbent on the Government at this moment than to give those who are watching to see what our intentions are in Egypt a clear indication of their policy. This measure is only one among the chain of uncertain and ambiguous indications which has already covered their path with so much difficulty. I entreat the noble Earl, if he will not do it to-night, at all events before this measure leaves this House, and before the opportunity is gone, to make it the occasion of a clear indication of his intentions, and that he will remove the veil that conceals from the world, and from our possible allies in Egypt, the intentions which the British Government entertain.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH said, the Government had pursued their usual course of simply announcing foregone conclusions, and of refraining from stating the policy they intended to pursue. The Convention was a foregone conclusion, and it would be impossible for that House to make any Motion which would neutralize what had been done in "another place." He maintained, however, that there was no necessity whatever to make that Convention, except to extricate Her Majesty's Government from difficulties which they had themselves created; and he would urge on the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs the enormous importance, if the Convention was to be accepted, of a distinct declaration on the part of the Government of the policy they intended to pursue with respect to the Soudan. They knew from the declarations of the Prime Minister himself that for two years Her Majesty's Government trusted to frightening the Powers in reference to the Law of Liquidation; and this view of the matter was confirmed by Sir Evelyn Baring's Report. The Government would not see that this law was the greatest guarantee

of peace that we possessed. Her Majesty's Government had never shown that it was really necessary to alter the Law of Liquidation. For his own part, he was disposed to adopt the doctrine that the value of Egyptian securities was a test of the prosperity of that country; and there was ample evidence to show that under the Dual Control they had doubled in value, and the Egyptian Government, from being in a state of insolvency, became able to borrow on reasonable terms. He was justified in saying that under a good Administration the Revenue of Egypt was a highly elastic one, and that the taxation upon the Privileged land would produce a considerable augmentation of that Revenue. Had Her Majesty's Government sought to have administered Egypt properly, they should have made themselves responsible, either directly or indirectly, for the acts of the Khedive and his Ministry; secondly, they should have appointed a Resident Minister of position, who would have commanded the respect of Foreign Powers and of the Egyptians themselves; thirdly, they should have preserved a friendly co-operation with the French; fourthly, they should have developed the resources of Egypt by improving the irrigation; and, fifthly—and he looked upon this point as almost the most important of all—they should have taken in hand the superintendence of taxation in the country, and should have pushed on the Cadastral Survey. But Her Majesty's Government had done none of these things. Why had not Her Majesty's Government initiated in Egypt such a policy as Lord Dufferin would have attempted to carry out by increasing the agricultural resources of the country, by improving irrigation, by equalizing the Land Tax, by completing the Cadastral Survey, and by supervising the collection of the Revenue? None of these matters were going to receive the attention of Her Majesty's Government except the question of irrigation. Until Her Majesty's Government had given a clear pronouncement of the policy they meant to pursue they had no right to come before the House and the country and make such a proposal. What he wanted to know was, on what principle the Government had spent nearly £15,000,000 in Egypt, and also sacrificed many of the lives of their fellow-countrymen? If he was to be a Liberal, why was he to be told that it was wrong for the late Administration to spend £20,000,000 in Afghanistan, and that it was not wrong for the present Administration to spend £20,000,000 in Egypt? The second point he wished to bring before the House was whether Her Majesty's Government would, in face of the sacrifices they had called upon the country to make, in men, money, and *prestige*, even now, at the eleventh hour, give any rational explanation of the policy they intended to pursue in Egypt? Would the Government put the despatches of Lord Wolseley before the House, and would they say whether they were prepared to follow his advice? Did Lord Wolseley approve of the scuttle from the Soudan, and had he not given to Her Majesty's Government some indication of the consequences likely to ensue if they retired from the Soudan? Lord Wolseley had, he believed, expressed a strong opinion on that subject; and he thought it was monstrous that the country should not be in possession of the views of Lord Wolseley. He was quite sure of one thing, and that was that the Tory Party must be extremely glad that they had no part or share in these matters. What was really wanted now from Her Majesty's Government was some announcement that what he called the Penal Clause of the Convention might not be put in force—the Penal Clause with regard to the meeting of the Conference at the end of two years. He hoped that Her Majesty's Government would inaugurate such a financial policy in Egypt as would show that they were determined Egypt should remain solvent, and that at the end of two years, instead of there being a return to International Control, Egypt would be in a thoroughly prosperous and satisfactory condition.

LORD WENTWORTH said, he should oppose with his voice or vote any British Guarantee of an Egyptian Loan which was intended to pay claims which were unjust in their nature and enormous in their amount. He doubted whether any unsalaried Member of either House of Parliament thought the Arrangement then in question was anything but a great Treaty of partition and appropriation among the European Shylocks of the fortunes of Egypt and England alike.

EARL GRANVILLE: I cannot allow the debate to close without saying one or two words. First, I am quite ready to acknowledge the tone of the noble Marquess in the observations he has made; and I also give him full credit for his sincerity in giving, as one of his reasons for not doing anything touching this Bill, the due regard which he felt for the critical circumstances in which the foreign affairs of this country are now placed. I must say that beyond that I am exceedingly glad he did not give effect to the threat he shadowed forth some weeks ago, because I think a Motion of that sort would not only have tended to embarrass us with Foreign Powers, but would have been a sort of acknowledgment that this Guarantee gave the Powers of Europe a right of control which they do not now possess. There is no doubt whatever that there are a great many International engagements of all sorts in regard to Egypt. The noble Duke says—Why not settle this matter without any infringement whatever of the Liquidation Law? The noble Marquess took a different view. He said that it was not in the least necessary to do this, because we might guarantee the loan; but you cannot guarantee that any loan shall be raised under the existing Liquidation Law except with the consent of the other Powers. My Colleagues and I have been reflecting on this subject. I have read the speeches made on the Opposition side, and I have never yet seen what the practical view was, and how it was to be carried out—namely, that against and without any consent from the European Powers we were to extricate Egypt from the difficult financial position in which she was placed. The noble Marquess spoke about the indemnities. I agree with him that these indemnities have been a serious addition to the burdens of Egypt; but I do not agree with him when he said that these indemnities arose from a subtle distinction by Mr. Gladstone as to whether we were engaged simply in hostilities or were actually at war. I never heard Mr. Gladstone make any defence of these indemnities on these grounds. I do not say there was an absolute claim. There was a very great pressure, and a justified pressure, on Egypt; but it was not the burning of Alexandria, it was not any act of hostility, it was after the rebels had been defeated in the fortifications that the Egyptians, whom the Government of Egypt was not sufficiently strong to control, destroyed in the most wanton way the town of Alexandria. Does the noble Marquess say that we ought to have taken the Guarantee upon ourselves? Surely he knows that we could not have done that without interfering with the Law of Liquidation? We might have occupied Egypt, and allowed her to become completely bankrupt; but that would not have been creditable. We might, contrary to the past policy of the Government, and of noble Lords opposite also, have taken absolute and permanent possession of Egypt, and applied our financial resources to the purpose of clearing off the whole Egyptian Debt, taking it upon ourselves. We might, in short, have placed ourselves in opposition—illegal opposition—to the whole of Europe by contravening what was established by International Law. The noble Marquess laid great stress on the Government not giving an explanation of their policy in Egypt and the Soudan. I can only say that nothing has been more consistent than the policy of the Government in regard to Egypt. It has been called vacillating; but we have been persistent in the one policy which we have declared. With regard to the Soudan—though it is a very plausible argument used against us that the Government are reticent—I do appeal to the noble Marquess whether, on calmly reflecting, and without any wish to embarrass the Government, he thinks that this is a particular moment in which it would be wise and expedient, and in the public interest, for us exactly to specify and define the course which we propose to take in the Soudan? I trust that we shall soon be able to give further explanations than we have hitherto given; and, judging from the spirit in which the noble Marquess speaks himself, there seems to be considerable reticence on the part of the Opposition with regard to pressing us to make statements which might prove prejudicial to the interests of the nation.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK: I wish to make one observation upon the remark of the noble Earl that this is an inopportune time to make further announcements in regard to the policy of the Government in connection with the Sou-

dan. We have taken upon ourselves in the Soudan responsibilities which involve our honour and credit as a nation. For example, we have taken upon ourselves reponsibilities towards the Mudir of Dongola and the troops whom he has employed, and towards the friendly tribes who have assisted us in the neighbourhood of Suakin. I think we are bound, whether we retire from the country or not, to give an undertaking to these men who have implicitly trusted to our honour that we are not going to betray and desert them.

LORD STRATHNAIRN said, that he did not suppose that so unpatriotic and unstatesmanlike a Bill, or one so humiliating to England and dangerous to the peace of Europe, had ever been presented to their Lordships' House for approval. What could be more mortifying to the country and to the Army than that the vast outlay of money and the great loss of gallant and good officers and soldiers should be so little valued by Her Majesty's Government that the destinies of Egypt, and of British arms and policy, should now be taken from under British rule and confided to a hexagon Government of which England only formed a sixth part, all the Governments concerned being of different policy, religion, and interests? The gift of the control of the government of Egypt, which had been so freely made in full confidence in the trustworthiness and disinterestedness of England, had been summarily taken away by the Bill before the House, in remedy of the most ill-executed, hurried, and vacillating policy that had ever stained the annals of diplomacy. To prove the distinction and the vast importance of the position held by England in Egypt—the most legitimate that could be conceived, for it was voluntarily given her by the five Powers—he would quote Lord Granville's despatch of the 4th of January, 1884, which said—

"It should be made clear to the Egyptian Ministers and Governors of provinces that the responsibility which for the time rests on England obliges Her Majesty's Government to insist on the adoption of the policy which they recommend, and that it will be necessary that thoseMinisters and Governors who do not follow this course should cease to hold their offices. Her Majesty's Government feel confident that, in the event of a change of Ministry being necessary, Egyptians will be found, either among those who have already held the rank of Minister, or in less prominent positions, who will be ready to execute the orders which the Khedive, acting on the advice of Her Majesty's Government, may give them."—[Egypt. No. 1 (1884), p. 176.]

Now there had come the end of that legitimate position. Would any noble Lord say that the fall was not a most humiliating and undeserved one? England, after all her sacrifices, was only to be the sixth fraction of the collective six guaranteeing Powers. He would endeavour to describe the situation as affected by this collective, financial, and at any moment possibly administrative, Guarantee. Supposing that any circumstance, such as an irruption from our rather doubtful Ally, King John of Abyssinia, were to occur, or the re-appearance on the scene of Osman Digna or the Mahdi, availing themselves of any European complications, what might not happen? The English and the French might propose the fitting out of a Military and Naval Expedition. Italy might hesitate, and Russia and Germany, who had already made official demands to be represented officially on the *Caisse*, might stop the Expedition altogether. Egypt might, in fact, be a scene of universal complications, caused by the fact that the country was governed by six Powers whose interests were opposed. He proposed to mention a few historical facts which bore out the grave charges which he had made more than once against Her Majesty's Government. On the 13th of November, 1882, Mr. Gladstone stated in debate that "it was no part of the duty of Her Majesty's Government to restore order in the Soudan." Those brief words published to the world the Premier's ignorance of the diplomatic history of Egypt and of the facts of the case. Far from there being only disorder in the Soudan, the rising was a formal and well-planned rebellion of the Mahdi, a religious fanatic, with immense power in Kordofan, and of Arabi Pasha, at the head of his mutinous Army. The plan was that the Mahdi, appealing to the fanaticism and bigotry of the Mussulman Soudanese Tribes, was to call to arms some 40,000 of these warlike races, while Arabi Pasha fought against the British troops who were present in the interest of peace and order in Lower Egypt. Here appeared on the scene one of the Premier's dangerous sentimentalities, which drew upon himself a reprisal in Parliament which, to use

a French expression, he could only reply to by taciturnity. Mr. Gladstone had dignified that monster in human form, who witnessed with delight the massacre that he had ordered in cold blood of a helpless foe, "a patriot fighting for the liberties of his country."

"Then," replied a talented Member of the other House, "if he is such a William Tell, what can justify the Premier in sending thousands of Her Majesty's soldiers to kill as many thousands of the followers of this patriot?"

The only reply that was made to this serious charge—and that certainly was the safest one—was taciturnity. Now as to the Soudan. Egyptian history showed that the Soudanese Tribes, numbering some 40,000 or 50,000 fighting men, the most warlike and the bravest race in the East, had always coveted the riches of Lower Egypt and hung over her like an avalanche, ready to fall upon her at any moment, defended, as she was, only by a very industrious and useful but very unwarlike population, admirable agriculturists and irrigators, but no soldiers. It had, therefore, been the policy of every Governor of Egypt to subdue these warlike tribes. They had done so temporarily by a free use of the golden key, the *divide et impera* system, and the mixture of Ethiopian with the Egyptian troops; but eventually Mehemet Ali, Viceroy of Egypt, certainly the greatest and most successful soldier and politician in the East, brought over from his own country, Albania, several regiments of warlike and excellent troops; and, aided by the Ethiopian and selected European troops and talented French Engineers in two campaigns, he completely brought to order the Soudan, effecting a permanent hold of the Soudan Provinces by numerous strategically constructed forts and fortified places, of which Khartoum was the key—a position four miles in extent, and protected by ditches which could be inundated by the White and Blue Niles. Thus he completely subdued and brought into order these dangerous neighbours. But what was the first step of Mr. Gladstone and his Cabinet in direct opposition to Mehemet Ali's military policy? He publicly ordered the evacuation by the Egyptian troops of these fortresses, letting loose, of course, all the elements of war, revolt, and disorder, and fearful massacres ensued. Then, instead of withdrawing the garrisons from the front, and thus protecting the retreat by the successive withdrawal of the six or seven lines of defence, so that they could have made an impregnable defence, with their right flank on Khartoum and their left on Berber, both on the Blue Nile, he withdrew them exactly in a contrary sense from the rear lines. Hence they came back in isolated bodies, and were attacked and forced to surrender from want of food, in all cases the soldiers being massacred and the women and children led into slavery. Unwarned by these terrible defeats and barbarities, the Premier committed the same error when General Graham had completely and successfully conquered Osman Digna and his numerous and gallant tribes, who were completely dismayed and disorganized by their fearful losses from British scientific arms, amounting at the last fight, at Tamai, to no less than 6,200 men—a fearful and for ever deplorable sacrifice of human life, for which the responsibility must rest on those who caused it. British patrols sent out in every direction reported the total distribution and disorganization of the rebel force, and that not an enemy could be seen between the Blue and White Niles. Most unfortunately, as he held, these successes were rendered barren by the action of the Cabinet, and the result was that we were now engaged in a fresh Expedition.

The Earl of GALLOWAY said, that he wished to elicit some information upon one point. He was glad to hear that the Government would persistently maintain their power in Egypt; but he was sorry to hear from the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Salisbury) that he would not press the Government as to what they would do in the Soudan. It would not be reasonable or patriotic to ask for exact details, or at what time it would be advisable to push forward again to Khartoum; but as the noble Earl's statement indicated a distinct difference between their policy in Egypt and their policy in the Soudan, he thought they might fairly ask this one question, Where they drew the line between Egypt and the Soudan? He asked this

question principally because he wished to know whether, in the view of Her Majesty's Government, Dongola was in Egypt or the Soudan? We could not forget the noble manner in which we had been assisted by the Mudir of Dongola; and the statement that Her Majesty's Government held themselves entirely free as to their policy in the Soudan must have a most unfortunate effect, for it must make the tribes who had assisted us consider themselves deserted. There could not, at this moment, be a greater folly than to give up the prosecution of the railway from Suakin to Berber. It was no answer to say that some of the troops in the Soudan might be wanted by-and-bye to go to some other part of the world. It was the greatest mistake to keep troops out there without occupation, as nothing would be more likely to breed disease. He hoped Her Majesty's Government would make it understood that they would not abandon the Soudan, and that they would give a proof of their resolution by continuing the construction of the railway for which they had contracted, and for which, in any case, they would have to pay.

On Question? *resolved* in the *affirmative.*

Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House *To-morrow.*

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—EXPLOSION AT THE ADMIRALTY—QUESTION.

THE DUKE OF RICHMOND AND GORDON: Can the noble Earl the First Lord of the Admiralty give the House any information about the explosion at the Admiralty? I understood from the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in the early part of the evening, that the noble Earl would do so before the rising of the House.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: The information I can give to your Lordships is satisfactory as to the condition of Mr. Swainson, the Assistant Secretary, who has been very seriously injured by the abominable attempt which has been made. His medical attendant assures me that in all human probability he will recover. He has had a concussion of the brain and other injuries of the head; but he has regained consciousness, and the doctor has every reason to believe that the accident will not terminate fatally. I have no information as to the precise character of the instrument or shell that was used—because Colonel Majendie has not yet made the investigations necessary in order to arrive at a conclusion. Of this there is no doubt—that the explosive charge, of whatever it may have been composed, was inside the room, and either in or upon a bookshelf or cupboard between the windows. How it arrived there has not yet been discovered, and inquiries are being made. The explosion itself was not of the same serious character as those which have previously taken place, the charge containing probably not more than 2 lbs. of explosive matter, and the damage which it has produced is not very grave, with the exception of the unfortunate injury to Mr. Swainson. The room in which the explosion took place is wrecked. A certain amount of glass has been broken in the office; but no serious damage has been done excepting in the room itself.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION (LONDON) BILL [H.L.] (NO. 79.)

A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Education Department under the Elementary Education Act, 1870, to enable the School Board for London to put in force the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845, and the Acts amending the same: And

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROVISIONAL ORDERS CONFIRMATION (BIRMINGHAM, &C.) BILL [H.L.] (NO. 80.)

A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Education Department under the Elementary Education Act, 1870, to enable the School Boards for Birmingham, Bradford (Yorks), Cardiff, Derby, and Llanwonno to put in force the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845, and the Acts amending the same:

Were *presented* by THE LORD PRESIDENT; read 1ª; and *referred* to the Examiners.

House adjourned at Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 23rd April, 1885.

MINUTES.] — SELECT COMMITTEE — School Board Elections (Voting), Mr. John Morley and Mr. Gorst *added.*

SUPPLY—*considered in Committee*—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS—Votes 18 to 24 inclusive.

Resolution [April 20] *reported.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Metropolis Management Acts Amendment * [138]; Friendly Societies Act (1875) Amendment * [139]; Metropolitan Streets Act (1867) Extension * [137].

Second Reading—Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 4) [116], *debate adjourned;* East India Unclaimed Stocks [125].

Select Committee—Shannon Navigation * [54], Mr. O'Kelly *discharged;* Mr. Synan *added.*

Committee—Registration of Voters (Scotland) [132] — R.P.; Registration of Voters (Ireland) * [110]—R.P.

PROVISIONAL ORDERS BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (POOR LAW) (No. 4) BILL.

(*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles W. Dilke.*)

[BILL 116.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL said, he was given to understand that some opposition would be offered to the Bill by a right hon. Gentleman opposite. He would formally move the second reading, and give the right hon. Gentleman the opportunity of stating his objection.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. George Russell.*)

MR. RAIKES said, in the absence of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Cambridgeshire (Mr. Bulwer), whom he understood would have been there to state the objection felt in the town of Cambridge to that part of the Bill that related to a parish in that town, he (Mr. Raikes) wished to make an appeal to the hon. Gentleman opposite to postpone the second reading for a week. The question was one which, although it had some historical and local interest, was, perhaps, not a very easy one to debate in the House; and he should have thought that possibly the Local Government Board, taking into account all the local circumstances, might have made some other proposal. Practically, the point upon which the opposition was based had reference to the parish of St. Benedict in the town of Cambridge, a parish which had had a separate civil and ecclesiastical existence of 1,000 years; and that parish it was proposed in the Bill to extinguish by dividing it between two adjoining parishes, in spite of the unanimous wish of the inhabitants of the parish, or, if not unanimous, almost so. The ratepayers held a meeting protesting against the Order, and their Petition to the Local Government Board made it impossible that the Order should become final without having recourse to the judgment of the House; and, in consequence, the matter was included in the Bill with other parishes. He thought the right hon. Baronet at the head of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke), who had shown so great an affection for ancient names and historical associations in connection with another subject in which he had interested himself in the House, would be unwilling to act in opposition to the strong feeling which was entertained. He did not know what feeling might exist on the point in other parishes in Cambridge; but, at least, he did know the feeling in the parish of St. Benedict; the inhabitants were strongly desirous that at least their case should be taken out of the Bill and referred to a Select Committee. After what had fallen from the hon. Gentleman opposite, he would be disposed to accept the proposal to allow time for further consideration; and he now moved that the debate be adjourned to that day week.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be adjourned till Thursday next."—(*Mr. Raikes.*)

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL said, after what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman he should not oppose the Motion. Local feeling was divided in the borough of Cambridge. A Memorial from the inhabitants of St. Benedict had been presented against the Order, and the Local Government Board would like to have the opportunity of consultation before proceeding further. Any arrangement by which the ancient and archæological associations of a place might be preserved would have his sym-

pathy, and he would be glad to see a way out of the position in which the Board were placed. He had great pleasure in acceding to the Motion.

Motion *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *Thursday* next.

EXPLOSIVES ACTS.

PETITION PRESENTED.

THE O'GORMAN MAHON: I have to present a Petition of rather an unusual character with regard to explosives. There are Acts requiring the Guardians in particular districts in which they exist to take precautions against these explosives. And this is a Petition praying that at the same time certain Acts heretofore in existence should be repealed. The Acts mentioned are the 38 & 39 *Vict.* It further prays that magistrates shall henceforth be deprived of the power of appointing individuals to look after these explosives, as there now ceases to be any necessity for doing so, since the Authorities have confided the matter to the police. The Petition is signed by one of the most respectable men in my county, whose only fault happens to be that he is a Conservative. The Board of Guardians with which he is connected are Liberal in the extreme, and this matter shows their feeling as regards Conservative gentlemen; for, although opposed to both Whigs and Tories, they will tolerate such men as that.

Petition to lie on the Table.

QUESTIONS.

—o—

THE NATIONAL GALLERY — REPRODUCTION OF THE PICTURES BY PHOTOGRAPHY.

MR. TOMLINSON asked the honourable Member for East Cumberland, as one of the Trustees of the National Gallery, Whether he can state what were the conditions on which Messrs. Braun and Co. of Germany, and Messrs. Goupil and Co. of Paris, were respectively allowed to photograph the pictures in the National Gallery; whether any facilities were accorded to them, or either of them, which have been or would be refused to other photographers; whether amongst such facilities were comprised those of being allowed to remove the glass from some of the pictures, or to have them taken from the wall; whether the permission to erect a temporary structure outside the National Gallery was accorded exclusively to Messrs. Braun and Co. or whether a similar privilege would be given to any English photographers; whether any stipulations were made with the favoured photographers as to the price at which copies of the photographs were to be allowed to be sold, or as to providing copies gratis or at a reduced price to any public institution; whether any consideration was given by the favoured firms, or either of them, for the privileges accorded to them; whether any English photographers would be allowed any similar privileges to those given to the Foreign firms; and, if so, under what conditions; whether any special arrangements will be made for photographing the Ansidei Raphael; and, whether any Papers relating to the subject will be laid upon the Table?

MR. GEORGE HOWARD, in reply, said that Messrs. Braun had made photographic reproductions from most of the picture galleries of Europe, and in the case of the National Gallery no special conditions were laid down. They had made reproductions of 320 pictures, and they were not allowed to remove all the pictures during the progress of the work.

MR. TOMLINSON: Were there any written conditions?

MR. GEORGE HOWARD: No, Sir.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (CORRUPT AND ILLEGAL PRACTICES ACT), 1883.

MR. R. H. PAGET asked Mr. Attorney General, If he will be good enough to inform the House whether the allowance to any person in the employ of another of the necessary time to enable him to record his vote at an election, in his proper district, without deduction from his salary or wages in respect of the time so occupied, is a corrupt practice within the meaning of the Corrupt Practices Act, 1883, unless the same be done with a corrupt motive, and with a view to influencing the vote of such person?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES), in reply, said, that it seemed to him it would be dangerous to attempt to give a definition of what would or would not be a corrupt practice

in such a case. Each case would have, as it arose, to be determined on its merits.

MR. R. H. PAGET asked, whether, considering the risk which every Liberal or Conservative employer would incur in this matter, the hon. and learned Gentleman would be prepare to introduce an Amendment of the Corrupt Practices Act?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the Act made no change in this matter; but he was willing to consider the subject.

SOUTH AFRICA—AFFAIRS OF BECHUANALAND.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he can give the House any information as to the present position of affairs in Bechuanaland, and the relations between the High Commissioner and Sir Charles Warren; and, whether the proposals of Sir Charles Warren for the settlement of the Country are receiving the sanction and support of Her Majesty's Government?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: I am not yet able to add anything of importance to the information given in previous answers in this House and in "another place." Indeed, we have had no telegraphic communication since the 9th of this month. The long interval which has passed without any reference to the relations which exist between the High Commissioner and Sir Charles Warren makes me hope and believe that they have continued cordial and satisfactory. We have not yet received from Sir Charles Warren any Report detailing what he has done up to the present time. Up to the end of March he seems to have been busily engaged in defining the frontier. We are also awaiting his proposals for the settlement of Bechuanaland; and I need hardly assure the right hon. Gentleman that when they do arrive they will receive that consideration which Sir Charles Warren's position and services entitle them to.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—MARKETHILL PETTY SESSIONS—SERGEANT EAKINS.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Sergeant Eakins brought before the magistrates privately, at last Petty Sessions held on the 30th March last at Markethill, a placard, posted some time since in that town, reflecting on the conduct of a local publican; whether he proposed to swear it was the handwriting of a respectable young man; whether the magistrates told him that it was not this party's writing, and refused to take his oath; whether he had the authority of his superior officer for doing so; whether this is the same officer who arrested a Catholic priest and a magistrate at Mohill some years ago; and, whether, after him swearing both were drunk, the magistrates there dismissed both cases; and what action he proposes now to take?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Sergeant Eakins brought before the magistrates a placard reflecting on the conduct of a local policeman—not a publican. He did not propose to swear it was in the handwriting of a respectable young man. The magistrates gave no opinion or directions in the case. The sergeant had the authority of his superior officer for the course he pursued. He was never stationed in Mohill, and never arrested either a Catholic priest or a magistrate.

IRELAND—A ROYAL RESIDENCE.

MR. GABBETT asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If Her Majesty's Government have now come to the conclusion that the time has arrived when, in the interests of Ireland and Great Britain, a Royal residence in Ireland for frequent occupation ought to be provided; and, whether the Government would consider the expediency of abolishing the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland and of establishing a government for Ireland in the person of a member of the Royal Family?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The only reply which I can make to the hon. Member is that I am not prepared to make any announcement on either of the subjects mentioned.

LAW AND JUSTICE—THE CORONER'S COURT—JURYMEN'S OATH.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether his attention has been called to an inquest held last Saturday at the Britannia Tavern, Lati-

mer Road, Notting Hill, by Dr. Diplock, at which a gentleman who had been summoned as a juror, and who was stated by the coroner to be disqualified from serving, because he did not believe in the binding power of an oath, was not allowed to leave the court, until the conclusion of the inquest; and, whether his retention was in accordance with the Law; and, if so, with what Law?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES), in reply, said, that the power of the Coroner in such a case would be similar to that of a Judge, and therefore he would be in his right in retaining the juryman. He had communicated with Dr. Diplock, and he found that on a recent occasion, when the question was mooted as to the obligation of jurymen when summoned, there was an objection raised by a juryman to serve on account of his want of religious belief. The Coroner yielded to the objection on this occasion; but shortly afterwards, when holding an inquest in the same neighbourhood, he found that out of the jurymen summoned there was scarcely anyone who had not doubts as to his religious belief. In these circumstances, and in order to prevent such an objection being raised, the jurymen had been retained, so that they should bear the same burden of attendance as those who had no difficulties in regard to religious belief.

RAILWAYS (INDIA)—THE QUETTA RAILWAY.

MR. E. STANHOPE asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If, having regard to the fact that all the money expended up to 1880 upon the construction of the Quetta Railway has been charged to the account of the War in Afghanistan, he can now state under what head of account the expenditure now being incurred for the completion of the Railway will be charged?

MR. ONSLOW asked whether the hon. Gentleman could state the present contract per mile of this railway, and the price per mile before the railway was broken up in 1880?

MR. J. K. CROSS: There was no contract previously for the railway, and there is none now; in fact, there is no estimate formed at all. The hon. Gentleman speaks of "all the money expended up to 1880 on the construction of the Quetta Railway" as having been "charged to the account of the War in Afghanistan." I may point out that this may lead to some misapprehension. The total amount spent to the end of 1880-1 on proposed lines from the Indus to Candahar was £1,713,946, of which £595,987 was transferred in 1881-2 to the account of war in Afghanistan. It is intended to place the present expenditure to the frontier railways account. But a considerable portion of the cost of the system of frontier railways now proposed—which system is described in Papers, No. 113, lately presented to Parliament—will necessarily be defrayed from borrowed money. The heading under which this portion of the expenditure will appear in the accounts has not been finally decided.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—THE COMMISSARIAT—SUPPLY OF HAY.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked the Financial Secretary to the War Office, Whether he is aware that, last week, two tenders for delivery of hay during the ensuing six months at Woolwich and Aldershot were accepted at the respective prices of 94*s*. and 93*s*. per ton, and that, at the same time, a tender for hay at Woolwich for the troops in Egypt was accepted at the price of 120*s*. per ton; and, if he can state why hay supplied for horses and camels in Egypt should cost more than that supplied for horses in England?

SIR ARTHUR HAYTER: The prices stated in the Question are practically accurate. Hay for use at home is bought for early consumption at the places where it is delivered. For abroad it has to be compressed, and may be required to keep for some time. For such a purpose extreme care is required in accepting any hay but the very first quality. Hence the difference in price.

PUBLIC HEALTH (SCOTLAND)—IMPORTED RAGS.

DR. FARQUHARSON asked the Secretary to the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been directed to a statement in *The Aberdeen Free Press* of April 15th, to the effect that two cases of small-pox have recently occurred among workers in the Woodside rag works; whether he is aware that previous epidemics of small-pox have been

traced to the same source; and, whether, under these circumstances, he will direct that these depôts of foreign rags, which have been proved to disseminate disease, shall be subjected to very strict disinfection?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): I have communicated with the Board of Supervision in regard to this matter, and I am informed that the attention of the Board has been directed to the fact that small-pox has on more than one occasion occurred among the workers in the works referred to, and others. There can be no doubt that in some of these cases the infection has been traced to rags imported from abroad, as well as to the rags collected in this country. The Board's Medical Officer has made inquiries at the instance of the Board; but as it appeared very doubtful whether, under the Public Health Act, the Board could compel the paper makers to disinfect the bundles of rags before being used, the Board have mainly directed the attention of the Local Authority to the importance of making provision for the isolation and treatment of the infected persons, so as to prevent the spread of the disease. The action of the Local Authority of Woodside, where the works are situated, has been, on the whole, very successful in preventing the disease at any time from assuming an epidemic form.

POOR RATES—3 & 4 WILL. IV. c. 30—EXEMPTION OF CHAPELS, &c. IN ENGLAND AND WALES.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he will direct a Return to be made giving the number, denomination, and locality of the chapels, meeting houses, and premises (other than those of the Church of England) in England and Wales, which are exempted by the 3 and 4 Will. 4, c. 30, from assessment to poor rates, on the ground that they—

"Are exclusively appropriated to public religious worship, and are duly certified for the performance of such religious worship according to the provision of any Act or Acts now in force?"

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: The particulars required for a Return, such as that proposed, could only be furnished by the overseers of the poor of the several parishes in England and Wales. This would involve the obtaining of about 15,000 Returns. The difficulty, trouble, and expense attending the obtaining and compilation of the Returns, irrespective of the cost of printing, would be so considerable that we are not prepared to direct that a Return shall be made as suggested.

PARLIAMENT—PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—VENTILATION OF THIS HOUSE.

MR. ALDERMAN LAWRENCE asked the junior Member for Leeds, Whether he can inform the House when it is probable that the windows in the House and the Lobbies, which formerly could be opened, but, having been broken by the explosion, have since been temporarily closed, will be in a condition to be again opened, and allow fresh air to enter the House?

MR. HERBERT GLADSTONE: The metal work of the casements has been repaired, and the stained glass, which is in progress, will be finished by Whitsuntide. If the outside temperature renders it necessary, the temporary windows can, at a small cost, be made to open. But I must point out to the hon. Member that fresh air is continually being introduced through the floor of the House, and that the officers in charge have a great objection to the opening of the windows, particularly at this early season of the year, as tending to interfere seriously with the general system of ventilation, which, on the whole, thanks to their unceasing care, answers extremely well.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — THE CLERK OF MULLAGHROE PETTY SESSIONS, CO. SLIGO.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the clerk of Petty Sessions at Mullaghroe (county Sligo), lives in the town of Boyle, in another Petty Sessions district, and in another county; whether many residents in the Mullaghroe district, having business with the clerk, have to make a journey of over twenty miles in order to transact their business; whether the clerk of Mullaghroe is also clerk of three other Petty Sessions districts; whether the Government regard this arrangement as one that can pro-

perly be continued; and, whether they will take steps to cause the appointment as clerk for Mullaghroe of a person resident in the district, and having time to devote to the due performance of the duties of the office?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Clerk of Mullaghroe Petty Sessions resides at Boyle, which is 6¾ miles from Mullaghroe. He was elected by the magistrates in 1879, when the question of his being also clerk of other districts was raised; but the Lord Lieutenant decided not to interfere with the choice of the magistrates. No complaint has since been made of inconvenience to the public; but if such inconvenience can be shown to have arisen, the expediency of continuing the arrangement can be inquired into.

MR. SEXTON: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman if it is not a fact that the Petty Sessions Clerk is required to visit his office at certain hours every day; and if it is possible for it to be done in this case?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: If any inconvenience can be shown, the matter will be inquired into.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. AVERELL LLOYD, J.P.

MR. DEASY (for Mr. SMALL) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that Mr. Averell Lloyd, a magistrate residing at Tamnamore, county Tyrone, was fined, at the Armagh Quarter Sessions, on an appeal from the magistrates, for assaulting Thomas Harbison; and, what course the Government intend to take in the matter?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I find this matter was under the consideration of the late Lord Chancellor, who came to the conclusion that, although an assault of a trivial character had undoubtedly taken place, yet, as it was committed in the supposed exercise of a legal right, it did not appear to be a case for further notice.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS—DRUMFIN DIVISION, COUNTY SLIGO.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with regard to the recent election of a Poor Law guardian for the Drumfin Division (Sligo), Whether, after the returning officer had returned Mr. Thomas Patterson as elected by a majority of one, the Board, on investigation, found that six votes had been recorded for Mr. Patterson which should not have been allowed, and that the said votes were lost, because the paper on which they were entered had not been returned to the police and taken up by them in the manner prescribed by Law; whether this decision of the Board left the other candidate, Mr. Martin Judge, in a majority of five upon the poll; whether, nevertheless, the Board have declined to declare Mr. Judge elected, and have declined upon the ground that the provisions of the Poor Law Acts do not allow them to declare a candidate elected unless he has been so returned by the returning officer; what provisions in the Acts in question are relied on to support this view; and, whether, the Board having already informed the returning officer that the candidate declared by him to have been returned had been so returned because the returning officer had unduly allowed "lost votes," the Board will now be instructed that it is their duty to declare the candidate returned who obtained the majority of valid votes in the election?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Question correctly represents the facts of the case. The Local Government Board can only decide whether the person returned has a right to act or not. They have no power to declare another person elected, or to return or appoint another Guardian themselves.

MR. SEXTON: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to answer the last paragraph but one of the Question. If he cannot answer that, I would ask whether it is a fact that the Local Government Board, although they have admitted that the election was illegal, are debarred by this improper action on the part of this officer from declaring the candidate returned who has obtained the majority of votes?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have no knowledge of any particular provisions provided which could be relied upon; but I believe that this has been the practice for the past 20 or 30 years.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to give Notice that upon the Estimates for the Local Government Board I shall call attention

to the necessity for an amendment in the law in this respect.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—DONEGAL BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been directed to the action of the Donegal Board of Guardians in refusing, by a resolution passed at their meeting on the 18th instant, to direct the clerk of the Union to serve the notices required by the ninth section of the Representation of the People Act, pending the receipt of instructions referred to in his letter of the 7th instant to the Board; whether these instructions have any connection with the service of the notices; whether the action of the Board, by postponing to serve the notices referred to, is calculated to disfranchise a large section of the householders of the Union; and, whether the Local Government Board will take immediate action to prevent further delay by the Donegal Guardians in having the notices duly served?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The facts are as stated, and the Local Government Board have told the Clerk that the Guardians had no power to make such an order, and that he is bound to proceed with his duty of serving these notices without unnecessary delay.

MR. HEALY: Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will direct the Local Government Board to send down an Inspector in order to see that this shall be done immediately?

[Reply inaudible.]

MR. HEALY: Will he telegraph to the Local Government Board to ask whether the voters should be disfranchised or not?

[No reply.]

ARMY—THE RIFLE BRIGADE—NUMBERS.

MR. TOTTENHAM asked the Secretary of State for War, How many recruits are now at the depôt of the Rifle Brigade, and what number is the 2nd battalion which is at home in excess of its establishment; and, how it is proposed to feed the three battalions abroad from one battalion at home, and a depôt under its establishment, according to the last monthly Return?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: On Saturday last there were 15 recruits at drill at the depôt of the Rifle Brigade, and the 2nd Battalion had on the same day 62 rank and file in excess of its establishment. The three battalions abroad are at present above their establishment; and should more men be required to feed them than may be available with the battalion at home at the depot, there are a large number of men belonging to this regiment in the Army Reserve.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE FEES OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, with reference to page 25 of the Finance Accounts, What are the fees formerly payable to the Attorney General for Ireland, and amounting to £109 11*s.* 8*d.* which are credited to the Chief Secretary's Office; what they are for, and by whom they are paid?

MR. HIBBERT: These fees are payable upon the grant of Letters Patent, Charters, &c. They were formerly retained by the Attorney General, but had since 1878 been paid into the Exchequer, as the holders of them have received a commuted allowance in lieu. These payments are extra receipts on the Vote for Law Charges (Ireland), which are accounted for by the Chief Secretary's Office.

INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT—EXCISE COLLECTION.

MR. KENNY asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it is a fact that, since 1882, by the re-arrangement of the Inland Revenue business throughout the United Kingdom, a large saving has been effected in the annual expenditure in that Department; and, whether some of the money so saved will be devoted to increasing the salaries of the supervisors and officers of the Excise branch, who for years are complaining of inadequate salaries?

MR. HIBBERT: The Board of Inland Revenue have in the last few years succeeded in reducing by about 130 the number of the staff employed in the collection of the Excise revenue; but the saving which would have resulted from this reform has been neutralized by

improvements which have been and are being made in the pay, emoluments, and holidays of the staff. These changes are set forth in Papers before the House, or which will be so in a few days.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES)—SCHOOL EXAMINATIONS—THE PORTSMOUTH DISTRICT.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether complaints have been received at any time respecting the high standard of examination adopted by Her Majesty's Inspector in the Portsmouth district; and what steps have been taken by the Education Department in reference thereto; and, whether information can be given as to the per-centage of schools in the above district assessed as "Fair," "Good," "Excellent," as compared with the adjoining districts inspected by Messrs. Koe and Virtue respectively?

MR. MUNDELLA: I am not aware that any complaints have reached the Education Department as to the standard of examination in the Portsmouth district.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked for an answer as to the second paragraph of the Question.

MR. MUNDELLA: I regret that the hon. Member should put this Question. This kind of comparison of Inspectors acts as a discouragement to them to do their duty.

PARLIAMENT—THE OATH OF ALLEGIANCE.

MR. M'COAN asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether any, and what, penalty attaches to breach of the Oath of Allegiance taken by Members of this House; whether his attention has been called to *The United Ireland* and to *The Freeman's Journal*, both of the 18th inst., containing reports of speeches delivered on the occasion of the Prince of Wales's visit to Ireland by, amongst others, Mr. W. O' Brien, M.P., at Kanturck, on the 12th inst., when he is reported to have said—

"England is entering upon a gigantic struggle with Russia (enthusiastic cheering). It seems to me to be just the moment for the Irish people to proclaim to the world, and to warn England, that in the hour of her peril she will have to deal with an Irish nation, which she has oppressed, impoverished, ruined, and plundered (prolonged cheering), a nation which burns and longs for the opportunity of putting an end for ever to English misgovernment in Ireland by peaceable means and by friendly alliance, if that be possible, but if not by any means that God's providence may send to close our long struggle for national independence (prolonged cheering);"

also of a speech delivered by Mr. W. Redmond, M.P., at Dundalk, on the 12th inst., in which—

"He rejoiced that in their resolutions they first declared their unalterable determination to be satisfied with nothing that England could give so long as Englishmen ruled them (cheers), and so long as the English flag took the place where the green only ought to float (cheers). There could be no time when it would be more appropriate or effective for them to pronounce in favour of Home Rule, because the old saying was as true now as in the days when Wolfe Tone died, that 'England's difficulty, under the providence of God, was Ireland's opportunity.' In the Soudan the English had got 20,000 of their picked troops trying to 'smash the Mahdi' (cheers and laughter). In the Soudan the English had already got from the brave Arabs a touch of what his fellow-countrymen gave them in the blessed days of '98 (prolonged cheering). He thought the day was coming when the Irish people will place the immortal green for ever over and above the red (cheers);"

also of a speech made at the Rotunda, Dublin, on the 17th instant, by Mr. W. Redmond, M.P., in which he said—

"He (the Prince of Wales) had prayed that God might protect and bless Ireland (renewed groaning). Such a thing from a man whose Country had trampled upon them, disgraced them, and ruined them, was insulting to the Irish race (applause). The Irish people wanted no praise from an English Prince for their salvation. If the great majority of the Irish people believed that they could not get salvation except through the mediation of the English Prince, they would rather go down willingly to perdition (applause). . . . . If they were persecuted too much by Orangemen and Freemasons, if they had too much princely visit slung in their teeth by the English *Times*, they would be compelled to fall in shoulder to shoulder, and to march along, if not to liberty in this Country, at least to die with their face to their foe, with the green standard of their fathers flying above them (loud cheers);"

also of a further speech delivered by Mr. W. O'Brien, M.P., at the fortnightly meeting of the Irish National League held in Dublin on the 21st inst. at which he is reported by *The Times* of yesterday to have said—

"There was no loyalty in Ireland to England or an English Prince, and wherever the Prince would go throughout the country there would not be wanting evidence to remind him that the sincere and earnest prayer of the Irish people was that the British Empire would be sunk

for twenty-four hours under the sea (loud cheers);"

and, whether such speeches constitute a legal offence, and whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to take any action in regard to them, or to permit the continued deliverance of similar speeches with impunity in the future?

MR. BIGGAR: Before the hon. and learned Gentleman answers that Question, may I be permitted to ask him whether there is any fee allowed to a common informer in such cases as this?

MR. SPEAKER: Order!

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): I do not know that any offence can be charged against anyone, or that any penalty can be inflicted upon anyone, for breaking the Oath of Allegiance. Of course, if any persons commit any acts either of high treason or of sedition which show him to be wanting in the fulfilment of that Oath, he will be guilty, by law, for having committed those acts; but no charge can be preferred in that name for not having fulfilled the Oath and promise of allegiance. Then the hon. Member asks me whether such speeches as are quoted in the Question constitute a legal offence? If I were to answer that Question, I should be taking upon myself the fulfilment of the duties both of Judge and jury. I, therefore, respectfully ask the House to permit me not to be the judge of any man, be he a Member of this House or not, or to say whether he has or has not been guilty of an offence. As to the third Question, whatever course it is thought right to take, either in the affirmative or in the negative, the matter rests entirely with the Irish Executive.

MR. M'COAN: Then, as regards the Oath of Allegiance taken in this House, are we to understand that it is, as the junior Member for Northampton describes it to be for himself, an idle form, or a legal reality imposing an obligation?

[No reply.]

Afterwards,

MR. M'COAN said: As the Attorney General has stated, in answer to the final portion of my Question, that it would be more properly addressed to the Irish Executive, I beg to give Notice that, on a future day, I shall ask that part of the Question of the Solicitor General or Chief Secretary for Ireland, whichever is the more competent to answer it.

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE RIVER BANN.

MR. HEALY asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If he will state the present intentions of the Government as to the Bann Navigation question, and is he aware that while the works are most injurious to drainage and ruinous to riverside farmers, the navigation which they were constructed to facilitate is practically non-existent, and that an existing railway amply provides for freight and carriage in the district?

MR. HIBBERT: The Government has given a great deal of attention to this question, and are fully alive to the grievances of the riparian occupiers. I recently stated, in reply to my hon. Friend the senior Member for the county of Derry (Sir Thomas M'Clure), that we are considering what can be done to meet the case, and I hope we shall shortly be able to arrive at a conclusion. But it is right to say that the Government have no power to remove the navigation works, however useless they may think them, without legislation.

MR. HEALY: May I ask the hon. Gentleman whether, in view of the fact that the Solicitor General for Ireland represents the county in question, steps will be taken to improve the drainage of these districts before the next General Election?

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I should like to put the same Question with respect to the Shannon and Barrow.

MR. HIBBERT: The matter is being inquired into.

INTERMEDIATE AND HIGHER EDUCATION (WALES)—THE WELSH COLLEGES.

MR. MORGAN LLOYD asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether, having regard to the fact that the number of students at the University College of Wales at Aberystwith has largely increased since the establishment of the Colleges at Cardiff and Bangor, he will consider the advisability of increasing the Grant to the College at Aberystwith, so as to

place it in the same position as the other Colleges?

MR. MUNDELLA: The recent success of the Aberystwith College, and, indeed, of all three of the Welsh Colleges, is highly gratifying, and justifies the encouragement which the Government has extended to higher education in Wales. Having regard, however, to the fact that the grant to Aberystwith was settled only about nine months ago, in strict conformity with the wants and wishes of the Governing Body of that College, it is premature to re-open the question until we have had some further experience of its progress and success. We shall not lose sight of the matter to which the hon. Member has called attention.

ADMIRALTY—OFFICE OF THE ACCOUNTANT GENERAL OF THE NAVY.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, On what grounds the term of Mr. Willis's appointment as Accountant General of the Navy was limited to three years; whether he would place upon the Table a Return of the several officers who have held the position of Accountant General of the Navy, showing their previous service, the length of time they held the office, their age on retirement, and the cause of their retirement, i.e., whether the same was voluntary or not; and, whether he would grant a Return of the Members constituting the Board of Admiralty since 1st January 1865, showing their tenure of office and cause of leaving?

MR. CAINE: The Office of Accountant General of the Navy became vacant in 1882 by the promotion of Mr. (now Sir) Robert Hamilton. Mr. Willis was at that time the Deputy Accountant General, and was approaching his 60th year, when, under ordinary circumstances, he would have been retired. But the re-organization of the Department had only recently been completed, and it was deemed advisable to retain Mr. Willis's services for a limited period in the position vacated by Mr. Hamilton. The period was fixed at three years, because that period was necessary to enable Mr. Willis, on retirement, to receive his full pension. No object would be gained by presenting the Return asked for relating to the tenure of office by previous officers holding the position of Accountant General; but, if desired, the information could be given. With regard to the last sentence of the Question, I do not see why the officials of the Admiralty should be taken away from more important work to make a Return which the hon. Member can make for himself in half-an-hour from *The Navy Lists* in the Library. The chief causes why Members of the Board have left their respective offices have been promotions and changes of Government.

CYPRUS (FINANCE, &c.)—REPORTED REVENUE FRAUDS.

MR. GORST asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Chief Inspector of Revenue in Cyprus has resigned his office; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will withhold their acceptance of his resignation until further inquiry into the recent revenue frauds has taken place?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY, in reply, said, the Government had telegraphed to Cyprus regarding this Question; but a reply had not yet been received.

MR. GORST said, he would call attention to the subject in Supply, and move a reduction of the Vote.

ARMY (CONTRACTS)—TINNED MEAT FOR FIELD SERVICE.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL (for Mr. DIGBY) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether offers have been invited for the supply of tinned meat for British troops in the field from such firms in the Australasian and other British Colonies as are prepared to tender; and, if so, what was the relative price, as compared with the prices charged by American firms, who hold the contracts at present?

SIR ARTHUR HAYTER: The bulk of the Australian tinned meat comes to this country in tins of a shape not suited for field service. When the meat is in suitable tins, and of approved brands, it is always taken if the conditions are equal, and the price not higher than that of American meat.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL asked whether any preference was shown for Colonial beef?

SIR ARTHUR HAYTER said, that if the price was equal the Australian meat was taken in preference.

DUBLIN METROPOLITAN POLICE—POSTING OF PLACARDS.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If police notices issued by the Commissioner of the Dublin Metropolitan Police have been posted within the last few days on the pedestal of the Grattan statue in College Green, Dublin; and, if the Commissioner has any legal right to cause the public monuments of the city to be so defaced?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: A police notice for the regulation of traffic was posted on the pedestal of the Grattan Statue, but not by the police or any of their agents. When the police saw it, they had it removed.

MR. SEXTON: Who posted the notices?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: That I do not know.

MR. HEALY: Is it a fact that public attention had been called in this House previously to the defacement of public monuments in Ireland by the police?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: What I understand happened in this case was that a number of these notices were issued to persons supposed to have been affected by them, and they may have posted them on the statue.

MR. HEALY: The police would not have posted them on King William's Statue?

MR. SEXTON: Is it usual for the Police Commissioner, having to issue notices to people, to get them posted for him?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir.

ARMY (THE MILITARY EXPEDITION TO EGYPT)—THE VOTE FOR CHARGES.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he can inform the House of the precise amount of the £4,000,000 which the House is asked to vote for the charges in the Soudan and Upper Egypt under the head of "Army," that has already been expended, and the amount that is to be expended on the completion of the Wady Halfa Railroad; and, whether this Railroad when completed will be the property of Her Majesty's Government?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I will answer the hon. Member for my right hon. Friend. I am unable to state the amount expended to the present time; but I presume that the hon. Member means the amount of liability which has been incurred. It is not possible to state this with accuracy. Expenditure is being incurred in India and in Egypt, for which the accounts have not been received, and cannot be received for some time. The actual liabilities may be estimated to amount to £2,500,000. It must not be supposed, however, that, under any circumstances, the Soudan expenditure could be reduced to this amount. Provision has to be made for maintenance of adequate garrisons in Suakin and in Upper Egypt; and the expenditure in excess of what is required for these services will depend on the rate at which it may be found possible to effect the intended concentration of the troops. The estimated cost of the Nile Railway is £400,000; but communications are now being made with Sir Evelyn Baring and Lord Wolseley as to the extent to which it should be completed.

CENTRAL ASIA—THE AFGHAN BOUNDARY COMMISSION—EXPENDITURE.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the statement in *The Weekly Dispatch* that the following quantity of spirituous liquors accompanied Sir Peter Lumsden's Mission:—300 dozen of champagne, 150 dozen of claret, 100 dozen of other wines, 100 dozen of brandy, 150 dozen of whiskey, and 400 dozen of beer; and, if so, whether these spirituous liquors were intended for the consumption of Sir Peter Lumsden and his Staff, or to be consumed by Afghans and Turcomans; and, whether Sir Peter Lumsden is receiving, in addition to his pay and allowances as a General, a salary at the rate of £50,000 per annum, as stated in *The Weekly Dispatch?*

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether he would have any objection to lay upon the Table a statement with reference to Sir Peter Lumsden's mission, showing—(1.) The amount of estimated expenditure for the pay and allowances of (a) Sir Peter Lumsden himself; (b) for the rest of the mission; (2.) The amount of the estimated incidental expenditure?

MR. J. K. CROSS: The pay and allowances of Sir Peter Lumsden during

his Mission, including his pay and allowances as Major General in the Army, are £3,112 10*s.* a-year, besides which he continues to draw £1,200 a-year as Member of the Indian Council. The other officers of the Mission received an addition of one-fifth to their Indian pay and allowances. The total cost of the Mission entered in the revised Estimates for 1884-5 is £120,000. In the Budget for 1885-6 further provision is made for £60,000. With regard to the extracts from *The Weekly Dispatch*, quoted by my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton, the only information on the subject that we have is that there was to be sent from India for the use of the Mission 15 dozen of champagne and six dozen of brandy.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—PROCESSION OF BANDS IN DUBLIN.

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is true that the Chief Commissioner of Police in Dublin issued a notice on Monday last to the effect that any of the citizens' bands playing in the streets of that city on the nights of Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday would be dispersed by force; whether he caused copies of that notice to be served by the police on the masters of several of those bands; and, whether the Chief Commissioner of Police has power to fix the occasions on which popular bands will be allowed to perform in Dublin, or to prescribe the tunes which they are to play?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It having been publicly stated that the amateur bands of the city had been invited to parade the streets on the evenings referred to, and that the object of the parade was to express dissent from those who had decorated their houses or otherwise manifested their loyalty towards His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, the police, knowing that such a procession of bands in such circumstances was likely to result in outrages on property and disturbance of the public peace, communicated verbally with the leaders of the bands, and warned them that the parade would not be allowed. In taking this course the police not only acted within their powers, but they would have failed in their duty if they had not done so.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—RANK OF OFFICERS.

MR. SAMPSON LLOYD asked the Secretary of State for India, If it is a fact that the rank of Major is granted to Officers of the Militia and Volunteer Battalions of a Territorial Regiment after 20 years' service, and the rank of Lieut.-Colonel after 25 years' service; and, if he will consider the advisability, now that the Militia and Volunteer Officers are doing duty with the regular battalions, of granting similar rank to the officers of those battalions with the same length of service?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The rank referred to as granted in the Auxiliary Forces is entirely honorary, and affords the holder neither precedence nor military command over officers of the Army. There is no necessity for extending the system to Army officers.

CENTRAL ASIA—THE AFGHAN BOUNDARY COMMISSION—COMMUNICATION.

MR. ONSLOW asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, How long it takes now to send messages by telegraph to and receive messages from Sir P. Lumsden?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The House is already in possession of this information. The last telegram received from Sir Peter Lumsden (see Central Asia, No. 1, 1885) is dated Tirpul, April 17, and was received in London at 8.30 a.m. on the 21st. It may be assumed that telegrams from the Foreign Office will take about an equal amount of time to reach Sir Peter Lumsden.

MR. ONSLOW: Does the noble Lord not know that telegrams have been received from Tirpul in much less time than four days?

[No reply.]

CENTRAL ASIA—ARREST OF AYOOB KHAN.

MR. ONSLOW asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he can communicate any further intelligence regarding the arrest of Ayoob Khan?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No further intelligence regarding Ayoob Khan has been received at the Foreign Office since my last reply in the House.

POST OFFICE—THE COMMITTEE ON POSTAGE STAMPS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Postmaster General, Whether the Post Office Committee on Stamps have yet returned from visiting the various Government Stamp Factories on the Continent; and, if so, whether he has any objection to lay upon the Table of the House any Report they may have made in connection with that visit, as well as upon any departmental and other evidence they may have taken?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE, in reply, said, the inquiries of the Committee had been completed, but he had not yet received their Report.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—PRODUCTION OF PAPERS—THE VOTE OF CREDIT.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will lay upon the Table any more Papers connected with the proceedings on the Afghan frontier, before he asks for the Vote of Credit; and, whether he can state what is the exact point at issue between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of Russia?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have given the consideration which I promised to give to the subject of the telegrams preceding that important telegram—the detailed telegram—of Sir Peter Lumsden, which has been laid upon the Table, and the result is this, that we have not found that we could convey valuable information by the dispersed statements, contained in former telegrams, and which are mixed with a good deal of extraneous matter. It is not, therefore, our intention to lay further Papers on the Table connected with the proceedings on the Afghan Frontier before we ask for the Vote of Credit. I have given careful consideration to the second part of this Question, and have consulted Lord Granville and others of my Colleagues, and although we should gladly, if we could, lay open precisely what is going forward, the fact is that we are engaged in a Correspondence of extreme gravity, and to make a complete statement of its nature and particulars would be impossible, while no partial statement could be given without great risk of creating misapprehension. Consequently, though with some reluctance, we have arrived at the conclusion that we cannot undertake to give any further statement to the House as to the nature and particulars of the Correspondence with the Russian Government at the present time.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Will the right hon. Gentleman make any statement on Monday?

MR. GLADSTONE: Well, I could not undertake to do so. It may be that between this time and Monday information may reach us of a character which may be communicated to the House; but I cannot enter into any covenants on the subject.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Does the right hon. Gentleman think that the House will, immediately after the first statement, proceed to pass the Vote? I would remind the right hon. Gentleman that in 1878, when we proposed a Vote of Credit, the stages were that the amount was mentioned on Friday, and on Monday a statement was made by the Government of the circumstances which led to the Vote. The Opposition of the day thought it unreasonable at once to proceed to the discussion, and the matter was put off till the following Thursday.

MR. GLADSTONE: It will be in the power of the House, if they think fit, to contend that more time is required. I have very grave doubts as to whether that contention will be made on the facts before us. We have been careful to make statements to the House of the precise character of the Vote and all that is connected with the Vote itself. With respect to the justification for proposing the Vote, that we shall state on Monday; but I am not aware that it is my duty to state to the House anything that, so far as I know, will require prolonged consideration. Should the House see cause to demand further time for consideration, it will be in the power of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, or of any other Member of the House, to urge their views to that effect. But certainly in a case of this kind—Votes of Credit differ from one another in character—where the general grounds of the Vote are patent to the world, and where their extreme importance and the manner in which they are associated with the national interests and dignity are universally recognized, our impression is that it will be the disposition of

the House to proceed at once with the Vote.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked whether the despatch of M. de Giers, published in the newspapers that morning, had been received by Her Majesty's Government?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have not seen the despatch in the papers this morning.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that no Papers relating to Sir Peter Lumsden's Mission and the Afghan Frontier have been given to Parliament for a long time—none at all, I am informed, except the one despatch from Sir Peter Lumsden?

MR. GLADSTONE: I believe that is so.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: And yet the right hon. Gentleman wishes the House to understand that no information with regard to this question will be laid before the House before Monday, when the Vote is to be discussed?

MR. GLADSTONE: The Vote of Credit has no reference to Sir Peter Lumsden's Mission.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: The Afghan Frontier?

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir Peter Lumsden's Mission does not require a Vote of Credit. It is the unfortunate and deplorable incidents that have arisen in the course of it, but which are quite distinguishable and separate in themselves.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Is it not the case that the attack on the Afghan position at Penjdeh is closely connected with Sir Peter Lumsden's Mission and the correspondence which took place with regard to the escort which accompanied Sir Peter Lumsden? We wish to know whether the House can come to any definite conclusion respecting the negotiations with regard to the Afghan Frontier without more information than it at present possesses?

MR. GLADSTONE: We do not ask the House to come to any definite conclusion on the negotiations generally. The necessity for the Vote of Credit does not arise out of the course of these negotiations, but it has been precipitated by special circumstances quite separate from the negotiations. We conceive that the telegrams laid before the House from Sir Peter Lumsden will enable the House to fully understand the nature of the requisitions made upon them.

LORD JOHN MANNERS: After the answer which the right hon. Gentleman has given, I should wish to ask are any of the facts connected with the departure of Sir Peter Lumsden from Gulran and the circumstances by which that departure was accompanied stated in any of the telegrams from Sir Peter Lumsden which had not been communicated to the House; and, if so, will the right hon. Gentleman allow the House to be in possession of those telegrams referring to the reason why Sir Peter Lumsden quitted Gulran and the circumstances attending that departure?

MR. GLADSTONE: I must ask the noble Lord to put a Question of this kind on the Paper, as it taxes my memory with regard to particulars.

MR. O'KELLY: Will the right hon. Gentleman take into consideration the desirability of postponing the Vote of Credit until the Government are in a position to lay before the House full information with reference to the transaction at Penjdeh?

MR. GLADSTONE: My opinion is that such a course would be extremely prejudicial to the public interest and very adverse to the general feeling of the House.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it is within his recollection that one of the most formidable articles in his indictment against Lord Beaconsfield's Government was that it withheld information from Parliament while expecting a debate to be carried on? I wish to know whether the right hon. Gentleman is going to follow that bad example?

[No reply.]

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT: I should like to know whether the Vote of Credit can be put in two distinct sums, one of £6,500,000 for special preparations, and the other of £4,500,000 for the Soudan Expedition?

MR. GLADSTONE: My impression is that it will be open to anyone as a matter of form to move to reduce the Vote of Credit; but, undoubtedly, as the matter stands, it will be put in one sum.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: In reference to the answer which was given to the noble Lord by the Prime

Minister, I would ask whether it is the fact that the Russian Government, in their reply to Her Majesty's Government, have asserted that the deplorable incident at Penjdeh, or whatever it may be called, was due to the presence of Sir Peter Lumsden's Mission on the Afghan Frontier with a large escort? [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"]

MR. SPEAKER: That Question does not at all fairly grow out of the answer to the noble Lord.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I rise to a point of Order. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!" "Name!" *and* "Order!"] I have not quite finished the Question. I ask you, Sir, to recall the Question of the noble Lord. The noble Lord asked whether Sir Peter Lumsden's Mission had any connection with the unfortunate affair at Penjdeh? The Prime Minister said "None;" and he therefore declined to produce Sir Peter Lumsden's despatches. I wish to ask upon this question what is the exact point of issue between Her Majesty's Government and the Russian Government? Is it not a fact that the Government of Russia have ventured to assert that the cause of the deplorable incident at Penjdeh was the presence of Sir Peter Lumsden on the frontier with an armed escort? Ought we not, therefore, to have Sir Peter Lumsden's despatches, in order to be able to estimate the truth of this Russian allegation? Does that not arise out of the Question put by the noble Lord?

MR. SPEAKER: I do not see that it at all arises out of that Question.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I also wish to ask a Question on a point of Order. The Prime Minister has stated that the Vote of Credit would be put in one sum. I have given Notice of Motion for Monday next to the effect that the question of expenditure in the Soudan ought to be considered by the Committee separately from that of expenditure elsewhere. I wish to ask whether it will be competent for any hon. Member to move an Amendment on the Motion "That the Speaker do leave the Chair" for the Vote of Credit to be brought forward? Can I on that occasion make the Motion of which I have given Notice?

MR. SPEAKER: I should first require to see the Motion which the hon. Member wishes to move.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that his Motion was to the effect that it was expedient that the Vote of Credit in connection with the Soudan Expedition should be considered separately from the Vote of Credit for military expenditure elsewhere.

MR. SPEAKER: I shall be prepared to answer that Question when I am acquainted with the full circumstances of the case.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH: May I ask the Prime Minister whether that part of the Vote of Credit in respect of the Soudan will be voted on Monday under the same conditions of reticence as the part relating to the special preparations in regard to the Afghan Frontier?

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir. What I have stated in answer to the right hon. Gentleman undoubtedly had reference to the Vote for special preparations, and not to the Vote for the Soudan, which in many respects comes under very different conditions.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—WHITE SLAVES AT KHARTOUM.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the statements in *The Daily News* of the 22nd, made by one of General Gordon's Egyptian soldiers, and especially to the following passages:—

"There were several white women when I left, daughters of Europeans by Abyssinian wives. There were two or three ladies at the Austrian Consul's. Gordon always said, 'The English are coming;'

* * * * *

"All the white and all the black women are now made slaves. My poor wife, I shall never see her again. When I say white I mean also those whose mothers were Abyssinian and fathers European, and there were some Turkish ladies who wore the achmet, wives of officers; all will now be slaves;'"

and, whether, before leaving the Soudan, he will directly authorise the General now in command at Dongola to try to ransom these unfortunate victims?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: My right hon. Friend has asked me to answer the Question of the hon. Gentleman. My attention has been called to the statement, and I have telegraphed to Lord Wolseley inquiring whether by reference to the soldier referred to or by any other means he can obtain any fur-

ther information as to the statements quoted, and whether if there appears to be any foundation for them it would be in his opinion possible immediately to effect the release of these women either by ransom or otherwise.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—EXPLOSION AT THE ADMIRALTY.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: I wish to ask the Secretary for the Home Department a Question of which I have given him private Notice — namely, Whether he can give the House any particulars as to the explosion which took place at the Admiralty this forenoon; and, also, whether he can state if there is any truth in the rumour that another explosion had taken place at a later period of the day?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: An explosion took place in one of the lower official rooms at the Admiralty at 11 o'clock this morning. It is too early yet to form a definite opinion on the subject; but it seems to be quite clear that the explosive, whatever it was, was placed inside the room. The quantity must have been small, as the structural damage to the room was very slight. It also appears that the explosive must have been placed on the top of some piece of furniture in the room against the wall. I regret to state that the Assistant Under Secretary of the Admiralty, Mr. Swainson, who was at work at a desk close to where the explosion took place, was serious injured; but the most recent accounts—within the last half-hour — from the hospital give a favourable account of his progress. He has recovered consciousness, and I am informed has taken some natural sleep. I have heard nothing of any other explosion, and I believe it is not the fact.

RAILWAY REGULATION ACTS—PREFERENTIAL RATES.

MR. R. H. PAGET asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether, having reference to his recent statement, that the subject of preferential Railway rates on Foreign goods was "ripe for legislation," he will be good enough to inform the House if he is prepared to introduce a Bill dealing with the subject; and, whether, in view of the urgency of the question, he will make an early statement on the matter, and place the House in possession of the principles of his proposed measure?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I will endeavour to give the hon. Member the explanation and further information as to the intentions of the Government for which he asks. In the first place, I have to say that we consider that the evidence taken by the Committee on Railway Rates and Fares in 1883 furnishes sufficient information as to the nature of the complaints which have been made of preferential rates both on foreign good and also on home products. We are further of opinion that the Report of this Committee, and the Reports of previous Committees and Commissions on the subject, show conclusively that no general law of universal application can be laid down. The establishment, for instance, of equal mileage rates which has sometimes been proposed would be most injurious to trade since it would deprive freighters of any advantage from competition; it would also cause a revolution in the movement of traffic, and would involve the ruin of very large interests which have been created on the faith of existing arrangements. On the other hand, there is good reason to believe that under the present system preferences have been created which cannot be justified in law or equity. In the Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1854, there is a clause dealing with undue preference, which appears to be sufficient for the purpose, and all that is necessary is that all cases of complaint should be dealt with as they arise by a competent tribunal. Such a tribunal the Government believe already exists in the Railway Commissioners; but further legislation is required in order to put this tribunal on a permanent basis, with somewhat extended powers, and at the same time to facilitate the resort to it by giving a *locus standi* to public bodies and associations which may be expected to seek a decision in all disputed cases of any importance, where, however, the interests of private traders and individuals may not be sufficient to induce them to undertake the burden of litigation. These views found expression in the Railway Regulation Acts Amendment Bill introduced by me last Session, but withdrawn owing to the pressure of

Business. I am afraid that the present state of Public Business does not leave room for hope that the Bill could be re-introduced with any advantage in the present Session.

MR. R. H. PAGET asked whether he was right in understanding that the only legislation which the right hon. Gentleman proposed was the permanency of the Railway Commissioners, and to give a *locus standi* to certain bodies before it?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, he thought his previous reply was very full. It was proposed to put the Railway Commission on a permanent basis, somewhat to extend its functions, and to give a *locus standi* to other bodies, so as to facilitate their access to its decisions?

MR. TOMLINSON asked whether, in the opinion of the President of the Board of Trade, the Railway Commissioners had jurisdiction now to entertain questions of undue preference as between foreign goods and English goods?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, Sir; that is my opinion.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. RITCHIE asked the President of the Local Government Board when he expected the Amendments of the Government to the Redistribution Bill to be distributed?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that some were ready and some were not, and as it was desirable to put them down together he proposed to put them all on the Paper to-morrow.

MR. LEWIS inquired when the Government proposed to take the Irish Registration Bill?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: To-morrow, Sir.

MR. PARNELL asked the President of the Local Government Board who was responsible for placing the Scotch Registration Bill second in that night's Paper, and the Irish Registration Bill 17th?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that the Irish Registration Bill would be the first Order to-morrow. There was no intention to take it that night.

MR. PARNELL asked whether this Bill would be proceeded with throughout the Sitting to-morrow?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Yes, Sir.

MR. HEALY suggested that one stage should be taken to-night, as the Bill was not blocked. They might get the Speaker out of the Chair, and then to-morrow proceed with the Amendments.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, he had no objection.

MR. GIBSON said, he would like to know whether there was to be any definiteness in the proposals of the Government? They were just told that the Irish Bill would be taken to-morrow, and now they were told that it would be taken to-night. Was anything to be done to-night, or was there to be merely a pretence of doing something?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, the original intention was to do nothing until to-morrow; but then came the suggestion of the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) that they should get the Speaker out of the Chair to-night after the Scotch Bill, and proceed with the clauses to-morrow. The Government had no objection to that; but they were, of course, entirely in the hands of the House.

MR. GIBSON: If getting the Speaker out of the Chair is a mere benevolent sham to amuse people, and if it remains that the clauses of the Bill will be taken to-morrow, I do not care in the least what amusement goes on to-night.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £195,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886, in aid of the Cost of Maintenance of Disturnpiked and Main Roads in England and Wales during the year ending on the 25th day of March 1886."

MR. WARTON asked what was the reason that Vote 4 of the Civil Service Estimates had been passed over?

MR. HIBBERT said, that Vote 4 had been postponed on account of the proceedings of the Committee, who were

now sitting upon the restoration of Westminster Hall. That Committee had not yet reported.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he had on two previous occasions opposed this Vote. Upon both occasions he had opposed it on principle, and he regretted to find that he should be compelled to vote against it now. It was a Vote in aid of local taxation in England, and the next Vote was a Vote of a similar nature to relieve the burden of local taxation in Scotland. As had been urged over and over again, if there was one portion of the United Kingdom which required that the burdens of local taxation should be lightened, it was not England, but Ireland. The people of this country could bear with comparative ease the pressure of local taxation; and even the debt of something like £159,000,000 incurred by the Local Authorities in this country, was of slight pressure upon the enormous valuation of the country, no practical inconvenience being occasioned by it. But in Ireland, with a valuation of only some £13,000,000, the existence of local taxation was very grievous indeed. The unfortunate people of Ireland, in addition to paying a cess which pressed most heavily upon them, were called upon to contribute towards the payment of local taxes both in England and Scotland; and notwithstanding that the general taxation of the country pressed so heavily upon them they got no relief of this description provided for them. But, even as it was, the Vote was not applied in the way which Parliament intended to appropriate it. It was intended to relieve those districts where certain turnpike roads had been disturnpiked, and where, in consequence, the pressure of local taxation at one time existed. But, as a matter of fact, it would be found that even in districts where no such taxation had been imposed locally, and where no rates had been issued from time out of mind, for turnpike purposes, the local rates had been supplemented by a portion of this Vote. In the year ending 31st March, 1884, an extraordinary Circular signed by the Home Secretary was issued with regard to the grant in aid of those turnpike roads, and it was to this effect—that certain counties, districts, and boroughs having last year been precluded from participating in the grant in consequence of their never having had turnpike roads, a Minute regulating the matter had been adopted, which brought such counties, districts, and boroughs under a new provision made by the Secretary of State with the approval of the Treasury, and presented to Parliament. That Minute provided that, subject to any modification to meet exceptional cases, the Government were to grant to counties, districts, and boroughs containing roads which had been disturnpiked since 1859, an allowance to the extent of one-fourth of the cost of materials and labour employed in the repair of such roads. The second paragraph in that Minute was the one to which he wished to draw more particular attention. It set forth that in such counties, districts, and boroughs in which there had never been turnpike roads—and in which, therefore, there could not be a disturnpiked road—a sum bearing the same proportion to the total cost of the maintenance of such roads should be granted as under head No. 1. The charge upon the Public Exchequer for the purpose of relieving the local taxation in this respect amounted to nearly £250,000 in England and Scotland, and a portion of that grant went to very extensive districts which never had turnpike roads, which, therefore, never had a road disturnpiked, and had consequently never experienced inconvenience in regard to local taxation in connection with the roads at all. An Estimate was made of the amount of extra taxation which had been thrown upon the local taxpayers in consequence of disturnpiking the roads, and upon that Estimate the original Vote was passed; but that Estimate did not take into consideration any county districts or boroughs in which there were no disturnpiked roads. Under this Minute of the Home Secretary, issued with the assent of the Treasury, a sum of money was voted in aid of local rates both in England and Scotland which, he maintained, was never intended by Parliament. He objected to the whole system under which the Treasury had been disbursing the money voted by Parliament, and he took the objection as a matter of principle. He said nothing of Scotland as distinguished from Ireland; but he found that the original Vote had been gradually extended by grants which had never been explained to Parliament, and which Parliament could never have expected.

At the time it was asked upon to vote this money in the year 1884, the amount granted for England for disturnpiked roads was £100,000, and the expenditure was only £95,000—which was to say, that the money voted in Committee of Supply and passed by the House was more than sufficient to meet the service. In spite of that fact, there was an increase in the Vote up to £215,000 last year—that was to say, that whereas the Treasury had been called upon to repay to the Exchequer a sum of £5,000 which was not wanted for the service, they came before the House in the following year, and asked not only for the same sum, but for £115,000 more than was deemed necessary in 1884. They were also asking this year for £215,000, which it was proved could not really be required. He should object to this Vote as at present framed on that ground, if not on any other—namely, that it was perfectly clear that the whole of this money was not required. The ground of objection, however, which he preferred to take was a larger one—namely, that this was a Vote of a very considerable and substantial sum in relief of local taxation in England and Scotland, which relief was entirely withheld from Ireland, where the people were much more seriously pressed by local taxation than in this country. The question whether the grant should be continued in places where there were no turnpike roads of any kind, as was the case in Scotland, would perhaps be dealt with more properly when the Committee came to the next Vote. He did not propose to move the reduction of the Vote, because he objected to it altogether, and he would content himself with expressing his determination to divide against it.

COLONEL NOLAN said, he did not think the Vote should be allowed to pass without a protest from the Irish Members. They were constantly told that they were treated on equal terms and that they had equal laws with the United Kingdom; but when it came to a question of whether Parliament should vote money for repairing and keeping up the roads in the three countries, it was most unfair that the people of Ireland should be obliged to contribute heavily to the maintenance of their own roads, and then, in addition, have to contribute something like £30,000 towards maintaining the roads in England and Scotland. The case of Scotland did not come under this Vote; but that the Irish people should be required to contribute to the maintenance of the English roads at all really appeared to be very hard upon so poor a country. England was a much richer country, and yet she received a grant in aid. They were frequently told that Ireland received benefit from her connection with England; but at present she contributed £8,000,000 in the shape of taxation to the Imperial Exchequer, and only got back about £3,000,000 in return. The present case formed a good illustration of the totally different system which was adopted in granting money to the English and Irish countries. If the Government would come forward they might be able to confer substantial benefit upon the country if, instead of keeping up the roads, they would construct railways in such districts as Connemara and the county of Kerry. Railways would be of advantage in opening up markets for the produce of the country; but hitherto it had been found that the existing roads afforded no substantial benefit, and the Irish people were not likely to expend large sums of money upon them. Certainly they got no benefit at all equivalent to the large sum of £250,000 voted for England and Scotland; and he did not see why the Irish Members should go on, year after year, voting that money, without making a very strong protest against it unless they were placed on a footing of equality. He might also point out how much worse off they were in Ireland in regard to the manner in which the roads were kept up. The sums necessary for maintaining them were voted by the Grand Juries, and paid by the cesspayers; but the Government took upon themselves the duty of appointing the County Surveyor. In this country that course was not followed; but in Ireland the Government took the patronage upon themselves. In England the patronage was enjoyed by the Local Authorities and by those who paid the rates. Therefore it would appear that in every way Ireland was placed in a most inferior position. Next week they would be asked to vote £1,000,000 for the construction of a railroad in the Soudan, as well as other railroads in Egypt; and they were asked, further, to keep up the roads of England

and Scotland, while they had to pay for their own roads out of their own pockets, and yet the Government insisted on having the distribution of the money which was levied for that purpose. It was not merely in the case of the County Surveyor, but in that of other appointments in Ireland, that the distribution of local taxation paid for out of the county rates was also made by the Government. Then, again, money which was supposed to be primarily contributed for the maintenance of roads was collected by the Government and used by them for other works. Upon all of those grounds it seemed to him that a case was established to show that very unequal justice was meted out as between Ireland and the United Kingdom, and he thought the Government might hold out some promise that in the future a grant in aid similar to that which was allowed to England and Scotland should be given to Ireland.

MR. HIBBERT said, he did not rise to complain of the way in which either of the hon. Members who had brought forward this question had discussed it. At first sight it would seem that there was some justification for the complaint they had made; but he did not desire to go closely into the question whether Ireland had an advantage over England, or whether England had an advantage over Ireland, in the matter of taxation, and expenditure out of money raised by taxation, although he believed that if the question were inquired into it would be found that Ireland really had the best of it. [Colonel NOLAN: No.] This appeared, as regarded expenditure, from a Return moved for by the hon. and gallant Member himself He could also refer to several taxes which were imposed in this country and not in Ireland—such as the House Tax, for instance, and various others. But, as he had stated, he did not wish to discuss the question upon that ground. He would prefer to see questions of this kind treated in a liberal and generous spirit. That had been the case in the past, and he hoped it would continue to be so in the future. This question of turnpike roads was not the only one in regard to the Vote, which was not to be considered of a permanent character. It was merely proposed as a temporary measure until the whole question of Local Government and Local Taxation could be dealt with. It was hoped that those questions would be dealt with early in the next Parliament, and then, he trusted, the question would be settled, and would be heard of no more either as it affected Ireland or England and Scotland. He thought Ireland had been very happy in not having possessed a similar system of turnpike roads to that which existed in this country.

COLONEL NOLAN remarked, that there were turnpike roads in Ireland.

MR. HIBBERT said, he had always understood that there were not.

COLONEL NOLAN said, the hon. Gentleman was altogether mistaken.

MR. HIBBERT said, that as to the question of the money to be given to Ireland for that purpose, he could only say that it was one which must await the consideration of the whole question of local taxation. In the first place, assuming that it was agreed to give money in aid of an Irish Vote, in the same way as it was now given to England and Scotland, who were the authorities they would have to pay? There were certainly no authorities in Ireland like those which existed in England and Scotland; and as the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan) had pointed out, even the County Surveyor was appointed by the State. He should be very sorry if the matter stood in the same position in this country, and he hoped it would not long be left to the Local Authorities to maintain the turnpike roads in Ireland. As to the question whether money was to be given to Ireland, he could only repeat that that was a question which must be dealt with when the whole subject of Local Taxation and Local Government came to be considered in the next Parliament.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, the answer of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury was fair as far as it went; but he thought it ought to be observed, in reply to the complaint of Gentlemen representing Irish constituencies, that this Vote did not arise out of feelings of benevolence towards the payers of local rates, but was rather a recognition, on the part of the State, of an injustice inflicted upon the ratepayers through the lapse of Parliamentary authority to charge tolls in respect of roads which had been disturnpiked. That was a subject which could hardly be said to arise out of any benevolent in-

tention on the part of the State to contribute towards the local rates. But the injury had arisen by the action of Parliament itself, and this was a Vote in aid to enable the Local Authorities to provide that which had been previously paid over by those who used the roads. That was a state of things which did not exist in Ireland, and the grievance, if there were one, in Ireland was not at all of a similar character. Consequently, Parliament would not be justified in making the same arrangement for Ireland as that which was made for the United Kingdom.

MR. R. H. PAGET said, it was not necessary that he should enter into any question of disagreement or difference in regard to the local taxation of England and Ireland. Hitherto the English Members had constantly discussed the necessity of introducing large reforms in the system of levying local taxation. But the question of local taxation had been allowed to remain almost entirely in the hands of the English Members, and had not been taken up by Members either from Scotland or Ireland. There was nothing that would more rejoice the heart of a local taxation reformer than to find that he was obtaining new allies in his endeavour to remove the injustice of this taxation. If this question were to arise in the shape of a proposal to give a grant towards the maintenance of the Irish roads, he would be perfectly ready to consider that question on its merits. But in this particular case he was now asked to record his vote, "aye" or "no," in favour of the grant which was given towards the English roads. Although he had not the slightest objection to consider the question whether a similar Vote should be given to Ireland, he had a very strong objection to take away the grant now proposed for England. It had been pointed out by the right hon. Member for North Hampshire (Mr. Sclater-Booth) that in abolishing turnpike roads additional burdens had been thrown upon the ratepayers. Those burdens had been distinctly pointed out by his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Oxfordshire (Colonel Harcourt), who they all regretted not to have been able to see in his place for some time; but it was on the distinct recognition of the additional burden thrown on the ratepayers by the withdrawal of the subvention hitherto made upon the travelling public to keep up these roads, that the State had consented to make this grant in aid. Therefore, the money the Committee were now asked to vote was not given entirely in that free and liberal spirit which hon. Gentlemen from Ireland seemed desirous of claiming; but, at any rate, it was given, according to a decision and a deliberate vote of the House, upon a principle which he and others had constantly advocated.

MR. SEXTON said, he failed to see any force in the argument of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Sclater-Booth) as far as it was directed against the representation of his hon. Friend the Member for Queen's County (Mr. A. O'Connor). The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that because tolls were formerly paid on the English roads by the travelling public, that there should be a subvention now by the House of Commons. The Irish Members were not contending now that the tolls ought to be paid by the travelling public on the high roads, or that the discontinuance of a tax of that kind afforded any claim for a subvention. He presumed that those who used the roads were those who lived in the locality, and it could not be said that it was on account of an incursion of foreigners from other localities that the tolls which had been paid hitherto out of local resources should not be still supplied from local resources. What his hon. Friend said was that there were formerly turnpike roads in Ireland, that those turnpike roads had been abolished, and no one had ever got up in that House to say that the Local Authorities, on whom the support of the roads was in consequence thrown, ought to be compensated. The main argument upon which he and his hon. Friends relied in opposing this taxation was that, no matter how the money had been formerly obtained, it was not fair that they should ask the people of Ireland, who paid for their own roads, to contribute £40,000 out of £215,000 to pay for the roads in England. That was what it came to. The Irish people contributed to the Imperial funds, and the House of Commons proposed to dip their hands into the Imperial purse and take out £215,000, towards which the Irish people, who paid every penny of the cost of supporting their own roads,

contributed largely. That was a gross injustice, and no ingenuity could give it any other complexion. He had no objection to the tone of the speech of the hon. Gentleman in charge of the Vote. As a matter of fact, there was never anything to be said in condemnation of the tone of the hon. Gentleman; but the substance of the hon. Gentleman's speech was decidedly unsatisfactory. The hon. Gentleman bade them look forward with hope to the next Parliament. Well, he believed the next Parliament would do a great many things which this Parliament, notwithstanding its pretensions, had been unable to accomplish. But he objected always to be fed upon hope. It was not a substantial fare. The statement of the hon. Gentleman was coupled with another—that they must wait until a general measure of Local Taxation and Local Government could be passed. That was precisely the excuse Earl Spencer had been putting forward in Ireland for the last five years for neglecting to proceed with important measures. Earl Spencer told them that the Government were meditating some general scheme; but what it was had never yet left the mind of that noble Earl. The Irish Members had waited with hope—it had now diminished to a vanishing point—for the appearance of this great scheme, which they had so long been told was to bring them financial relief in Ireland. They were now told that they were to live in the hope of finding a higher moral capacity or better intentions in a new Parliament. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury took credit for his forbearance in not looking too closely into the question of taxation in the Three Kingdoms. He told the hon. Gentleman to enter into that question as closely as he liked, and the Irish Members were quite ready to follow him. If he wished it to be understood that Ireland was in any way receiving advantage, or even fair play, from the Imperial purse, in the shape of grants in aid of local burdens, he would tell the hon. Gentleman that that was not the case. It was altogether remote from the fact, and quite contrary to it. Let him compare the grants in aid of local taxation in England, Ireland, and Scotland; and what was the result? First of all, if any relief were made in any country, it should be the poor country, whose capacity was the least, that should receive it, and not the rich country. If the Imperial purse, which was contributed to by the Three Kingdoms, was to be dipped into for the benefit of either of the three, the recipient of the relief ought to be Ireland, and not England, which was the wealthiest country in the world. In the last decade the valuation of England for purposes of this kind had increased by 30 per cent—an increase unparalleled in the civilized world. In the same period, that for Ireland had increased by 4 per cent. Thus, in the same period, while the Return of incomes in Ireland remained almost stationary, the capacity to pay taxation in England had increased by leaps and bounds; and in the same decade in Ireland the number of persons in the receipt of relief had doubled. Large numbers had been compelled to give up the means of earning a living, and the population itself had very largely diminished. Therefore, it was plain that it would not only be unjust, but cruel, to add anything to the local burdens of Ireland. Grants in aid of local taxation from the Imperial purse in England amounted to £3,500,000; in Scotland to over £500,000; and in Ireland, although the sum was nominally much greater, if they took out the Irish Constabulary and the Dublin Police, which were just as much military forces as the Army and Navy, officered under the control of the Lord Lieutenant, and maintained altogether independent of the will of the people, and, in fact, contrary to it—taking out those sums, it would be found that Ireland received very little in aid of grants for local purposes; while Scotland, with a population only three-fourths of that of Ireland, received £500,000, and England £3,500,000. That proved that no fair play was given to Ireland, but that very great hardship was inflicted upon her in this matter. Who were the people who had paid for the maintenance of roads in Ireland? He did not blame the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury for being unacquainted with the details, because he had only lately come into his present Office; but he appeared to have founded something on the question of the Highway Authority. Now, in Ireland the Highway Authority was the Grand Jury, and the sum was levied in every county by means of county cess. Among the pur-

poses for which county cess was given was the maintenance of the high roads. If the hon. Gentleman had any benevolent intentions towards Ireland in reference to those roads, he would place the charge upon the Imperial purse, and no objection would be entertained on that side of the House. The people who paid taxes in Ireland—poor rate and county cess—were the poor occupiers; and he asked the hon. Gentleman to bear in mind this extraordinary fact—that, whereas 20 years ago the rates only amounted to 10*d.* in the pound, they were now nearly 2*s.*, having been more than doubled. All those taxes fell upon the occupiers, and the increase was more than equal to the whole of the taxation 20 years ago. The landlord did not pay 1*d.* of county cess, but the whole of it fell upon the struggling occupier, who was only in one degree removed from the condition of a pauper. The injustice of the tax in the case of Ireland was manifest. In England the valuation was increasing, the people were well-to-do, the taxes fell lightly upon them, and were hardly felt by the bulk of the community; but in Ireland persons only one degree above the condition of paupers contributed every penny for the maintenance of the high roads. Notwithstanding that fact, they were required to pay £40,000 a-year out of their narrow means in aid of the maintenance of roads in England and Scotland.

MR. CLARE READ said, he was glad to find that hon. Members from Ireland were becoming convinced of the pressure of local taxation in that country, and he would be glad to do anything he could to alleviate the burden so far as Ireland was concerned. He would most heartily support any proposition that would give relief from the burden of maintaining arterial roads in Ireland. Casual visits to that country led him to the conclusion that the high roads there were much superior to those they had in England. He did not see why a grant should not be given to the Irish Grand Juries, as well as to the Courts of Quarter Sessions or the Local Authorities in England. But, as a matter of fact, whatever might be the comparison between the amount of Imperial taxation paid by Ireland or by England, there were one or two little matters in Ireland in which the Irish people had an advantage over the ratepayers in England. Take the Dog Tax; it was an Imperial tax in this country and a local tax in Ireland, and he should be glad to see some day or other that it was made a local tax for Great Britain as well as for Ireland. In the matter of turnpike tolls, he believed that, although they were unpopular, they were strictly just. Those who used the roads paid for them; and now the arrangement was that those who used the roads least paid the most. The hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) referred to the fact that England had increased very much in wealth. That was certainly not the case with regard to the occupiers of land. Their prosperity had not increased very much in the last few years; but, on the contrary, the owners and occupiers of land had considerably diminished in wealth and prosperity, although they paid almost the whole of the rates of the country. He maintained that any sort of contribution which the general wealth of the country could afford ought to be made towards the relief of local taxation, not only in Ireland, but throughout the United Kingdom.

MR. W. J. CORBET wished to correct a false impression which might be produced by the statement of the hon. Member for West Norfolk (Mr. Clare Read) in reference to the Dog Tax. The tax amounted to something like £30,000 a-year in Ireland, but it was almost entirely absorbed in the payment of officials connected with the Office of the Registrar of Dublin Castle. A very small amount, indeed, went in aid of local taxation.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he thought he had heard the Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. George Russell) cheer some of the remarks of the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken below the Gangway (Mr. Clare Read). He took it that that cheer meant that in England there was good cause for the grant towards the maintenance of those roads. Now, what were the purposes for which many of the main roads were made in this country? They were made for the purpose of connecting the large towns—for instance, London with Edinburgh, London with Liverpool and Manchester, and even London with Holyhead—and many of the Irish roads were made for a

similar purpose; and he could not see why the ratepayers in Ireland should not receive the same grant in respect of the main roads of that country as was allowed to the ratepayers of this country. He had always felt and believed that the turnpikes should be maintained, and that the cost of maintaining the roads should be paid by those who made use of them; and it was well known that many of the main roads were of comparatively little use to the local inhabitants. It was not they who travelled by them, but the general public who made use of them; but, notwithstanding that fact, the farmers and residents of the poorer localities had to pay for them. He should like to hear one word from the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Local Government Board to intimate that the Government would recognize, in this case, the claim of the Irish people to some relief.

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL said, the hon. and gallant Baronet was very insidious in the advances he had made. He (Mr. Russell) had greeted with a cheer certain sentiments which fell from hon. Members from Ireland, simply intending to indicate that they received his sympathy. It was not, of course, for him to lay down any general rule as to the taxation to be applied to the different parts of the United Kingdom; but granting that the principle of subventions from the Imperial Treasury, in relief of local taxation, was a sound one, it was very difficult to deny that Ireland had an equal right to such subventions with England and Scotland.

Mr. BIGGAR said, the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury had said that he did not know how the money raised for the maintenance of roads in Ireland was disposed of. Now, the Grand Juries in Ireland were the persons who were responsible for keeping the roads in repair, and, of course, they were the persons who determined what the contribution of the locality should be. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman did not know that there were two areas of taxation upon which the Grand Juries imposed the rate in connection with roads. One was a charge on the county at large. In charging the county at large the amount went in relief of the local rates for the maintenance of the main roads of the country—for instance, the mail coach roads. But in places where no turnpike roads existed the charge was thrown upon the local baronies, and they were purely local rates in which the area for which the rate was required was specified. Originally, the cost of those roads was borne by the county in which the roads existed. In the county of Antrim, with which he was well acquainted, there was a main road from Belfast to Coleraine, and thence on to Londonderry, and there were three or four turnpikes on that road. It was a road of an arterial nature, and had to be kept in repair by the Grand Juries. There was another mail coach road in the county of Antrim, between Belfast and Dublin, upon which several tolls were levied; and there were tolls also upon the road from Belfast to Carrickfergus. There were no charges for tolls on those roads for Government purposes, or upon persons who made use of them for the purpose of going to church on Sunday. In those respects the roads were free. But tolls were very strictly levied in regard to any other use of the roads. Those tolls had now been entirely abolished; but the main roads were still required to be kept up at the expense of the ratepayers, and he considered the principle to be most unjust, because in many counties—take, for instance, the county of Down—the old main roads were very much better and wider than were required for purely local traffic, but, nevertheless, they were still kept up at the expense of the local ratepayers. He quite agreed with the hon. and gallant Baronet the Member for West Sussex (Sir Water B. Barttelot), that the maintenance of the main and leading roads should be provided for by Parliament. In the case of purely local roads they could hardly expect a grant in aid from Parliament; but in regard to the main roads, they were certainly entitled to a contribution towards the expense of maintenance. In the county of Waterford, the road between Waterford and Cork was a leading road, which certainly ought to be supported by a public grant, seeing that it was never used at all for the convenience of the locality, but merely for the through traffic. As these grants were given to England and Scotland, he failed to see why the Government should not hold out to the Irish Members the expectation that, if not immediately, they would, in the future,

give a vote of this sort to Ireland. He believed the amount contributed by Ireland to the two countries which formed the United Kingdom, amounted to £60,000 a-year, and he thought something ought to be done to put Ireland on a footing of equality with England and Scotland, even if it became necessary to propose a Supplementary Vote in the present year. It was as clear as noonday that Ireland was treated unfairly, and that the Government had full power, if they chose to exercise it, of doing justice.

MR. DEASY supported the proposal of his hon. Friend the Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar), that the Government should bring in a Supplementary Estimate. If they did not wish to do that, they might make a subvention of £40,000 towards the maintenance of the Irish roads. He did not think that anything more unjust towards the Irish people could be imagined than the principle upon which the Three Kingdoms were dealt with in this matter. What the Irish people had to do with the roads in England was more than he could see, nor could he understand why they should be asked to pay £40,000 a-year for the relief of the English taxpayers. Certain roads in the neighbourhood of Cork were made for the convenience of the barracks, and they were mainly, at the present moment, used by the military. They included one of the most expensive roads perhaps in Ireland, and yet the people of the county of Cork were not aided to the extent of a single 1*d.* from the Imperial funds towards the maintenance of that road. The Government had passed a Land Act which had had the effect of reducing rents in Ireland; but the unfortunate people in whose favour the rents had been reduced had still to contribute their full share towards county cess, whereas the very rich population of England received a contribution from the Imperial Exchequer towards the maintenance of the highways of the country. He thought that was a most outrageous injustice, and he trusted that his hon. Friends would, on every possible occasion, strongly protest against it. It was all very well for hon. Gentlemen opposite to express sympathy with the views which had been uttered by the Irish Members; but he failed to see of what value that sympathy was if nothing resulted from it. They were quite accustomed to see hon. Members rise and admit that the Irish claims were just and reasonable; but his complaint was that no notice was taken of those claims when these Votes came on in Committee of Supply. He did not believe, in spite of the observations of hon. Gentleman opposite, that the Government, unless they were compelled to do so, would be disposed to give £40,000 in aid of the Irish roads, instead of compelling the Irish people to contribute that sum, as they did at present, towards the maintenance of the English and Scotch roads. During the last 10 years the number of paupers in Ireland had increased from 280,000 to 590,000, while during the same time the amount of pauperism is England had decreased. That fact alone ought to induce the Government to take time to consider before they called upon such a poor country as Ireland to contribute towards the maintenance of roads, or anything else, in such a rich country as England. £215,000 was now asked for as a contribution for keeping up the English roads, while not a single 1*s.* was proposed to be given to Ireland. Not only was that the case, but many of the roads which were kept up in that country were not necessary at all for the purposes of developing the resources of the country, having been made principally at the public expense for the convenience of the landlords. If that were not the case in Ireland, the county cess would be very much lower than it was. In some places it amounted to from 3*s.* to 4*s.* in the pound, and the poor rate was also very high. Ten years ago the poor rate in the Cork Union was 1*s.* 6*d.* in the pound, and now it amounted to 3*s.* 6*d.* or 4*s.* He believed there were very few places in England where the poor rate was as high as that; and even if it were higher than in Ireland, the people of England were able to pay it, while those of Ireland were not. He could entirely confirm the remarks of his hon. Friend the Member for Wicklow (Mr. Corbet) in reference to the Dog Tax. The total sum realized in Ireland from the Dog Tax amounted to £32,000, while the cost of collecting it amounted to £28,000; so that out of £32,000 the only sum contributed towards the relief of taxation was £4,000, and the unfortunate people who had to pay county cess were compelled to pay for sheep and other dogs on which no tax was

levied in England. He trusted that the Government, even now, would see the justice of bringing in a Supplementary Estimate in order to give a grant in aid to Ireland.

MR. P. J. POWER said, the only desire of his hon. Friends in this matter was to place the people of Ireland upon a par with the people of England and Scotland. He asked the Committee to bear in mind that in Ireland, owing to the scarcity of railways in many districts, the roads were still very much used for the conveyance of Her Majesty's mails. To his mind, that was another reason why the Treasury should contribute towards the maintenance of the Irish roads. Certainly that was the case in the county he had the honour to represent (Waterford). A considerable number of mails were conveyed daily by four-horse cars along the main roads; and his hon. Friend the Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) had alluded to some of the routes upon which, within his own knowledge, mail coaches now ran. It could not be denied that the people of Ireland contributed their fair proportion towards the Imperial taxation. In fact, if the figures were properly gone into, it would be found that they paid more than their fair proportion. Another reason why the Government should make this grant, and place the Irish people on a par with those of England and Scotland, was this—that, owing to the Government not keeping their promises, the Grand Jury system still continued in Ireland. Her Majesty's Ministers had made repeated promises to deal with that subject; but they had never yet seen fit to keep them, but had directed attention to other and far less important questions. So far as Ireland was concerned, that was one of the most vital questions that could be brought on for consideration. The county he represented paid, at that moment, a tax of £14,000 a-year to the shareholders of a Railway Company; and it was contended that if the Grand Jury system were reformed, and the counties governed on some representative system, a considerable portion of that local taxation would be got rid of. He hoped the Government would accede to the demand which had been made by his hon. Friends, which, to every fair-minded man, must appear to be of a most reasonable character.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he would be very sorry not to take part in any measure of justice to Ireland; but hon. Members seemed to have forgotten that in Ireland there was no Carriage Tax.

An hon. MEMBER: There are no carriages, except those belonging to the landlords, on which it could be levied.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, hon. Members opposite had enumerated the advantages enjoyed by the two countries; but that was putting the question upon a false issue. As far as he remembered, the Vote now under the consideration of the Committee was founded upon an arrangement made by the Prime Minister in consequence of what occurred on the Motion of the hon. and gallant Member for Oxfordshire (Colonel Harcourt) in reference to the Carriage Tax. That Vote was given to England, and subsequently to Scotland, and he supposed it was not given to Ireland owing to the fact that there was no Carriage Tax in that country. He was quite of opinion that Ireland had a claim for consideration in the matter; but he hoped that the grants from Imperial Taxation in aid of local taxation would not be increased, and that the time was not far distant when this Vote would disappear altogether from the Estimates. He should support the Vote, although he admitted that a Vote for England and Scotland, and none for Ireland, presented a somewhat anomalous appearance.

MR. SEXTON said, he could not admit that there was any connection between the argument of the hon. Gentleman opposite and the claim put forward by the Irish Members. The hon. Gentleman had cited the case of the Carriage Tax; but the people of Ireland who had carriages were not the people who maintained the roads. Those who kept their carriages in Ireland were not numerous compared with those in England; but whoever they were, they did not pay 1*d.* for keeping up the roads. It was the occupier, and not the landlord, who paid for them. He was glad to see the Prime Minister present, because it was desirable that his attention should be called to the fact that every 1*d.* of county cess in Ireland was paid by the occupier, and not by the landlord; and, therefore, there was no connection between the Carriage Tax and the demand made by the Irish Members

in reference to the support of the roads. If the Prime Minister would allow him, in a few words he would convey to the right hon. Gentleman's mind the merits of the case. The Committee were now asked to grant £215,000 to England, and, in the next Vote, £35,000 to Scotland, as grants in aid of local taxation in connection with the maintenance of roads; and in the case of Scotland it was paid, although there had been no roads disturnpiked at all. In Ireland they were called upon to contribute 40 or 50 per cent towards this subvention in aid of the local roads in England and Scotland, whereas in Ireland itself every 1*d.* of the same expenditure for keeping up the roads came out of the pockets of the occupiers of land, who were the poorest class of people. That state of things occurred when, as the right hon. Gentleman well knew, the capacity of England to bear taxation had been increased by 30 per cent during the last 10 years; whereas, on the contrary, the capacity of Ireland had diminished, and pauperism, instead of prosperity, was increasing. Every circumstance pointed to the equity and justice of some relief being given to Ireland, instead of that country being asked to contribute towards a subvention for England and Scotland. He was sure the right hon. Gentleman would see that the existing system was not one that ought to be continued; and it would give great satisfaction to the Irish Members if he would say a word in the same spirit as the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury, or hold out any hope that the matter would be considered between this year and next, with the object of placing the taxation of the Three Kingdoms upon a more equitable basis.

MR. GLADSTONE said, that when Parliament—not the present Parliament, but the new Parliament—came, at the very earliest period, as he thought it ought to come, and must come, to a comprehensive consideration of the question of Local and Imperial Taxation, and the relations of Local and Imperial Taxation in the Three Kingdoms, undoubtedly this would be a point which would have to be put down more or less to the credit of Ireland on her side of the account. That was the admission he was prepared to make; but the question evidently formed part of a large subject to which a comprehensive consideration would have to be given. More than that he could not undertake to say. He stated that, because he thought that justice required it; and no doubt, when Parliament came to consider the whole matter, a fair and equitable view would be taken by those who represented the Three Kingdoms.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, the observations of the Prime Minister were just and equitable; but the right hon. Gentleman talked of a prospective amelioration of the present position, whereas, unfortunately, the grievance was a present one, and the Irish ratepayers who were taxed now and had to pay their own cess were also called upon to contribute to a Vote in aid of the English ratepayers, with no immediate prospect of an improvement in their local administration or of their financial arrangements. No change hereafter in local administration or in local financial arrangements would give relief to those who would be necessarily taxed now if this Vote were passed in favour of the English and Scotch ratepayers. The hon. Member the Secretary to the Treasury was evidently unacquainted with the exceedingly unfair incidence of local taxation in respect of roads in Ireland. He might inform the hon. Gentleman that the highway rate in this country only formed one-twentieth part of the local revenue, and represented a little more than £1,000,000 out of a revenue of £20,000,000, whereas in Ireland, out of a revenue of £3,300,000 raised for local purposes, no less than £333,000 was paid for the maintenance of roads. Therefore, while in Ireland one-tenth of the local revenue went towards the maintenance of roads, in England the amount was only one-twentieth. Therefore, the pressure upon the Irish people was double as heavy as in England, and yet, while in England a substantial relief was afforded, in Ireland no relief at all was given. He was grateful to the Prime Minister for the equitable language he had used; but it did not remove the fundamental objection he took to a proposal of this kind. Therefore, unless he obtained from the Government some undertaking that they would make a similar contribution for the maintenance of turnpike or disturnpiked roads in Ireland as that which was made for England and Scotland, or, at any rate, that they would give to Ire-

land something in aid of local taxation more than they did now to enable the people to pay the local taxes, he should feel it necessary to take a division against the Vote. There were many ways in which the Government might make up to Ireland for what she had sacrificed in this particular instance. There were many things in that country which rightly called for some Government action, and some of the Votes which had hitherto been taken for Ireland were now at an end. For instance, there was the Vote for the Shannon improvements, and if the Government would continue the £10,000 or £20,000 spent heretofore on the Shannon for similar works in other parts of Ireland, where drainage was badly required, Ireland would not feel the injustice of this Vote so much. But unless they were promised the advantage of a Government subvention on something like the same terms as England and Scotland, they must show their objection to the present Vote in the only way that was open to them.

Mr. HICKS said, he had listened to the debate with considerable attention, and it appeared to him that a great deal of irrelevant matter had been introduced into it which was not altogether consistent with the real facts of the case. The question before the Committee was whether Ireland was entitled to relief from local taxation or not. That was a grave question, and he was certainly of opinion that she was entitled to it. He thought it a great pity that the question had been mixed up with the Carriage Tax and the Dog Tax, and other extraneous matters. Nor would it alter the question whether there had been an increase of assessment in England or not. But with regard to there having been an increase of assessment, if that subject were inquired into in the rural districts of England, he believed it would be found that the assessment had been materially reduced. The rents had been reduced, and, sooner or later, a reduction of assessment was bound to follow. Then, as to the statement of his hon. Friend the Member for Queen's County (Mr. A. O'Connor) as to the proportion of the burden of maintaining the roads which fell upon England and upon Ireland, he understood the hon. Member to say that in one case it amounted to one-tenth, and in the other to one-twentieth. He thought the hon. Member was mistaken, and he did not know that that was the case anywhere.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he had referred to the highway rates.

Mr. HICKS said, that it was a very great mistake to suppose that the proportion amounted to one-twentieth part. In talking of English local taxation people very often mixed up a number of things with the actual local taxation that had nothing whatever to do with it. For instance, they included water rates and gas rates—things that had nothing to do with the poor rate and nothing to do with the highway rate. If they took the highway rate and that which really constituted the local revenues—the poor rate—and the things which were properly included in them, it would be found that, instead of one-twentieth, the proportion of highway rates to poor rates was nearly one fourth—at any rate, in the rural districts. In his own district the poor rate was 2*s.* 6*d.* in the pound, and the highway rate would be 8*d.* But those points, he thought, were entirely outside the discussion on this Vote, the question raised being as to why, if relief were to be afforded in the matter of roads in England and Scotland, it should not also be afforded in the case of Ireland, and he considered it should.

Colonel COLTHURST said, that Members from Ireland would be grateful to the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down for placing the question in a proper light. Certainly, no argument had been adduced to prove that this allowance should not be made; and he could not but think that the argument drawn from the poor rate was somewhat beside the question, which was as to whether they in Ireland were not entitled to the same relief in respect of the maintenance of roads as was given in the case of the roads in England and Scotland. He quite agreed with his hon. Friend the Member for Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor), who raised this question. He thought that every county should have its share of the money, and he hoped that the intimation of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister would be carried out, and that next year a Vote equal in amount to that of the Vote now before the Committee would be put into the Estimates for the maintenance of the roads in Ireland.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 144; Noes 23: Majority 121.—(Div. List, No. 124.)

(2.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £30,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886, in Aid of the Cost of Maintenance of Disturnpiked and other Roads maintained out of Public Rates in Scotland during the year ended Whitsuntide 1885."

MR. SEXTON said, he had already recorded his opinion that while England received the entire advantage in comparison with Ireland in the matter of these subventions, Scotland was the spoilt child of the Estimates. He had pointed out that the amount of the grants in aid of local taxation in Ireland was only about £500,000 a-year; whereas in the case of Scotland, with a much smaller population, it amounted to £525,000. Then there was another singular fact admitted in connection with this matter—namely, that some of the counties of Scotland relieved by this grant had no disturnpiked roads at all. The heading of the Vote in the Appropriation Act was simply "Disturnpiked Roads." In England some of the grant was for main roads besides disturnpiked roads; but in Scotland it was given for some roads which were not disturnpiked. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department had pleaded on behalf of these grants that before the roads were disturnpiked the cost of maintaining them was paid out of the tolls charged on those who used the roads, and he gave that as the reason why the localities should be relieved; but that could not be pleaded on behalf of the grants made for the maintenance of roads which were never disturnpiked; and therefore he said that the same claim on the Imperial purse did not exist as was alleged by the right hon. Gentleman in regard to England. He thought this transaction on the part of the right hon. Gentleman and the Treasury was a most grave and questionable one, inasmuch as in addition to its unfairness it tended to withdraw from the cognizance of Parliament the expenditure of the public money. The meaning of the Government regulations with respect to these grants was, that while in England only the localities were relieved which had disturnpiked roads, in Scotland, whether the roads were disturnpiked or not, the localities should receive the same relief as if they had disturnpiked roads.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, he could not admit that there was any justice in the observation of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) that Scotland was the spoilt child of the Estimates. He would not go into the larger question, but could do so if necessary, and he did not think there would be any difficulty in showing that the contributions in aid of local taxation in Ireland were far in excess of any given to Scotland. In the case of the Police, for instance, the whole cost of maintenance was contributed by the Imperial Exchequer. ["No, no!"] There were also other contributions which he would not dwell upon. As regarded the particular question before the Committee, he was afraid that the hon. Member had not adverted to the heading of the Vote, because it was "Disturnpiked and other Roads." He would remind the Committee of the history of the matter. [MR. SEXTON: Why is the heading different in the Appropriation Account?] He thought it was "Disturnpiked and other Roads," but perhaps the word "other" had been admitted by mistake; at all events, the word "other" occurred in the Estimate, which he proposed to deal with. The Committee would recollect that £250,000 was agreed to be granted as a contribution in aid of the maintenance of roads, and as had been stated by the hon. Member it was made in terms applicable to disturnpiked and main roads. It was true that the words "main roads" was an incorrect term—it was an error, and had been rectified since. Well, during the first year that the Vote was given, the only contribution was to counties, the roads of which had been disturnpiked since 1860. It was felt and represented in that House—and he believed that the representation was considered by the House generally to be a just one—that by going back to 1860 an injustice was done to those counties of Scotland which had anticipated the legislation which subsequently took place and which culminated in the Act of 1878. There were various instances in which roads were disturnpiked by County Acts between 1850 and 1860, and

accordingly it was felt that the representation made that the counties concerned should participate was a reasonable one, and it was determined to carry back the period to 1850. He did not gather from the remarks of the hon. Member that he would complain of the practice with regard to those roads having come into operation somewhat earlier in Scotland than in England. The *gravamen* of the hon. Member's charge related to those counties where there were no disturnpiked roads. That question had been brought before the House very prominently by the hon. Member for the Falkirk Burghs (Mr. Ramsay), and the result was a prevalent or unanimous assent, so far as one could gather, to the view that those counties which never had received a contribution in aid, because they had maintained their own roads, had just as great a claim to a share of the general grant as those which had for some time received a contribution by reason of their having disturnpiked roads. The proportion given to Scotland was very nearly on the basis of population between the two countries, making a little allowance in consequence of the greater lines of roads in Scotland, and that was the allocation which appeared on the Votes. He did not suppose that hon. Members would care to pursue the matter very narrowly, seeing that Scotland only got a fair proportion of the grant, and that the domestic arrangement, as he might call it, of allocating the grant between the various counties was such as had received the prevalent assent of the House, and had the great merit of being just in itself.

Colonel NOLAN said, he was glad the Committee had had the advantage of listening to a speech from the Lord Advocate, because it appeared to him to be entirely in favour of the view taken of this matter by Irish Members. As a matter of fact, the Scotch case was exactly the same as the Irish case. The Scotch people had had a very able advocate, however, and got their share of the money. But the argument of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department was that the grant in aid was by way of compensation for the tolls that had been given up. The only argument against the claim of Irish Members had been upset by the Lord Advocate. It was practically admitted that Ireland was in the same position as that in which Scotland formerly stood. He would only point out the great disparity which existed between the two countries in this respect—namely, that whereas the Scotch people had got the money, the unfortunate Irish tenants who bore the bulk of the cost of maintaining the Irish roads were without relief. He trusted the Government would attend to the argument of the Lord Advocate.

Mr. J. W. BARCLAY said, he objected in principle to grants in aid of local rates; but the practice had been adopted of giving to England and Scotland money, and, in his opinion, it ought in that case to be distributed all round. He should vote for the grant in aid to Scotland only because England had already received it. If hon. Members from Ireland were to bring forward a Motion to give a grant to Ireland under similar circumstances, he should vote with them. In the case of Scotland there was no difference between the disturnpiked roads and others—they had all been taken over by the County Boards. He did not now see any difference between the case of Ireland and that of Scotland; and, as he had already stated, he was ready to vote for a Motion, if it were brought forward, to place the two countries in a similar position in respect of the maintenance of roads.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he hoped the Irish Members would be a little more consistent than the hon. Member (Mr. Barclay). The hon. Gentleman wished to have fair play all round; he had voted against the subvention for England, but he was not prepared to vote against that for Scotland. There was no subvention proposed in relief of local taxation in Ireland, and, therefore, the Irish Members objected alike to the Votes for England and Scotland. He hoped they were sufficiently consistent, having voted against the privilege extended to England, to vote against the privilege being extended to Scotland. The Irish Representatives objected to the system of subventions from the Imperial Exchequer in aid of local taxation. ["No, no!"] It seemed they were not unanimous. He, however, was of opinion that there ought to be no subventions from the Imperial Exchequer in aid of

local taxation. Every local area ought to bear its own local burdens, and the Imperial Exchequer ought only to bear burdens which were essentially Imperial. At any rate, if there was to be any departure from that principle, the departure ought to apply to every portion of the Kingdom. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate had referred to a Scotch Member who, two years ago, made a stand against the proposed Vote for England, on the ground that Scotland was not allowed to participate in the same proportion as England in the scramble. The hon. Member for Falkirk (Mr. Ramsay) divided the House two years ago against the Vote for England, and he objected to the Vote for Scotland on the ground that the distribution of the Vote was not equitably made in Scotland—that some portions of the country did not obtain the advantage that others did. What did the hon. Member for Falkirk say his objection to the Vote was? Why, that if the Vote was made at all, it should be made equally all round—that every portion of the Kingdom ought to obtain its share. The hon. Member was supported on that occasion by the Irish Members. He (Mr. A. O'Connor) was sorry to say that they did not find that the Scotch Members regarded it as a matter of reciprocity when the claims of Ireland in the matter were urged upon the House. There was this peculiar feature about the Vote for Scotland, that an allowance was made to the country in respect of those districts in which there never was a turnpike road. Now, the Committee were told by the Lord Advocate that the Vote was to be increased, in order that some inequality might be got rid of. The fact was, that when the Vote was only £25,000, they did not spend so much in Scotland; they only required £23,800 for this purpose. The last Appropriation Account showed that there was actually upwards of £1,100 surrendered out of the smaller Vote of £25,000. What was the case now? Whereas £23,000 odd was sufficient two years ago, Scotland now wanted £35,000, and the only thing to be said in defence of the increased amount was that the Scotch Members insisted on obtaining, and the Government assented to their obtaining, something like a fair proportionate share of this public grant from the Imperial Exchequer. Why should Ireland not be allowed to share in the grant? The Government told the Irish Members that they could not have it, but that they must wait until, by some measure or other to be brought in in a future Parliament, something like equality in this matter could be secured between the different parts of the Kingdom. He had no doubt that when there was a new Parliament, the Irish Members would be able to produce effects much greater than they could now. The pressure they would be able to bring to bear on the Government would be something like the effective pressure which the Scotch Members could now bring to bear on the Liberal Administration. There were now sitting on the Government Bench hon. Members who in previous years had recognized the hardship under which Ireland rested in this particular. The hon. Gentleman who was now the Secretary to the Local Government (Mr. George Russell) recognized last year the inequality of treatment in this respect, and he joined the Irish Members in the division against the Government proposal. He could not now ask the hon. Gentleman to repeat his action, because the position of the hon. Gentleman was altered. The Irish Members would very likely find that, whatever individual Members of the Government felt ought to be done with regard to Ireland, they would have to rest content with the present state of things. He hoped, however, that they would go to a division, simply in order that they might have a record of their proceedings—a record of the protest on the part of Irish Members against this signal instance of unequal treatment which was meted out to Ireland in the distribution of public money.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR said, he hoped that this was the last year in which these subventions would appear on the Estimates. A more objectionable system than that comprised in these grants in aid could not be imagined, for it really amounted to putting money into the pocket of the people with one hand and taking it out with the other, then to be spent without that check which was felt when it came out of their own pocket. He trusted that between this and the assembling of the next Parliament, calculations

would be made with the view of getting rid of these subventions. That might be effected by transferring to localities a number of small taxes yielding an income of about £6,000,000—more than suffient to cover the subventions. He could not help pointing out to the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. A. O'Connor) and the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan), who were very fond of calling attention to the amounts of public money received by Scotland in comparison with those granted to Ireland, that those hon. Gentlemen disregarded the fact that Scotland contributed in many respects considerably more to the Revenue of the United Kingdom than Ireland.

Mr. GIBSON said, that this was a matter of great practical importance. A great many things were to be relegated to the new Parliament which they were told would do a great deal of justice which could not at present be obtained; but he would like, if they could, to do a little good in this Parliament. It was small comfort for them to hear from the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Sir George Balfour) that they should devote the time between this and the next Parliament to making calculations. There were no more intelligent or calculating people in the world than the Irish, and one of their peculiarities was that they could make their calculations with every reasonable rapidity. If the Government told the Committee that they really meant to remedy the state of things which existed in Ireland—if they meant to apply a remedy as soon as the people were ready to supply them with the necessary calculations, he assured the Government that those calculations would be forthcoming a great deal quicker than his hon. Friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert) imagined.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL said, he had listened to the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gibson) with considerable pain, because, so far as he could gather, the right hon. and learned Gentleman urged the Government to depart from an agreement entered into by their Predecessors. He (Sir Herbert Maxwell) regarded this Vote as a corollary of the Turnpikes Act of the late Government; and, therefore, any indication of an intention on the part of the Government to depart from the agreement entered into in consequence of that legislation, would be a distinct breach of faith. Whatever might be the merits of the relative amounts of expenditure upon what might be called the systems in Ireland and Scotland, there could be no change of intention on the part of the Government on this point. He should be glad to hear from the Government that he was right in assuming that to be the case.

Mr. WARTON said, he did not quite understand the process of argument of their Irish Friends. He was willing to admit that Ireland had a claim for relief of local taxation; but he did not see why, because Ireland had such a claim. Irish Members should move to negative this Vote. Their proceeding seemed to him very curious, to say the least of it. He did not understand the logic of it, because the ratepayers of England and Scotland were entitled to relief under an agreement come to between the Prime Minister and the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Oxfordshire (Colonel Harcourt). That there was not such relief afforded to Ireland was no real reason why the Irish Members should object to the English and Scotch receiving it; it was a very good reason why there should be relief given to Ireland, but it was no reason why it should be refused to England and Scotland. At the same time, the attitude of the Irish Members was quite as consistent as that of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Forfarshire (Mr. Barclay). The hon. Gentleman said he was opposed to those grants altogether, and being opposed to them he voted against that proposed for England. He was, however, prepared to vote for the grant to Scotland, and the reason he gave was that England already had got the Vote. He (Mr. Warton) hoped they would be able to test the sentiments of the hon. Member for Forfarshire next year by reversing the order of the Votes. He very much questioned whether, if the Vote for Scotland were proposed first, the hon. Member would be found voting against this objectionable system, for he was afraid that the hon. Gentleman would on no account vote against money being granted to Scotland.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he thought the hon. and learned Gentleman's (Mr. Warton's) observations were very unfair to the hon. Gentleman the Mem-

ber for Forfarshire (Mr. Barclay). The interference of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Barclay) in the debate was kindly meant towards Ireland, and his statement was perfectly consistent. The hon. Gentleman was in favour of a grant being given to Ireland as well as to Scotland, and being a Scotchman he naturally voted in favour of the grant being continued to his own country. The Irish Members had no means whatever of giving the hon. Gentleman an opportunity of voting for a grant for them. No one knew better than the hon. Member himself that it was impossible for any private Member to bring forward anything like a distinct proposal of the kind. The reason of the Irish Members' attitude was perfectly intelligible. They were opposed to the Vote for Scotland, not that they disapproved of that Vote, but because it was unaccompanied by a Vote for Ireland. He was glad that this Vote was intrusted to the care of the present Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert). There was no Member of the Government whose mind was more open to reason, and who was more willing to give expression to his opinions when they had been changed by arguments addressed to him, than the hon. Gentleman. Now, the hon. Gentleman had heard that discussion—a discussion of a very remarkable character in one respect. Practically all the speakers, representing nearly every shade of opinion in the House, had joined in backing the claim of Ireland. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) was kind enough, a short time ago, to speak in a spirit friendly to Ireland, and no doubt he would be found amongst the supporters of a grant being given to Ireland. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), who was separated from the Irish National Party by as wide a chasm of political difference as could separate any two Parties, pressed upon the Government the desirability of meeting the claim of Ireland in this matter. The hon. Member for Forfarshire (Mr. Barclay), who was not unacquainted with questions of this kind, also spoke in favour of Ireland. Every section of the Committee, therefore, had practically united with the Irish Members in pressing this claim upon the attention of the Government. He was almost precluded from urging any argument in favour of the principle of the demand which was made. He assumed that the demand would not have received such unanimous and highly respectable support if it were not founded on reason and justice. The only point he wished to press on the Government was the desirability and possibility of their dealing with the question promptly. He quite agreed with the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) that it was a rather perilous proceeding for them to postpone until the next Parliament all matters of reform. He joined with most other people in looking to the next Parliament for the introduction of very great and desirable reforms in the three countries; but, at the same time, it must be borne in mind that the next Parliament would, in all probability, find, like all preceding Parliaments, that it had more work to do than it could get through. It was only due to the next Parliament that if they could introduce small reforms in this Parliament they should do so. What he would respectfully suggest to the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert) was that he should deal with this question by Bill. The measure need only contain a very few clauses, and it would certainly be one of a non-contentious character. It would not receive any opposition either direct or indirect. Members' minds were made up on the matter; the Bill could be got through in the small hours of the morning; and, in fact, it would be like the Royal Irish Constabulary Redistribution Bill, a measure which could be passed in the course of a week. Any action of the kind he had suggested would have a most beneficial effect. There was nothing more exasperating to the Irish Members than to observe the gigantic disproportion between the amount of money expended in Ireland upon Police and Constabulary, and the sum expended for purposes of reform—for education or local aid, for instance. He thought his hon. Friends were justified in pointing out the extraordinary inequality in this matter which existed between the two countries, and he hoped the Secretary to the Treasury would take that opportunity of redressing a generally admitted grievance.

Mr. PARNELL said, he was precluded by an engagement from giving his reasons for voting against the system of subvention on the English Vote; but he would take the opportunity of doing so upon the Scotch Vote, which was, of course, of a similar character. He understood that during the debate upon the English Vote, the Prime Minister admitted the apparent justice of the claim of Ireland to a proportionate grant in aid of local taxation in the direction of the maintenance of roads, and said that he would look into the matter, and that if he found upon full examination that the claim was a just one, he had no doubt the House would apply a remedy. But in a matter of such importance, one in which it was evident the general feeling of the House was in favour of the justice of the claim, the Irish Members were entitled to something a little more definite, at all events, as regarded the time when the ameliorating action, by Bill or otherwise, would be taken. He did not know whether it would be necessarry to pass an Act of Parliament at all; but, assuming that it would be necessary, it was obvious, from the kindly feeling expressed by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) and by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), that the Bill would neither be blocked nor opposed on the Opposition side of the House. As the Government could control and influence their own followers, it followed that the Bill would not meet with opposition from the Ministerial side of the House either. The Bill, consequently, would be a non-contentious Bill, and would be passed without any difficulty if it were taken up by the only power able to take it up, that power being the Government. He was perfectly willing to leave to the Prime Minister the investigation as to whether justice and right were upon their side; but what he asked was, would the Government introduce a Bill for the purpose of remedying this grievance if the Prime Minister decided that their claim was based upon a just foundation? It was absurd to put the Irish Members off till next year. Many of them might never come back; besides, it was, in any case, their duty, having pointed out this glaring inequality, to use all reasonable means of getting it removed. It might be said that the Government were taken by surprise. But the question had been raised by the Irish Members before now. It was raised upon the Bill, now an Act, upon which this Estimate was founded. They supported the hon. and gallant Member for Oxfordshire (Colonel Harcourt), when, in the early days of this Parliament, he moved his Motion in favour of relief of local taxation. The majority upon that Motion was so small that the Government were compelled to take action by legislation. Although the Irish Members supported the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Harcourt), they found, when the time came for legislation, that Ireland was left out in the cold. They were entitled to some plain declaration from the Government with regard to this question. The Government ought to say whether they would introduce a Bill that Session for the purpose of removing the inequality which existed. Of course, if the Bill were opposed by the Irish Members, the Government would be justified in abandoning it; but if it were only opposed on the Government side of the House, the Irish Members would be entitled to ask the Government to use their influence to secure the withdrawal of the opposition. He asked the Government to show that their sympathy was *bonâ fide*, and not shove the Irish Members on one side for the rest of the Session. He protested against Ireland being cheated annually out of something like £40,000 or £50,000, to which, in comparison with Scotland, they were entitled. When English people went over to Ireland the Irish people were always very glad to see them; but, after all, visitors drove and walked over the roads at the expense of the Irish people. When, however, Irish people came over to England, they found that they drove over roads towards the maintenance of which they contributed. Such a state of things was not fair or just. The Government ought to speak candidly and straightforwardly in reply to the question he had addressed to them—namely, if the Prime Minister came to the conclusion that their claim was a just one, would legislation be initiated that Session to meet it?

Mr. HIBBERT said, he felt that after the speeches made by hon. Gentlemen opposite, it was proper some remarks

should be made by the Government upon this Vote. He was extremely sorry the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) was not present during the discussion upon the English Vote, because he would then have heard what was said by the Prime Minister. He (Mr. Hibbert) was not able to go beyond what the Prime Minister said on that Vote—namely, that the subject should be considered in connection with the whole system of local taxation and local government. The hon. Gentleman had said he was given to understand that the Prime Minister stated that he would consider this question itself. The right hon. Gentleman hardly went so far as that; he said he was quite willing to consider this question in connection with other questions of local taxation, and he would take care full justice was done to Ireland, not only in respect to this particular question but other questions. He (Mr. Hibbert) regarded the protest which had been made by hon. Members as a protest against this grant being given to England and Scotland unless it was given to Ireland also. His own impression was that it was much more likely that this discussion would lead to the abolition of the grants in aid to England and Scotland rather than a grant being given to Ireland as well as to England and Scotland. He believed that that was so, because when this grant in aid of disturnpiked roads was assented to it was only intended to be a temporary means of meeting the difficulty. It was always understood that the matter would be reconsidered when the whole question of local taxation came to be reviewed. The hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had referred to him personally. Of course, if he could meet the views of the hon. Gentleman he should be very glad to do so. He was always anxious to deal with questions, no matter from whatever part of the House they were raised, in the most open and liberal spirit. He should be very glad if this question could be settled in the way suggested by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell); but he was not prepared to go further than the promise made by the Prime Minister—namely, that the whole question should be considered as affecting the Three Kingdoms.

MR. T. A. DICKSON said, that surely upon the admission of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister there was every reason why the inequality between England and Scotland and Ireland should be remedied that year. If the Prime Minister admitted—and he did admit—that the inequality existed, then he (Mr. Dickson) maintained it was the duty of the Government to remove the inequality that very year. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had very fairly stated that there would be no difficulty in passing a Bill to remedy this undoubted grievance. He (Mr. Dickson) was persuaded that no Member of the House would be found to assent that Ireland should be treated in an exceptional manner with respect to local taxation. If English and Scotch Members really knew how burdensome local taxation was becoming in Ireland they would at once concede the demand now made in regard to Ireland; they would readily admit that if such countries like England and Scotland received subventions in aid of local taxation, a poor country like Ireland should certainly receive such assistance. What did he hear the other day from a friend? Why, that in one county of Ireland he had found that local taxation already amounted to as much as 10*s.* in the pound. It was a notorious fact that taxation was rising at such a rate in various counties that already the reduction of rents was being rapidly neutralized by the increase of taxation. He hoped the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury would consider the desirability of bringing in a Bill to place the three countries, with regard to grants in aid of local taxation, in the same advantageous position.

MR. SEXTON said, the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), who endeavoured, on occasions like this, to derive for the public some benefit from discussions which might otherwise have a tendency to become academical, had suggested that the Government should bring in a Bill to remedy an admitted grievance in Ireland. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hibbert) who was in charge of the Vote seemed to raise some question of the accuracy of the interpretation given by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Parnell) of the Prime Minister's words. Of course, it was impossible to be always verbally

accurate; but he (Mr. Sexton) certainly understood the Prime Minister to admit the justice of the claim made on behalf of Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman said the question should receive consideration, and he held out the hope or prospect that when the larger question of local government came to be considered all sections of the House would be found willing, and even desirous, to concede the just claim of Ireland on this question. As long as the justice of their claim was recognized he saw no reason why a Bill, and subsequently a Supplementary Estimate, should not be brought in this year to give Ireland the relief which was its due. The Bill could be prepared in a few minutes; it would not arouse any hostile susceptibilities in any quarter of the House, but would be regarded as a praiseworthy effort to deal justly with Ireland. He thought that if the Prime Minister were informed of what had taken place during his absence from the House he might be inclined to reconsider the question. He would not move to report Progress, because he understood there were other hon. Members who wished to address the Committee; but he thought that before the debate was brought to a conclusion it was desirable that the view of the Prime Minister should be had with respect to the appeal which had been made to the Government by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell).

Mr. PLUNKET desired very respectfully to add his voice to the unbroken chorus of unanimous approval which had come from all the Irish Members in that discussion. He did not know what answer could be given in justice or in equity to the demand which was now made. It was perfectly plain on the face of this Estimate that large sums were being given to England and Scotland for the purposes of meeting the requirements of the turnpike roads. It had been proved, and it had not been questioned by the Government, that the necessity for such subvention was stronger in Ireland than it was in either England or Scotland; and, under those circumstances, he could not see why the Government should not frankly undertake at once that they would, *pari passu* with the relief which they were now giving to Scotland and England in this matter, give similar and proportionate relief to Ireland. It could not be a very large sum; but to make the grant would facilitate the course of Business very much. It would be not only a gracious but simply a just thing to do if the Government were at once frankly to say that they would, without postponing the matter until that vague and shadowy time when they could introduce a measure dealing with local taxation generally, redress this admitted grievance. Let the Committee have an assurance at once that the Irish people should not be kept out of that which he sincerely and honestly believed Ireland was entitled to; let them be told at once that the Government would concede the unanimous demand of the Irish Members of all Parties, to which demand the Government had not attempted to make any proper or just answer.

Mr. PARNELL said, the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert) was good enough to give him a more accurate version of the statement of the Prime Minister than that which he had been able to receive otherwise. It now appeared that the Prime Minister desired to leave the question over until the consideration of the question of local government in the Three Kingdoms. They were also very candidly told by the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury that, in his judgment, the reconsideration of the whole question of local government would end in the withdrawal of the two Votes which they had been considering that evening, or, in other words, instead of Ireland getting relief, relief would be taken away from England and Scotland. The hon. Gentleman had also reminded the Committee that the Vote which they were now discussing was one of a temporary character. That consideration, however, strengthened very much the position of the Irish Members. They were willing to leave the final settlement of the question of relief of local taxation out of the Imperial funds to the time when the Government might bring it before the House, either in that Parliament or the next. That time might be next year, or it might not be for several years to come. Their case was simply this—that it was not just to vote these sums annually for England and for Scotland without at the same voting a proportionate sum for Ireland. Parliament might decide upon

stopping these Votes when the whole question of local taxation and local government came up for consideration; but what the Committee had to do now was to deal with the situation of affairs at the present time, and as matters now stood the Irish people were by their contributions to the Imperial Revenue paying a certain portion of the expenses of the roads in England and Scotland, while the English and Scotch people paid nothing whatever in aid of the maintenance of the roads in Ireland. Such a state of affairs might last for one year, or for several years, or it might last always. These contributions might always be given; but whether they lasted for a short time, or for a long time, it was the duty of the Irish Members to exhaust the means at their disposal to insure that the same treatment should be meted out to Ireland with regard to grants from Imperial sources as was meted out to England and Scotland. He thought that was a fair and reasonable proposition. He noticed that since the debate on this particular Vote commenced, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan), a Member of the Cabinet and a Gentleman who, from his position, was qualified to speak on this important question, had entered the House. The right hon. Gentleman was Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland during a very important period; he discharged the duties of that Office to the satisfaction of the Members of the House of Commons, and, no doubt, of the majority of the people of England, though certainly not to the satisfaction of the Irish Members, or as they believed to the satisfaction of the majority of the people of Ireland, and anything that came from him upon this question would have great weight. It might be possible for the right hon. Gentleman to assist the Committee in unravelling this entanglement into which their proceedings had unfortunately got, and if he would do so he would certainly earn the gratitude of all present.

MR. ILLINGWORTH desired to say a few words in justification of the position he took up upon this question. Hon. Members had urged equality of treatment between England and Scotland on the one hand and Ireland on the other. It must, however, be borne in mind that there were some items of Imperial taxation in respect to which Ireland had an advantage over the other parts of the Kingdom. While equality of treatment in this matter might be urged with unanswerable force, it was only fair to recognize the fact that there were items which were paid by England and Scotland, but which were not paid by Ireland. Having said that, he hoped the Government would understand that the strong objection in principle and in practice that many Members of the House entertained to these grants in aid remained with them as forcibly as ever. He trusted the Government would adhere to the often-expressed determination to remove this system of subvention, which he considered was as vicious a system as could be imagined.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR remarked, that the unanimity on this question had, at last, been broken by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford—[MR. ILLINGWORTH: No, no!]—but, after all, the hon. Gentleman dealt rather with the general principle than with the particular question under consideration. It might or might not have been wise in Parliament to have given these grants in aid; but that was not the question the Committee were discussing. Parliament, whether rightly or wrongly, had given these grants in aid, Ireland being debarred from any participation in them. He rather regretted the attitude which the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert) had taken up on this matter; but he did not despair even yet that the Chancellor of the Duchy (Mr. Trevelyan) might be able to give them some satisfaction in this matter. The statement of the Prime Minister, which he had not the advantage of hearing, was very good so far as it went; but he thought it gave the Irish Members very little satisfaction indeed. According to the statement of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert), the Prime Minister meant to say that when the large and general question of local government and local taxation came to be considered the case of this particular grant in aid would be considered also. The Prime Minister must be very sanguine indeed if he supposed that the Irish Representatives could gather any great amount of consolation from such a general promise as that. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) and his hon. Friends were very desirous of seeing

a thorough reform of local government in Ireland. They had been waiting for some such reform ever since the very beginning of this Parliament; and they would not be at all displeased if, when the future arrangements of the Session were announced, a Bill for the reform of local government in Ireland took its place amongst the proposals of the Government. So far so good; but surely this was a very small part of the general question of local government. The question of local government in Ireland was a very large question indeed, and he was afraid that the two right hon. and learned Gentlemen (Mr. Gibson and Mr. Plunket) who had given such strong support to the proposal in respect to this small reform would not be found amongst the supporters of the larger reform. He was afraid that any such proposal propounded by Her Majesty's Government would receive a considerable amount of opposition from hon. Gentlemen above the Gangway; it would, indeed, be by a stroke of singular good fortune if the Government succeeded in getting such a measure passed during the present Session of Parliament. To postpone this question until the larger one of local government was considered was practically to postpone this grant in aid to Ireland until the next Parliament. Looking at all the facts of the case, and at the moribund condition of the present Parliament, he feared that any hope of getting such a large reform as local government in Ireland passed that Session was very remote. He hoped the next speaker from the Treasury Bench—and he assumed there would be another speaker—would assure the Committee that this question would receive immediate consideration. That was the demand of the Irish Members. No one needed to be at great pains to see the monstrous injustice of giving large rates in aid to rich countries like England and Scotland, and leaving Ireland out in the cold. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) had referred to the sum contributed by Ireland to the Imperial Revenue. He assured the hon. Gentleman that the comparison between the amount of taxation contributed by Ireland to the Imperial Exchequer and the amount contributed by other parts of the Kingdom was one on which Irish Members would enter with the greatest courage, for they were firmly convinced that any fair and impartial comparison of the contributions of the Three Kingdoms would show that Ireland contributed not less, but far more, than her due share of the general taxation of the Kingdom. He had no desire to enter into that subject now; but he might state that in the case of whiskey, for instance, Ireland was far more heavily and disproportionately taxed than England. The point now under consideration was that the two richer countries received grants in aid of local taxation, while the poorer country did not. That was a monstrous injustice, which ought not to be tolerated a moment longer than was necessary.

MR. TREVELYAN said, that the hon. Members who were present when the Prime Minister made his statement would admit it was extremely difficult for anyone upon the Treasury Bench to add to that statement. It would be conceded that the right hon. Gentleman said the very utmost which the situation justified him in saying. ["He did not say anything."] Yes, the right hon. Gentleman said something; and from the account which he (Mr. Trevelyan) had heard, both privately on the Treasury Bench and through the speeches of hon. Gentlemen and the speech of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert), he gathered that the Prime Minister said all that he thought safe under the circumstances. In saying anything more he would have shown an indiscretion of which he was quite incapable. This was a question which had been started for the first time. [MR. HEALY: No, no; nor the second time.] It was a question which had been started, not on its own merits, but by way of objection to two Estimates laid before the House for the first time. [MR. HEALY: What other way have we?] He did not complain, by any means, of the way in which it had been started; but it having been started under such circumstances, the point was what amount of response it was possible to give to it. The response of the Prime Minister was to the effect that the question would be considered as one of the items of account when the whole matter of local taxation came before the attention of the Executive. It was impossible to go further than that. He (Mr. Trevelyan) certainly could go no

further, except to say that all the arguments which had been used since the Prime Minister left the House should be brought before the right hon. Gentleman's notice. He would personally engage himself to urge the right hon. Gentleman to take the matter into immediate consideration. He objected to go deeper into the matter, because, if he did, he should at once embark upon controversies that were not unfamiliar to hon. Members of the House, both with regard to the incidence of taxation in Ireland, as compared with other parts of the United Kingdom, and with regard to contributions, direct in the shape of grants and indirect in the shape of advantageous loans, which Ireland received, but which other parts of the Kingdom did not receive. Let him take the single instance of loans to Irish farmers. The argument the hon. Member had used on the subject differed from those which reached the ear of the Prime Minister, and should be brought before his right hon. Friend, who would be urged to give the question a broad and comprehensive consideration of a nature which would enable him to make a statement on the subject at the very earliest opportunity. More than that it was impossible for any Member of the Government to say at that moment; and, as hon. Members were well aware, it was impossible for the Prime Minister to say more. Under those circumstances, he earnestly trusted that the Committee would allow the Vote to be taken, and enable them to get on with those which, directly or indirectly, concerned Ireland.

MR. WARTON said, that hon. Members had extended the scope of the debate by introducing a sort of comparison between the local taxation of Great Britain and Ireland. Now, it was not a question of the comparative local taxation between the two countries, but a question between the State and the locality. It was a question between the public, as an entire body, and a smaller body of the people on whom the taxation really fell; and the reason why the question arose at all was that the public, as a body, had a user of the roads which was not confined to those who dwelt in the locality. It seemed perfectly fair to him that the State should recognize that fact, and should make a contribution out of the Imperial funds in aid of the local rates. It was, therefore, not a question between England and Ireland, but one between the State and, the locality; and that being so, there was no reason why the State should do one thing in England and another thing in Ireland, or why it should do more in Cornwall or Yorkshire than in any of the Irish counties. It was unjust to deprive a certain number of localities, because they happened to be situated in Ireland, of the right to relief in regard to local taxation, which in Ireland pressed so severely on the occupiers of land. The Committee had been much impressed by the magnificence of the language of the Prime Minister; but, after all, it did not amount to very much. They were all fond of putting forward some grand scheme which would embrace all the areas of local taxation with all their complexity—some grand telescopic plan blinding in its results when seen through a kaleidoscope, but when calmly contemplated through an ordinary medium discovered to be nothing more than a gorgeous vision. He hoped they would all remain Members of the House until that prospect was realized, and he thought they would have a pretty long enjoyment of their seats. He only hoped that he might live to see the day when this grand scheme would come off. He was afraid, however, that it never would be realized either in this or the next Parliament. The earlier days of the coming Parliament would be very much occupied in considering Constitutional questions and the position of Parliament itself; and, after those questions were disposed of, it would be found that there were a great number of new Members, all of whom would have their own ideas, and there would be very little prospect of this grand scheme of local government taxation being carried out.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must remind the hon. and learned Member that he is travelling from the Question before the Committee, which is really a Vote in aid of the maintenance of roads.

MR. WARTON begged the hon. Gentleman's pardon; but he had been led astray by the almost impossibility of rigidly adhering to the text. As they all knew, a sermon very often differed from the text. The question was really one of granting relief to Ireland. They were all agreed that the

relief asked for ought to be granted, and the only question was whether it should be immediate or prospective; but after the warning he had received he would not touch upon that question further. He ventured to think that this was the Parliament in which the relief should be granted. At any rate, something should be done quickly, for the purpose of remedying an injustice which the Government themselves admitted was only to be continued temporarily.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR remarked that the Committee were placed in an extraordinary position. The Irish Members were asked to consent to the taxation of their own constituents for the benefit of England and Scotland. Every single Member who had spoken, as the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin had pointed out, had spoken in one voice with regard to the sense of the House about an injustice which was recognized by the Conservative and Liberal Members alike. Even upon the Treasury Bench there was an admission of the injustice, and, that admission having been made, the Committee were quietly asked still to vote the money without any further discussion, so that they might get on, as the Chancellor of the Duchy suggested, with the other Votes. The right hon. Gentleman had not the advantage, as he had himself admitted, of hearing the remarks of the Prime Minister; and he was also under the disadvantage of not having heard the two previous discussions of the question before the Committee of Supply last year and the year before. The very same arguments and the same objections urged that night had on both of those occasions been brought under the notice of the Committee of Supply, and then, as now, the answer was that this was only to be a temporary charge, and that as soon as the general question of local expenditure and local government could be dealt with, as it would be in the near future, the difficulty would be removed. That was exactly what had been repeated by the Prime Minister that night. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy said—"Oh, yes; the Prime Minister did say something. He said a great deal; but he did not go beyond a certain point, and he exercised a wise discretion in the matter." Now, it seemed to him (Mr. A. O'Connor) that the Chancellor of the Duchy had exercised a wise discretion also; because, although towards the end of his remarks he said that he would urge upon the Prime Minister that the question should receive immediate consideration, he gave the Committee clearly to understand what his own general bias in the matter was—namely, that Ireland had counter-advantages to be thankful for, and he pointed out that those advantages consisted in the advances made to the owners of property for improvements. It was no satisfaction to the taxpayers of Ireland, in respect of the distribution of the present Vote, to know that other persons could, if they paid interest for them, obtain advances from the Treasury. The present question was not one of loan, but of granting and voting money from the Imperial Exchequer; and the retort he would make upon the question of loans was that any advantage the Irish tenants were able to derive in respect of them was a great deal more than counterbalanced by the manner in which other grants were distributed. In this case England and Scotland got all the money, and Ireland got nothing at all. In the same way, the Army and Navy Votes were distributed almost exclusively for the benefit of the taxpayers of this country, and the Irish taxpayers, who contributed an equal proportion, got merely a nominal share of them. Every Member on both sides of the House who had taken part in the discussion had expressed an opinion against the inequality of the present system. The Prime Minister, although, no doubt, an important Member of the Cabinet, could not be the only man who was authorized to speak on behalf of the Government. Surely, any other Cabinet Minister ought to be able to express his opinion upon a matter of this kind frankly and boldly, and to say whether he would be prepared to give the Irish Members his substantial advocacy when the question came to be discussed, and whether he would, between this and the Report of Supply, ascertain if the Cabinet were not able to take some further step. The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. George Russell) had frankly admitted at that Table that he entertained a strong opinion as to the unfairness of the present system, and, as far as he could gather, that was also the opinion of the Secretary to the

Treasury (Mr. Hibbert). He asked, then, that the Government should let the Committee clearly see what their view was, and it ought not to be too much for a Cabinet Minister to say what he was prepared to do personally—even if not in a position to speak for the Cabinet—when any proposal upon the subject was brought forward. He could not understand why, long ago, the Prime Minister had not been asked to reconsider his utterances. A mere reference to the possible discussion in the next Parliament of the whole question of local taxation and expenditure was simply to laugh at the Committee, and treat them like a parcel of children. In the meantime, the Irish taxpayers were being unduly burdened for the benefit of the rich taxpayers in England and Scotland. The simple statement of a grievance should be enough to secure that the Government would either withdraw the Vote or promise to bring forward some measure to provide equal treatment for the Irish taxpayers to that which was meted out to the taxpayers of England and Scotland. The attitude of the Government, however good their intentions might be, was such that he found he had no other alternative than to divide the Committee against the Vote.

MR. BIGGAR said, that, if he remembered rightly, there had been one Vote in the present Parliament, and others as long ago as 1873, in favour of assistance to local taxation in England. The Vote now before the Committee carried out that principle, and there was no reason to think that the new Parliament would alter the principle of taxation which had been affirmed by two Parliaments. For that reason he thought the Irish Members ought to still press for an extension of the principle of subvention. It was all very well in theory to say that it would be brought forward at some future time; but, unfortunately, although the consideration of this important question had now been promised for a very long time, the introduction of a Bill for establishing local self-government seemed to be as far off as ever. In the absence of any tangible scheme of that kind, what the Irish Members wanted was a temporary measure which would place the Irish people on the same level as those in England and Scotland in regard to this particular question. He did not see upon what grounds the Government could refuse such a fair demand. This grant to Ireland, if it were now made, would only continue in existence until the time shadowed forth by the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert), and supported by hon. Members behind him—namely, the time when this assistance to local taxation would be cleared away for ever. But, until that time came, it was only fair and reasonable that Ireland should get her fair share of these Votes. As had been pointed out, in the course of the debate, there were no doubt that several taxes, such as the House Tax and the Carriage Tax, were not paid in Ireland. Now, in regard to the House Tax, if it were laid on in Ireland it would bring in a very small amount of money, because a large proportion of the population were so poorly housed, that no tax could be levied; and in regard to the Carriage Tax, it was levied on a particular class of the people who were well enough off to keep their own carriages, and therefore a large portion of the population either in England or Ireland was not affected. It was only those people who lived in a luxurious way, who were able to drive their own carriages, who paid the Tax, and the Committee had already been told that the collection of the Tax cost seven-eighths of the entire amount raised. The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) had pointed out, as a counterbalancing advantage, that loans were made in Ireland; but he (Mr. Biggar) presumed they were not made unless good security was given for the money advanced. It was not a grant, but a loan, on the condition that the money was repaid to Parliament or the Government; and, on the whole, he thought Parliament had no cause to complain of those loans. The whole case resolved itself into this—whether they ought to be called upon to wait until some time in the future—perhaps the remote future—before they were placed on this footing of equality with the other parts of the Three Kingdoms. He thought the arguments of the Government were no real defence at all. A complete case, showing the inequality of the treatment of Ireland in comparison with that of England and Scotland had been made out; and so far as the loans to the Irish tenants were con-

cerned, it must be remembered that they only benefited a very small number of persons, and not the majority of the whole people. In the county of Down, according to a local paper, there had only been two loans granted in the whole of the county, and it was very rarely indeed that any demand was made upon the Treasury. That argument was, therefore, of the weakest nature, and one which it was hardly worth while for the Chancellor of the Duchy to use. Seeing that the mind and sense of the Committee had been clearly manifested in favour of the contention of the Irish Members, he trusted that the Government would give way.

MR. SEXTON said, the justice of the case of the Irish Members was not denied in any part of the House. It was obvious that it could not be called in question. No Party in that House denied their claim, and there was nothing in the state of Public Business, or in the prospects of the Session, to relieve the Government from the duty of providing relief. The Chancellor of the Duchy (Mr. Trevelyan) had been good enough to promise his personal influence with the Prime Minister; but even that promise did not make the case of Ireland more hopeful, because in making it the right hon. Gentleman had let in some rays of light as to the state of his own mind by hinting that, if it were necessary to go further, something to the disadvantage of Ireland, in reference to this claim, might easily be established. Now, he challenged the right hon. Gentleman either at the present time, or any other, to come to an issue upon that point, and he (Mr. Sexton) would be fully prepared to go into all relative injuries sustained, assistance given, and advantages enjoyed by the Three Kingdoms. The right hon. Gentleman said that loans were given upon beneficial terms to the Irish tenants; but fortunately for themselves the English tenants required no loans. They were generally possessed of some capital, and in that respect they differed from the Irish tenants who were possessed of no capital at all. The English farmers had money enough to enable them to cultivate the land themselves; but in Ireland it was found necessary to assist the tenants on terms which saved the Treasury from loss, and even left a profit. How, then, could the Government talk about their philanthrophy in a case of that kind when they were actually making a profit out of the money granted? Then, again, out of the large number of tenants in Ireland who had applied for loans, but very few indeed had received them. He was afraid that the right hon. Gentleman, in putting forward a plea of that kind, had somewhat lost his grasp of the details of Irish questions, or, if he had not, the observations he had made must be attributed to his ignorance. The only loans which had been granted on advantageous terms were those which had been granted to the landlords. Something like £150,000 had been lent to the tenants at a good rate of interest; but more than £1,000,000 had been lent to the landlords at 1 per cent, and there was not an impecunious landlord who had not taken advantage of that circumstance. The right hon. Gentleman remarked that the idea of the Government was to abolish this Vote altogether. If that was the latent intention of the Government, there was certainly no evidence of it on the surface. How could it be said that it was intended to abolish the Vote, in face of the fact that the amount of the grant itself was increasing year by year? It might have been thought that the Government would desire to emphasize the fact of the withdrawal of the Vote by gradually reducing it year by year. Last year Scotland got £25,000, and this year it was proposed to give her £35,000, while to England, which received £100,000 last year, it was now proposed to grant £215,000. If that was to be taken as an exhibition of the tendency to abolish these grants, it was the most retrograde and crab-like way of proceeding towards an end which could be conceived.

MR. T. A. DICKSON expressed a hope that the Government would meet the case which had been put before them frankly, and that they would, that Session, redress the inequality. Scotland and England, during the last three years, had received in aid of local taxation a sum of £700,000, while Ireland had received nothing. There was no reason whatever why Ireland should be treated in a different way from England and Scotland. All he had to say was, that if the question was allowed to stand over for the Reformed Parliament, Ireland would never receive a single 1*d.* of the

money, because, no doubt, the tendency of future legislation would be to abolish these subventions. He therefore asked the Government why they refused that year to redress the inequality? He would suggest that the Vote should be postponed until a later hour in the evening, in order to give time for the Members of the Government on the Front Bench to announce something more reassuring in regard to their policy.

MR. DEASY said, he hoped the suggestion which had been thrown out by the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson) would be accepted by the Government. He was sure that its acceptance would save time rather than otherwise. It was quite plain that if the debate closed without having the views of the Prime Minister upon the subject, it would be necessary to raise the question again upon the Report stage of the Estimates when, in all probability, the discussion would occupy a longer time than if it were settled to-night. So long as Scotland was so strongly represented in the Cabinet by an hon. Gentleman who possessed the sympathy of the great majority of his fellow-countrymen, the House would be afraid to resist any claim that the Scotch Members put forward. The Irish popular Party had no such Representative, and the Government, therefore, treated them in an entirely different manner. The hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) could not have been present during the early part of the discussion, or he would have heard the arguments the Irish Members urged in support of their claim. No doubt the Income Tax was much less in Ireland than in England and Scotland; but it was right to remember that the manufacturing industries in that country were not in a flourishing condition, and that while there were large coal and iron mines in England and Scotland, in Ireland the people were entirely dependent upon agricultural pursuits. The late Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant (Mr. Trevelyan) alleged that it was no injustice to Ireland to place this tax upon the farmers of that country, because the Government were in the habit of granting loans to them; but the profit made in consequence of those loans went into the pocket of the landlords, and did not benefit the tenant at all. Even under the Land Act the Commissioners had confiscated all the improvements effected through those loans; and the result was that the tenants were actually in a worse state than if no loans had been granted to them. He was rather inclined to think that the Irish farmers would have been better off if not 1*s.* in the shape of a loan had been given to them for the last 10 or 20 years. He was further of opinion that, owing to the way in which the Land Commissioners had proceeded, it would be impossible to settle the Land Question until the people of the country took a determined stand. ["Question!"] He might be out of Order in raising that question, but he would not have referred to it if it had not been for the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy; and he would simply say that he saw no excuse for the course taken by the Government in refusing, that Session, to grant a Supplementary Estimate in aid of local taxation in Ireland. He could not believe that such a proposition would meet with any opposition from any section of the House. They were often told by the Government that they could not ask for Supplementary Estimates because certain Gentlemen strongly objected to them; and yet they never hesitated about bringing in Bill after Bill, and carrying Money Votes, to which Irish Members were strongly opposed. The Government were now asked for an Estimate in regard to which the Committee were all united; and although it would only occupy a very short time to dispose of, the Government objected. They put the Irish Members off by saying that the new Parliament would be able to make provision in some general measure for all that the people of Ireland demanded. But it might happen that the Liberal Party would not be in Office in the new Parliament, and that they might have changed sides with the Opposition; and the consequence might be that the next Parliament would be allowed to go by, just as this had gone by, without remedying the injustice complained of. So long as he could remember he had heard of promises made by successive English Governments to introduce a large measure of local government reform, and yet they seemed to be as far off as they were 10 or 15 years ago. He did not think the Government were really

serious in offering this. He thought their real motive in not acceding to the views of the Irish Members was that they were not inclined to do justice to Ireland. Of course, they did not avow that intention openly; but it was perfectly obvious, to those who had watched their proceedings night after night, that they had no intention of doing justice. No doubt, they had passed certain Acts for the benefit of that country; but they had not passed them as Acts of justice to Ireland, but simply because hon. Members on those Benches made it impossible for them to refuse. In the next Parliament the Irish Members would probably have an opportunity of getting their views still better known; but that was no reason why the Government should rob Ireland of £40,000 in the meantime, and compel the poor taxpayers of the country to maintain their own roads unaided by the State, while they contributed towards the maintenance of those in England and Scotland. He saw that the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Childers) was now in his place, and he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would give the Committee his opinion and that he would endeavour to induce the Prime Minister to bring in such a Bill as would meet the demands of Irish Members. He was certain there would be no desire or disposition, in any part of the House, to obstruct such a measure. The Chancellor of the Duchy (Mr. Trevelyan) had told the Committee that he would place the views of the Irish Members before the Prime Minister; but the right hon. Gentleman had carefully abstained from stating what his own opinion on the subject was. He was inclined to believe that the right hon. Gentleman had given no opinion, because he was rather against the claim of Ireland to receive a sum out of the Imperial Exchequer in aid of local taxation. It was unfortunate that the people of Ireland, who were paying in some cases rates and taxes to the amount of 10*s.* in the pound, should be obliged to contribute £40,000 for the maintenance of highways in England and Scotland. The proposal was made two years ago that Scotland should receive a portion of the grant, and that proposal was accepted by the Government, and there was no reason why Ireland should not be included. The Government acknowledged that they were right in asking for relief, and only said that the question would be dealt with in the new Parliament amongst the first measures to be taken into consideration, or else there would be a total abolition of grants to England and Scotland. That, however, was no reason why, between this time and the new Parliament, the present injustice, in the case of Ireland should be continued. If the Government acknowledged that the Irish Members were right now, surely they ought to give them back the amount they had contributed towards the maintenance of highways in England and Scotland. It would be a very easy matter to give them what they asked. The Government did not hesitate to spend £100,000 in additional police in Ireland, and they would not hesitate to spend millions to-morrow if they were wanted in order to uphold the power of the landlords in Ireland, or to give annoyance to the Irish people. He did not see, therefore, while the fairness of their demand was acknowledged by everybody who had spoken in the debate except by the Chancellor of the Duchy, why even at that hour they should not adjourn the debate until they could have the views of the Prime Minister on the subject, or a promise that a Supplementary Estimate would be introduced.

DR. LYONS concurred with the observations which had fallen from his hon. Friend the Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson); and he trusted that the Government would not consider it worth their while to persevere in the attitude they had taken up, but that they would find it possible, by bringing in a short Supplementary Estimate, to redress the injustice proposed to be done to Ireland in the matter. It was conceded, on all hands, that the days of this grant were numbered, and that they would hear very little more about it. Under those circumstances, was it worth while to continue what was practically a grievance and a cause of complaint in Ireland —namely, that a grant of such a considerable amount should be paid to England and Scotland, and that nothing should be given to Ireland for the same purpose? As far as he understood, it was not proposed to ask the Government to refund what would be a considerable sum of money if totalled up; but it would be a satisfactory settlement of the

question to Ireland if the amount asked for that year were made to include a grant in equal proportion to Ireland. He had said that he presumed the days of grants in aid of those rates were numbered, and that the Government were looking forward to an early day for the introduction of a new system of local rating under local supervision and management in Ireland such as partially existed already in this country under much less expensive arrangements than those which were adopted in the case of Ireland. He had hoped that the time for the consideration of that subject would have arrived long before this; and last year, with the assistance of the Foreign Office, he had been able to procure some exceedingly valuable information from a country with which they were now, unfortunately, not upon the most pleasant terms. In the Returns which had been laid upon the Table the whole of this subject was minutely gone into, and details were fully supplied by the Embassy at St. Petersburg in reference to the Russian system of local administration. In those Returns the Committee would find much to assist them in the consideration of the subject. He trusted that in the very small shape in which the matter now stood the Treasury Bench would be able to see their way to do something to carry out the views which had been so generally expressed by the Committee.

MR. P. J. POWER said, that to this most reasonable proposal of his hon. Friend's the Government had opposed an objection of a very unreasonable kind. That proposal had been supported by a number of hon. Gentlemen—by the two right hon. and learned Members for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket and Mr. Gibson), who, as a rule, dissented from proposals made on those Benches; by the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson), and by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Dublin (Dr. Lyons). Again, not only was it supported by Irish Members of all shades of political opinion, but it had also received the support of Scotch Members. The hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) had, he believed, spoken more than once upon the subject. He was bound to say that the manner in which Her Majesty's Government had received the almost unanimous opinion of the Committee on that occasion was most disappointing. They had not held out the least hope that they would remedy the grievance complained of; they merely asked Members to postpone the question for two or three years in view of the introduction of legislation that would be introduced to deal with the entire question. A more unsatisfactory proposition could not have been made to hon. Members who raised this question. Everyone knew the difficulty of forecasting political matters; and from the manner in which legislation of the kind proceeded as a rule, they might take it for granted that nothing would be done in the matter for several years; in other words, it was not competent for this Parliament to speak the mind of a future Parliament; and therefore, if the Government adhered to their position in reference to this question, it was obvious that the grievance would continue. He did not think there could be a greater example of unfairness than the way in which Ireland was treated in respect of those subventions. Here was a case in which England and Scotland received from Imperial sources a large grant in aid of the maintenance of roads. Both England and Scotland were rich countries; but Ireland, the poorest of the Three Kingdoms, received nothing at all. In fact, the hon. Member for the City of Dublin (Dr. Lyons) had put the case in a nutshell when he said that on this question not only ought they to legislate for the future, but make some restitution for the past. It was clear that for many years England and Scotland had been receiving considerable sums from the public purse, while Ireland had received nothing. The proposition of legislation on the subject was entirely vague; and even the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, with all his knowledge of Parliamentary life, was not in a position to promise that this Government or its successor would be able to deal with the matter. His hon. Friend the Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar), certainly a competent judge of the subject, was of opinion that considerable time would elapse before Parliament would be in a position to do so. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) had said he would convey to the Prime Minister the views which had been expressed in the Committee in his

absence; and in saying that he thought the right hon. Gentleman had led them to believe that his own opinion was certainly not favourable to the view taken by hon. Members on that side of the House. The right hon. Gentleman had in the course of his remarks spoken of the great advantages which farmers had in Ireland in respect of Government loans; he said that money was advanced to tenant farmers for the improvement of their holdings, which was not the case in England and Scotland, and that they in Ireland had exceptional advantages. It was certainly peculiar that those advantages, if they existed, should not be availed of; but there were some reasons which, perhaps, accounted for that, and amongst them he would point to the very cumbersome and unsatisfactory manner in which the business was worked. On that point he had some personal feeling, because he had lately induced two farmers to apply for loans for the improvement of their holdings. One farmer applied for a loan of £600 or £700.

THE CHAIRMAN said, the hon. Member was not entitled to refer to the question of loans in Ireland on this Vote. It was not in any way germane to the subject before the Committee.

MR. P. J. POWER said, he of course submitted to the ruling of the Chairman. He was pointing out that one of the exceptional advantages referred to by the right hon. Gentleman as existing for the Irish people had no existence at all. If they were not to have legislation on this subject for some years, this question had to be answered. Was this great injustice towards Ireland to continue in the meantime? In his opinion, nothing could be easier than for the Government to fall in with the unanimous feeling which had been expressed in the Committee, and to promise to bring in a Supplementary Vote which would remove the injustice complained of. He did not suppose there was any necessity to bring in a Bill to deal with the subject; and the course he had suggested would remove from the minds of the people of Ireland the opinion that they were suffering in this matter, as in many others, a great injustice. At any rate, he thought that the Government, bearing in mind the view that had been expressed by Members in all quarters of the House, should, as had been suggested by the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson), postpone their decision until they had consulted with the Prime Minister and others whom they might find it necessary to consult, especially as that reasonable proposition had been put forward by one of their staunch supporters.

MR. VILLIERS STUART said, it seemed to him that Irish Members could not consistently allow this Vote to pass without a distinct and definite assurance on the part of the Government that the injustice which admittedly existed in this case should be remedied as far as possible without delay. If a division were taken he should have no other course open to him that to add his protest against the continuance of this inequality as between the three countries, by going into the Lobby against the Vote now under consideration. He hoped Her Majesty's Government would see their way to give the desired assurance; and this was emphatically one of those cases in which "where there's a will there's a way." If the enormous sum of £11,000,000 could be granted so easily by Parliament for warlike purposes, surely the very modest sum that would remove the admitted grievance complained of could be provided by means of a Supplementary Estimate. If the Members of Her Majesty's Government then present did not feel justified in giving the assurance asked for without consulting their Colleagues, he hoped they would postpone the Vote. He did not think that details very much signified at the moment; but he might mention that a number of the roads in Ireland were made for military purposes. In his own county (Waterford) there was a military road which ran from one end of it to the other, and the ratepayers had to contribute very heavily towards its maintenance. There were several parallel roads by which the local traffic could be carried on; nevertheless they had to pay for the maintenance of the military road referred to; and if the aggregate sum contributed since its first construction towards that road by the poorer classes in the county were ascertained it would be found to amount to an enormous sum. Looking at all the circumstances, he said that an injustice had been shown to exist, and that it ought to be removed.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, the position in which the Committee stood at that moment recalled the story of the farmer who was drinking at the house of his landlord some splendid wine; on being asked his opinion of it, he said—"It's very good, but we seem to go no for'arder." If the right hon. Gentleman would postpone the Vote until the Prime Minister had been consulted, he would save the Committee a great deal of time. It seemed to him that Irish Members must continue to press the Government until they forced upon them their conviction in this matter. Exactly the same arguments, the same prospects, and the same hopes were before them as had been put forward on previous occasions by Her Majesty's Government in replying to the just and reasonable representations of hon. Members on those Benches with respect to the great and unjust inequalities existing as between Ireland and the other portions of the Kingdom in the matter of those grants in aid of the maintenance of roads. They were too familiarized with the way in which those who represented Her Majesty's Government at that moment on the Treasury Bench had dealt with this question to attach any weight to the old arguments they had re-introduced into the discussion of this question; and therefore he suggested that they "got no for'arder." He was glad to see on the Treasury Bench an hon. Gentleman who probably was as well acquainted with this question as any Member of that House, and on that occasion he should endeavour to take the hon. Gentleman along with him while he went over the well-marked track of his previous speeches on this question. When his hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) got up and raised this question, the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert) said, in the course of his remarks, which referred to the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister on the subject of grants in aid of the cost and maintenance of public roads in Ireland, that the right hon. Gentleman had not undertaken to deal with that point singly, but that the right hon. Gentleman had stated that this question would have to be considered in connection with the larger questions of local government and local taxation—that, in other words, while the Prime Minister admitted the injustice of the particular grievance, he was obliged to postpone the remedy that ought to be applied to that injustice until the larger and more general question had been dealt with by Parliament. Now, he did not know whether the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury really thought hon. Members from Ireland on those Benches so ingenuous that they would take that statement of his as a sufficient answer to the complaint they had put forward with regard to this long-standing injustice on the present occasion; because if that were the view of the hon. Gentleman, and if it were correct, hon. Members on those Benches would not only be committing the original sin of helpless Parliamentary imbecility, but they would have proved themselves to be utterly unteachable by all the lessons that had been placed before them, and by the abundant debates which had already taken place on this subject. He would take up the debate of 1883 on the question—it might be called one of the milestones along the road traversed by the hon. Gentleman—and he found that in the course of that debate the right hon. Gentleman now the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) said that he thought the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) was by no means alone in this matter; and in answer to the hon. Member for Wolverhampton and the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) he said that he could only assure the Committee that the arrangement now existing must be looked upon as being in one sense of a temporary character. How often had they listened to that explanation of the injustice complained of from hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench? The arrangement was of a temporary character in 1883; it was so in 1884; they were told that it was of a temporary character now in 1885; and if they lived long enough and were Members of Parliament in 1895, they would, if the Government were allowed to deal with the matter as they had done hitherto year after year, find that it was a temporary grant then. So much as to the question of its being a temporary grant. Then he looked to the debate that took place upon the grants in aid on the 5th of June, 1885. His hon.

Friend the Member for Queen's County (Mr. A. O'Connor) had raised the question some time before; and on the occasion referred to, in answer to that, the hon. Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney), then Secretary to the Treasury, said that the arrangement "was a temporary one." Again it was called a temporary scheme; but there was no sign whatever that he could discover of its ceasing to be practically a permanent arrangement. Thus, in spite of this being a temporary arrangement, the disappointment of the Irish people was to continue; and while the money voted by Parliament for the grant in aid of the maintenance of roads was to go to England and Scotland year after year, Ireland was not to get any portion of it. Then he came to the second argument, that the settlement of this question and the removal of this injustice was to be part of a larger scheme; and in entering upon the consideration of that argument he would venture to remark that it was just as truthful as the argument drawn from the "temporary character of the grant." The right hon. Gentleman said the subject was one that must be dealt with when the subject of local taxation was examined. He hoped that the matter would come before the House at an early period; and whenever the question was considered it must be dealt with as one of local finance, and as one affecting the relations between the Imperial and local funds. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) and the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) were simple enough to take these words as meaning something, and as foreshadowing legislation promptly to be introduced for dealing with the question. The hon. Member for Bradford said he was glad that the right hon. Gentleman had informed the Committee that the Vote was only temporary, and that its removal from the Estimates was only awaiting the settlement of the larger question of local government and local finance. That was in the month of May, 1883. The statement was made at a time when the Government had before them two or three years of Parliamentary life or Ministerial existence. That promise of dealing with the whole question of local government and local taxation had never been carried out up to the present moment, although, as he had shown, it was made at a time when it would have been easier of accomplishment by the Government; and now Irish Members were asked again to be satisfied with the same assurance, when the existence of the present Parliament would come to an end within three or four months. He said—and he was convinced his observations would be confirmed by hon. Members—that there never was a more absurd appeal than that made to any body of men. He passed on to the 5th of June, 1884, on which date their venerable friend the Local Government and Taxation Bill reappeared. The Secretary to the Treasury then said that the Government would have to settle this question of local government and taxation. Here, again, they had the same promise, which had been given over and over again, that this matter would be dealt with in a larger scheme. Let the Committee consider the question as to whether the Government ought to put forward this same argument now, and whether hon. Members could receive it seriously—if the Government making this promise in 1883 were unable to give effect to it; if the Government repeating that promise in June, 1884, with respect to a Local Government Bill were unable to carry out that promise, under what pretext could they expect to redeem it now? He did not wish to say anything disrespectful of the present Parliament; but if he were called upon to describe it, he should say that it had about it the close and disturbing fumes of approaching dissolution. The right hon. Gentleman must know that it had all the characteristics of dissolution about it—if one only listened, he could hear the death rattle in it. And in the face of that Irish Members were told that they were to expect the matter to be dealt with in a large and comprehensive scheme of local government and local taxation. Why, he repeated that it was trifling with hon. Members to ask them to postpone the settlement of this question until the time when that oft-promised measure should be before the House; and, therefore, he hoped that his hon. Friend would persevere, and press this question on the Committee, who he hoped would not allow the Vote to pass until they had from the Government a more satisfactory statement than they had received, for certainly, as far as they had gone, the reply from the

Treasury Bench was by no means of a satisfactory character. It was true that the Secretary to the Treasury said that those Votes would probably be discontinued altogether. But that argument was a very old one, as he had shown, and it had been put forward over and over again. Hon. Members for Ireland saw no chance of those Votes being discontinued; and he was convinced that if he were returned as a Member of the next Parliament he should find that four or five years hence they would have exactly the same state of things to deal with. Therefore, in view of the future, he should urge his hon. Friends to do all that lay in their power on that occasion towards putting an end to a long-standing grievance by continuing to press this question upon the Government.

Colonel O'BEIRNE said, he wished to endorse what had been said by hon. Members opposite and in other quarters of the House with reference to this Vote. It was, in his opinion, simply a monstrous injustice that England and Scotland should receive large sums from the Imperial Exchequer toward the cost and maintenance of roads, while the Irish people were left to bear the whole cost themselves. He was glad to be present on that occasion to vote against this grant.

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN said, in the discussion of this question Irish Members were in the peculiar position of having an admitted grievance. He remarked upon that circumstance, because it was a very unusual thing for hon. Members on those Benches to put forward a grievance on behalf of the people of Ireland which received any real attention at the hands of Her Majesty's Government. But here was a case the justice of which was admitted years ago. Notwithstanding that admission, the grievance from which the people of Ireland were suffering had been allowed to exist and to continue year after year. He thought that hon. Members on those Benches had reason to congratulate themselves that this complaint of theirs was not, as was most frequently the case, called by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench a sentimental grievance. They were often charged with placing great weight from time to time on what Her Majesty's Government were pleased to style their "sentimental grievances." The present complaint had certainly nothing of that character about it; it was, indeed, a very practical grievance, affecting the pockets of the Irish people, and one which largely rested on the promises given on many occasions by Her Majesty's Government. Now, the question raised upon this Vote in aid of the maintenance of disturnpiked roads in Scotland involved the question also of the undue taxation of the Irish people to the amount of £40,000 per annum. Now, that amount was probably looked upon by the two countries—England and Ireland—in different lights—that was to say, in the estimation of the British Government and people the sum of £40,000 per annum was a very small matter; but in the estimation of the Irish people it was a very considerable matter. The reason of that was that the people of Ireland were a poor people as compared with the English people; and, moreover, they had been long suffering from the burden of an undue and unfair amount of Imperial taxation, besides the inequality which his hon. Friends were now urging upon Her Majesty's Government. When from time to time hon. Members on those Benches claimed any relief on that score in the House of Commons; whenever they made a claim for any grant for useful purposes in Ireland, they were met by the arguments that had been referred to, and were, moreover, told that they were once again wanting to dip their hands into the pocket of the British taxpayer. Irish Members, however, took an opposite view of the matter; they contended, on the contrary, that in financial affairs as between the two countries the British taxpayer had very much the best of it, and that this British taxpayer, with all his great professions and allegations of generosity towards Ireland, had his hands constantly in the pockets of the Irish people, and filched therefrom a considerable amount of undue taxation. He and his hon. Friends challenged discussion and investigation into the facts of the case. They had done so for years; and it was well known that whenever inquiry had been instituted into the circumstances the truth of their allegations had been abundantly established. He would remind the Committee that it was distinctly set forth in the Report of a

Select Committee of that House that the taxation of Ireland was out of all proportion to the Revenues of the country. Moreover, it had been stated on high financial authority, and it had been adopted in the Report of the Select Committee to which he referred, that in the matter of Imperial taxation England was at once the lightest and the heaviest taxed country in the world—it was the heaviest in respect of the gross amount raised from the people, and it was the lightest in respect of the ability of the people to bear that taxation. But the case was entirely different as regarded Ireland. Notwithstanding that Ireland was oppressed and unduly taxed, she paid a larger proportion out of the Revenues of the country than was paid by the English people. That fact had been established, and the matter was beyond all dispute. Nothing could be more unfair—he might say nothing could be more disgraceful—than for an admittedly wealthy country like England, along with all the other grievences and oppressions which she inflicted on the Irish people, to wrong her in a matter of pounds, shillings, and pence. What could be more unfair, on the face of the matter, than that the Irish people should be denied the same amount of relief of local taxation which was accorded to England and Scotland, and, moreover, that the Irish people should have to pay a share of the relief of local taxation accorded to England and Scotland? They were put off with the allegation that some reform of the whole question of local government was intended. It was said it was just as well they should wait until they saw what reform was effected. But it must be borne in mind that years were rolling on, and that in the meantime the Irish people were paying £40,000 per annum in excess of right and justice; and that, looking to the pressure of important questions of home and foreign politics, there was no guarantee whatever that the promised relief in this matter was at all near at hand, at all within measureable distance. The present Parliament and the next Parliament were likely to have their hands very full; and it was doubted very much whether they would concern themselves with questions which most intimately affected the fortunes and the interests of the Irish people. The Irish Members would be very glad if Parliament would so concern themselves; but at all events they had a claim, and a very strong claim, for immediate redress and reform in this particular matter. He thought it was neither fair, nor generous, nor just on the part of the Government that the present system—which amounted to nothing less than robbery of the Irish people—should be allowed to go on year after year, and that the Representatives of Ireland should be put off with such flimsy pretences as had been adduced by the Government that evening. The Irish people had a claim not merely to relief in the future, but, if they pressed the thing to the utmost, they had a claim for the re-imbursement to them of the large amount that had been unfairly abstracted from them under this particular head for years past. The fact was undenied, the grievance was admitted, the wrong was patent; it was a practical matter, a pressing matter, a matter of £40,000 per annum to the poor people of Ireland. That unjust abstraction of £40,000 a-year had been going on for many years; but, instead of making a claim that all the money wrongfully withheld from their people should be refunded, the Irish Members merely asked that they should from the present get the relief to which they were justly entitled. They certainly could not assent to the passing of this Vote. They were bound to oppose it and divide against it. Of course, they would be defeated in the Lobby; but he asked the Government if truth, right, and justice were not to prevail? Had they no consideration for the facts and the truth of the case, irrespective of their majority in the House of Commons? Did a majority make right wrong, or wrong right? Did the majority which the Government could command in the Lobby change the aspect of the question by one iota? Did it justify them in placing this admittedly unfair impost on the Irish people? He maintained it did not—the fact that he and his hon. Friends would be outnumbered in the division did not affect the principle involved. If right hon. Gentlemen opposite who represented the Government wanted to figure before the three countries as honourable men, as reasonable men, as upright men, they should, instead of putting the Irish Members off with empty phrases and worthless promises in a matter of this

kind, agree to let right and justice be done. They should act upon that principle, which was the best, and in the end the cheapest, whether they were dealing with an Irish or any other question.

MR. BIGGAR said, that the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert) knew very well that he (Mr. Biggar) would not advocate any expenditure of public money unless he thought it necessary. He approved of the relief in question being given to Ireland; but the very next Vote he should feel it his duty to oppose, for the simple reason that the money was absolutely thrown away. In his opinion, the Executive Government very often assented to money being given for unworthy objects, while they refused grants for purposes of a beneficial character. Earlier in the debate it was stated that part of this Scotch Vote went to places where no turnpikes had existed. When the Turnpike Votes were first granted, the theory was that they amounted to compensation for what might be called vested interests —compensation to those people who in times past had kept up the roads. It was particularly hard upon the Irish people that they should get no part of the public money, because they had not only made the main roads through the different counties, but supported them out of the public rates. It had been pointed out that the turnpikes in Ireland were abolished 30 years ago. If that was so, the local ratepayers had been keeping the roads in order during the whole of that time. In some counties where turnpikes did not exist the roads were made, in the first instance, by the ratepayers, and afterwards maintained by them. For those reasons he thought the Government ought to give way upon this question, and thus do justice. If the Government would take the advice of the Irish Members with regard to the grants of public money made with the intention of being expended in Ireland, they could effect a very much greater saving than £40,000, which was all he and his hon. Friends asked. All they asked was that simple justice should be done to Ireland with regard to the question of local taxation. They need not go into the question of general taxation, though, of course, if they did, the Irish Members would be quite prepared to defend their position, and to show that instead of paying too little to the Revenue of the country Ireland paid more than its share. That, however, was beside the question of subventions in mitigation of local rates. The House had decided, over and over again, that assistance should be given to local rates in respect of disturnpiked roads in Scotland and England. All that was now asked was that the same assistance should be given in Ireland. The proposition made by his hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), that the Government should undertake to bring in a Supplementary Estimate which would enable them to give to Ireland in the future the same relief given to England and Scotland, was a very reasonable and fair proposition, and one against which no valid argument had been advanced.

MR. HIBBERT said, that if the three countries stood upon an equality in point of taxation he should have thought that the Irish Members had shown a fair grievance. But the three countries did not stand upon an equality. Ireland was not taxed to the same extent as England or Scotland. ["There is only the Carriage Tax!" *and* "Put them on!"] Hon. Members demurred to that statement; but, at the same time, the fact remained that Ireland was not taxed in the same way as England or Scotland. That created the difficulty there was in dealing with this question. In the first place, the House Tax did not apply to Ireland. It might be said that if it were applied to Ireland it would not produce a very large amount. They were all sorry that the generality of tenements in Ireland were of such a character that the House Tax would not yield much revenue. Then there was the Carriage Tax, and the other taxes imposed upon what were called luxuries, which did not apply to Ireland—there was no tax upon the employment of male servants, or upon other luxuries of that kind. When the question of those grants in aid of disturnpiked roads was before the House, there was a proposal made by the then Chancellor of the Exchequer that the Carriage Tax in England and Scotland should be increased in amount, and the reason of that proposal was that the Exchequer should be able to recoup itself. That increased tax would not have applied to Ireland. There were several other taxes not of so large an

amount which did not apply to Ireland. He believed the Income Tax under Schedule A was not levied at so high a rate in Ireland as in England. On those grounds he thought he was fairly justified in saying that the three countries did not stand upon an equality. He was quite prepared to admit that if they had stood upon an equality hon. Gentlemen from Ireland would have been perfectly justified in saying Ireland had not been fairly treated as compared with England and Scotland. The Prime Minister had said that before they could deal with this matter they must consider the whole question of local taxation as affecting England, Ireland, and Scotland. He, therefore, did not think hon. Members were justified in saying that what the Prime Minister stated really amounted to nothing. He (Mr. Hibbert) believed that when the whole question was considered justice would be done to Ireland as well as to other parts of the United Kingdom. He, therefore, appealed to hon. Members from Ireland to allow this Vote to pass, and to trust to the representations which would be made to the Prime Minister by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan), and by himself (Mr. Hibbert), and other hon. Members who had been present during the debate, as to what had occurred. The Government had a duty to do to England and Scotland, and, at the same time, they were desirous of doing justice to Ireland.

MR. HEALY said, the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hibbert) had used very admirable arguments, from his point of view, for getting the Vote passed. But those arguments did not influence the Irish Members in the least. The hon. Gentleman had taunted the Irish people upon the fact that they did not want body servants. Who wanted body servants? The Government might tax body servants as much as they pleased. None of the Nationalist Members ever had body servants, and none of the people they represented employed body servants. Again, the Government were not sparing the peasant class in Ireland if they did not put on the House Tax. Then, it was said, the Irish people did not pay a tax on carriages. Who kept carriages in Ireland? There were not 99 in 100 people in that country who indulged in a carriage, so that it could not be said that the Government were sparing the people of Ireland because they did not put a tax on carriages. Who thanked the Government? The Government might put a tax of £1,000 a-year on a carriage for aught he cared. It would not affect the mass of the people; it would not affect the vast majority of the people who had to pay for the roads; and therefore such arguments as the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hibbert) had advanced were utterly beside the question. The Government might, if they liked, put a tax upon the miserable shanties of Ireland, upon body servants, and upon carriages. Who stopped them doing so? Those were the absurdities to which Members of the House of Commons were treated. These three luxuries, which in no way affected the daily lives of 99-100ths of the people of Ireland, were made an excuse for not giving the people the relief which was given in England and Scotland. Everybody had to pay for the roads; and the fact that that was so, and that people who had carriages got off without paying for them, was used as an excuse why the country should be treated differently to England and Scotland. He really would advise the hon. Gentleman to refrain from indulging in such arguments as he had put forward, unless he wished to figure as an Artemus Ward or a Mark Twain. The contention of the Irish Members was very simple. England was receiving something like £250,000 a-year, and Scotland £30,000 or £40,000 in aid of the roads, while the Irish people were required to support their own roads, and they had not even had the pleasure of deducting half from the landlords, as was the case in respect to the poor's rates. For the last two or three years, he and his hon. Friends had urged on the Government the necessity for redress in this matter; but successive Secretaries to the Treasury, according to their humour, had indulged in the same reasons for not granting it. At the present time the House was voting £11,000,000 for guns and sabres with which to fight Russia; they were spending thousands of pounds upon a railway in the Soudan; but they refused this just claim made on behalf of Ireland. It would be much more to the purpose if, instead of making a railway in the Soudan, the Government were to cut roads in Connaught. If they did that,

they would do something to bring the resources of civilization to the door of their own subjects; and that was one of the reasons why he and his hon. Friends objected to bloated Estimates on the one hand, and niggardly payments on the other. He could not understand why the Irish people should not be allowed to enjoy this relief in common with the people of England. Ireland paid the Government between £7,000,000 and £8,000,000 sterling per annum, and yet it was quite impossible to ascertain what it got in return, owing to the absurd way in which the Estimates were prepared. The Government spent their money in presents to the Ameer of Afghanistan,, and now they were going to war on account of a miserable dunghill in that country, about which no one cared a pin; but they refused to give Ireland £30,000 or £40,000 a-year, which was required to put it on an equality with England and Scotland. One of the curses of Ireland's dealings with England was that they never could get anybody who was actually responsible for the government of the country. When those Estimates came on the Irish Secretary sloped off, and the Solicitor General for Ireland was not in his place. The men who ought to be responsible for those things were not present. At one time the Irish Members had to meet the Secretary to the Treasury, at another time the Solicitor General for Ireland, at another time the Chief Secretary, at another time the Prime Minister, and at another time the Home Secretary. One set of men dealt with them on one set of affairs, and another set of men on another set of affairs; the Irish Members were shifted from one person to another until they really did not know where they stood. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert) suggested earlier in the evening the possibility of meeting this difficulty by the abolition of the Votes for England and Scotland. That was a step which the Irish Members would not view with any satisfaction, because, by taking it, the Government would simply injure the English and Scotch taxpayers without doing the Irish taxpayers any benefit. He and his hon. Friends did not wish to play the part of the dog in the manger; what they preferred to do was to share the Imperial boons with their fellow-subjects in England and Scotland. He hoped the Secretary to the Treasury would see his way to say that this matter would be considered in relation to the contributions of Ireland to the Imperial Exchequer, and to the expenditure which was made in Ireland. If the hon. Gentleman would strike what would really be a Civil Service balance as between England, Scotland, and Ireland, apart from the Military and Constabulary Expenditure, he would find that Ireland was treated most unjustly. Under the circumstances, he trusted the hon. Gentleman would not allow himself to be hampered with the fact that his official superiors were not present in the House. It was quite true that neither the Chancellor of the Exchequer nor the First Lord of the Treasury were present; but, unfortunately, they were never able to get the whole battery of the Treasury Bench present at the same time when Irish questions were under discussion. They withdrew themselves into space, and they only got one person to speak to, and he, however distinguished and intellectual he might be, was always obliged to say—"I must consult my Colleagues." They never got the Cabinet, *en bloc*, on the Front Ministerial Bench, so as to secure an opinion from them. He would ask the Secretary to the Treasury to press this matter on the Government.

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN said, he wished to say a word or two with regard to the question of assessed taxes referred to by the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury. It would be a positive ease to Ireland if those assessed taxes were imposed on that country. Those assessed taxes were a twopenny-halfpenny matter in Ireland; but they were invaluable to the Government as an *ad captandum* argument whenever the question of the relative taxation of the two countries cropped up. They were a very trivial matter indeed, and did not really affect the argument as between the two countries on this question. The wealth of England was 17 times greater than that of Ireland—or was on a recent calculation, and no doubt the disproportion had increased rather than the reverse of late. But instead of England paying 17 parts to one of Imperial taxation it paid only nine parts to one. That was the brief fact of the case, and it was really in no way affected by reference to this small matter of assessed taxes. There were two

or three small changes which might be made which would not, however, touch the body of the Irish people, and which would produce a result hardly worth mentioning. He was astonished to see the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury—whose honesty they all recognized, and whose honour and honesty they all believed in—producing, as an argument at the Table of the House of Commons, this reference to these miserable assessed taxes, when the disparity between the taxation of the two countries was so great as it was at present.

MR. BIGGAR said, he should like to say a word or two.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must remark to the hon. Gentleman before he begins his speech—for I do not wish to interrupt him if I can help it—that this discussion on the Scotch Vote has now been continued for nearly five hours, and that the hon. Member himself has addressed the Committee no less than six times.

MR. BIGGAR said, that very likely that was the case; but he had been obliged to speak so often because the Government would not listen to reason. If they would not listen to reason it was the duty of hon. Members to try and make them do so. He wished to say a word or two with regard to the argument of the Secretary to the Treasury. He had told them that Ireland was too leniently dealt with.

MR. HIBBERT: No; I said it had not been put on an equality with England.

MR. BIGGAR: Well, had not been put on an equality. Ireland was less taxed in regard to the three particular items pointed out than England was. The three items were the tax on male servants, the tax on carriages, and the tax upon houses. Now, if he might make a suggestion to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, before the Budget was introduced, he would recommend that those three taxes should be fully imposed upon Ireland. He (Mr. Biggar) was not arguing that the right hon. Gentleman, if he imposed those three taxes upon Ireland, should be even asked to give the pledge the Irish Members were requesting in regard to the particular Vote they were discussing. The people who would have to pay those taxes were people the majority of the Irish Members did not care about. The majority of the Irish Members spoke on behalf of the great mass of the ratepayers in Ireland, who would not have to pay a single 1*d.* if those three taxes were imposed; so that, in point of fact, the argument of the Government, founded upon those three taxes, was not entitled to the slightest amount of consideration. Then there was another question as to Irish taxation. It was notorious that the principal beverage of the Irish people was whisky and not beer, which was the great drink of the English. It was well known that, according to alcoholic strength, the tax on whisky was much heavier than that on beer, so that the unfortunate people of Ireland had to pay a much larger sum to the country on the alcoholic drinks they used than the English people. The hon. Member's argument, therefore, went for nothing. The Chairman complained that they had spent so much time on this Vote; but whose fault was it? The Front Treasury Bench was to blame for having gone into all sorts of questions which the Irish Members had had no idea of bringing into the consideration of the matter. If the Government had met them fairly, and had said—"You are suffering an injustice, and we will remedy it," there would have been an end to the whole business; but, unfortunately, the Government did not do that. They had instead raised a discussion upon man servants and carriages. With regard to carriages, he had always been of opinion that if a man wanted his business well done it would be very much better to hire a horse and conveyance than keep one of his own. It did not add to his personal dignity so much; but if he wished to travel any distance it was unquestionably better to hire a horse and machine to take him than to use one of his own. This question was not much to the point perhaps, but it had been introduced by the Government. He really would impress on the Government the desirability of laying taxes on those three items. They would by that means do away with the cry of future Secretaries to the Treasury when the Irish Votes came on that Ireland was treated with partiality, and would narrow and lessen the amount of labour the hon. Member (Mr. Hibbert) or his successors had to perform.

MR. PARNELL said, the Irish Members had occupied a considerable time in the discussion of this question, because it was a question of considerable importance to them, involving, as it did, payments by those they represented amounting to £40,000 or £50,000 in aid of English and Scotch rates, whilst those who paid it had no voice in its disposal. As Ireland was a very poor country, inhabited by very poor people, the Irish Members felt that, in view of the very extraordinary attitude of the Government, they would not have done justice to their constituents, or those they represented here, without dwelling at some considerable length—at, perhaps, unusually great length—on the subject. He did not augur from the statements which had been made either by the Prime Minister, the Chancellor of the Duchy, or the Secretary to the Treasury, that they were really going to do a just and fair thing in connection with this matter. They had scarcely attempted to dispute the justice of the claim of the Irish Members. They had scarcely attempted—from the Prime Minister, who had appeared to admit even the justice of the claim, to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy—to bring forward any valid argument against the claim of the Irish Members. There were very few two-wheel or four-wheel carriages in Ireland, consequently the Government had never considered it worth their while to put a tax on those articles of luxury. They were perfectly welcome to put a tax on then to-morrow so far as the great majority of the Irish people were concerned. The Government were attempting to put off this question until the whole question of local government came to be dealt with. The Irish Members could not accept that as a satisfactory answer; and they were bound to say that on this occasion they could not describe their action as anything less than an attempt to rob the Irish people out of a large sum of money every year without giving them any equivalent in return. The Government had not sought to defend the attempt. They admitted that things ought to be equal as between the Three Kingdoms. If they admitted that, why did they not make things equal? They said that, at some future time, they would do it when they came to consider the larger questions. But this little question had been looming before the House for many years, and the Irish Members did not know when it would be considered. Meanwhile this injustice and inequality was going on. Already the Kingdoms of England and Scotland had obtained something like £800,000 as Imperial contribution in aid of local rates, whilst Ireland had not obtained a single 1*d.* He should have thought that a Government, such as that of the Prime Minister, when it had been clearly shown that Ireland was suffering an injustice, would have been only too ready to come forward and say that though it might necessitate a re-arrangement of their finances, yet that they would not allow a single moment to pass by before remedying the inequality. The present case was similar to that involved in the Royal Irish Constabulary Redistribution Bill, which had passed through that House and had reached the other House. An admitted inequality and injustice had been exposed, and the Government had not put forward any valid argument—which even they themselves claimed as valid—against the statements of the Irish Members; therefore he said their consciences certainly ought not to be at ease until they had introduced a Supplementary Estimate for the purpose of remedying this gross inequality.

MR. HIBBERT said, he would only say one word in reply to the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), and it was that he could not agree with him in his statement that the English and Scotch taxpayers appeared to be robbing the poor of Ireland. He must say that he, for one—and he was sure the feeling was entertained by everyone connected with the Government—had a strong desire, in dealing with this question, to avoid doing any injustice to the Irish people. At the same time, he thought the Irish Members had been right in bringing on that discussion. For his own part, he could only promise that he would lay before the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer the suggestions of the Irish Members as to the taxation in Ireland, and see if any means could be adopted for the purpose of arriving at a proper solution of the question.

COLONEL NOLAN said, he had been anxious to see the debate confined to the subject of the Vote. The Ministry

had raised collateral issues; but so had the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar). The question was not so much as to the amount of money raised in Ireland, but the amount spent in it. Ireland sent over a surplus every year which was spent in England, and that was their grievance. It did not matter how much money was raised in a country if that money was spent in it; but the money raised in Ireland was not spent in it, and that was always the case in one country subject to another having the power and arms. The greatest injury which could be done to a country was to tax it heavily, and then spend the money raised in the form of taxation out of it. That was what the Government were doing in Ireland. The hon. Member for Cavan had taken up a weak position. They might tax two-horse carriages in Ireland as much as they liked, and they might put on drays and four-horse conveyances 10 times the amount of tax that was charged in England if they liked; but he was not anxious to see the one-horse conveyances taxed. Those general grievances had not been raised to any extent by him, his great grievance being that Ireland was heavily taxed, and the money raised was spent in England. It became outrageous when England took money from Ireland and spent it on English roads, and made Ireland pay for her own roads herself. He had always looked upon this as a remarkable instance of the general policy of the system of taxation carried on in Ireland. That policy was wrapped up in accounts, but it was easy to discover the plan pursued. Ireland sent over to this country £1,500,000, or £2,000,000 a-year, and that he had proved before now by the Returns he had received. Amounts that were described as having been spent in Ireland were frequently—as in the case of the soldiers—found to be fallacious. When £1,000,000 was put down as being spent by the military, the fact was that the amount distributed was only about £600,000. It was only in rations, &c., that the money was spent, the money for the arms and equipments of the men going to England, where the articles were obtained. There was no doubt about it that the money was sucked out of Ireland and spent in England, and that was a glaring injustice that Her Majesty's Ministers would do well to rectify.

Colonel Nolan

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 78; Noes 26: Majority 52.—(Div. List, No. 125.)

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £191,784, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886, for the Erection, Repairs, and Maintenance of the several Public Buildings under the Department of the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland, and for the Erection of Fishery Piers, and the Maintenance of certain Parks, Harbours, and Navigations."

COLONEL NOLAN said, he wished to address the Committee upon one point in connection with this Vote; and he thought the Committee would be glad to know that the Irish Members, who had been objecting to English and Scotch Votes because sufficient money was not spent in Ireland, now desired to save a certain sum expended in Ireland—namely, the £3,000 spent on the Ulster Canal. Not only did the Irish Members wish to save the Treasury this expenditure, but the £4,000 or £5,000 in addition which would probably be asked for. He had never been able to make out why the Government should incur this expenditure. They not only put the Vote down, but also brought forward a Bill on the subject; and whenever the Bill came on, every Irish Member who knew anything about the matter objected to the expenditure, and told them so—told them that, so far as he could see, it was a useless expenditure, and that the whole thing was a job. The Bill had been put down night after night. He was convinced—he could read it as plainly as he could read anything in the House of Commons—that the Government intended to slip it through some night when the Irish Members were not present. And why they proposed to spend the money was this—The Government issued a Royal Commission some years ago to inquire into the Ulster Canal, which Commission consisted of eight Gentlemen, four Irish Members of Parliament, Lord Mounteagle, and Representatives from the Public Offices. One gentleman was sent to represent the Treasury—an officer who had been engaged in irrigating land in India, and had been connected with hydraulic works in that country. Well, the seven Irish Commissioners

sent in a Report, to the effect that the Ulster Canal was useless, that it was a very heavy expense, and that it would be well to sell it, or otherwise get rid of it, to save the amount it was costing. That was the advice of the seven Irishmen. Six were present when the Report was agreed to. The seventh happened to be away; but he (Colonel Nolan) believed he was of the same opinion. He was not, however, so sure of him as he was of the other six. The eighth Commissioner—the officer representing the Treasury—had no local knowledge and no political position, though of high rank in the Army. Well, this gentleman sent in an adverse Report, stating that the Government had spent so much money on the Canal that it would be a pity to let it go to waste. The Government had chosen to take the advice of this gentleman, and had decided not to sell the Canal, but to give it away—to spend £3,000 on it to put it in a state of repair, and then give it away. He (Colonel Nolan) did not think £3,000 would be enough to do what the Government proposed to do, and he was strongly of opinion that £1,000 or £2,000 more would be required. All this outlay would be wasted. The whole of the Commissioners, with the exception of the one he had mentioned, believed that this expenditure would be simply so much money wasted. Every Irishman upon the Commission was against it. The Government, however, had got a fancy into their head, and they sent down a Representative from the Treasury, who took a fancy to expend a sum of money. The Commission came to the conclusion that the inland navigation of Ireland was of very little use; and in a great many cases, such as the Lower Bann and the Shannon, it was positively hurtful. The Commission were very strong about the Lower Bann, and terribly strong about the Shannon, and the majority of the Commissioners thought they would leave it to the Board of Works, believing that there was a strong case for considering drainage in the case of the Shannon, but none at all to any extent for navigation. The Government were spending their money everywhere in keeping up these ridiculous navigation works; but they knew the matter ought to be inquired into, and therefore they appointed this Commission, who went dead against them, and gave them a strong Report, which would have saved their money. He remembered an observation that was once made by the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Joseph Cowen) that the first thing to do with Ireland was to dry it. That, no doubt, was a very useful thing; but here the Government were keeping up this waste of money, and they would not take the advice of Irishmen on the subject. They were still going to have a good many thousands of pounds spent upon this business.

MR. T. A. DICKSON said, he had the pleasure and honour of being one of the Royal Commissioners who were appointed to inquire into this question, of which body the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan) was also a Member. The Commissioners travelled over a great deal of ground in Ireland in connection with these canals. The Royal Commission reported, in reference to this Canal, that, in their opinion, no public money should be expended upon it; and they recommended that the Canal, and all the property attached to it, should, as soon as possible, be offered for sale to the public, for they could not doubt that if there was a fair prospect of its being profitable, its value would easily be understood and appreciated by the prosperous towns in the North of Ireland, and it would be readily purchased and put into working order, and there need be no hesitation in disposing of it, so that it might be turned to some useful account. That was the Report of the Commissioners. He wished to call attention to one fact—that in the five years up to 1880, the average receipts from the 46 miles of this Canal amounted to only £55 per year, whilst the annual expenditure incurred in keeping the Canal in order, and paying the wages of the lock-keepers, amounted to £1,153, leaving a deficit of £1,098 a-year for keeping up what was admitted, by every Member of the Royal Commission, to be a useless navigation. What happened in 1865? The Canal was lying derelict, and the Board of Works, in order to give it a new trial, did that which produced £55 of tolls per annum. One member of the Board of Works said that after they had spent an extra sum of £22,000 upon it, the traffic remained *nil*, although the tolls were not more than half those imposed by the Grand

Canal and the Royal Canal. Now, he thought the common sense of the Committee, and the intelligence of any man in this House who had any idea of business, would recognize the fact that there never was a grosser case of expending public money in an utterly useless manner; and he would ask the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert) if he had read the Report of the Royal Commission and the evidence upon which that Report was based? He would also ask what was the use of appointing Royal Commissions and sending them to Ireland to report on questions of this kind, if then, after they had gone over the whole ground and sat for weeks and months, and given a Report to that House, not a single one of their recommendations was to be acted upon? He asked the Secretary of the Lagan Navigation, who was one of the witnesses before the Commissioners, whether that navigation would take this Canal, and the Secretary replied—"Not unless the Board of Works expend some £10,000 or £12,000 in putting it into proper order." Well, why should £240,000 of public money be handed over to the Lagan Navigation without 1*s.* of purchase? He did not object to giving them the Canal; but why should that gift be accompanied by £12,000 more in money? One difficulty of the Ulster Navigation was that the locks upon its Canal were not of the same dimensions or capacity as the other locks upon the Lagan or Tyrone Navigation. He would say, give the Canal over to the Lagan Navigation, and so save the expenditure of £1,100 a-year; but they should not throw away £12,000 besides. They tried the same experiment in 1865, and spent £22,000. He was quite certain that if the Committee considered this question they would reduce this Vote by £3,000. He had no wish that this continued and useless expenditure of £1,200 a-year should go on year after year. The Treasury should offer the Canal for sale. They did so before, as his hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Nolan) very well knew; but how did they offer it? They embarrassed it with conditions which nobody would accept. If it was offered for sale to-morrow unconditionally, there would be buyers, and he ventured to say that £10,000 would be given for it for the value of the ground, and the houses, and the other things about it. But it must be offered without the conditions which were imposed before. It should be offered for sale in the open market, and he would venture to say that, if the Lagan Navigation did not buy, private enterprize would step in and give a fair price for it. But nothing could be more insane than to follow up the expenditure already incurred by spending £12,000 more, when all the previous expenditure had hitherto been useless. He should certainly oppose the Vote, as he should also oppose the Bill.

Mr. TOTTENHAM said, that he also was a Member of the Royal Commission which had been referred to. He was not aware, until he entered the House, that this matter was going to be under consideration, and he was rather in the dark as to what had occurred, for he had only just come in. But certainly his recollection of the matter agreed entirely with that of the two hon. Members who had last spoken. The Commissioners were quite unanimous as to the entire uselessness of the Canal, and they reported accordingly that it should be given up. He could not for the life of him understand what the £12,000 was now going to be spent upon the Canal for. He should be glad to hear what the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury had to say—perhaps there was some argument to use which he (Mr. Tottenham) had not yet heard—but if that were not the case, he should certainly support the reduction of the Vote, if for no other reason that this—that he could not see what was the object of getting a Royal Commission to investigate the question of this Canal, and to devote a great deal of time and attention to the matter, if all their efforts and recommendations were to be so utterly and entirely disregarded in the end.

Mr. BIGGAR said, the Committee had now been addressed by three Members of the Royal Commission, who spoke of proceedings not at a very remote date, for it was only some four years since the Commissioners started on their labours. In point of fact, it was only about two years ago that they reported in the most direct form against this proposition; and not only was that the case, but if this grant were made, and the Bill connected with it were

passed, the result would be that it would be perfectly impossible to lower Lough Neagh to such a depth as would be required. The whole thing would be a most egregious blunder. The Canal had cost £130,000 of public money already, and what happened was this—that the parties who borrowed the money did not give any reasonable or personal security. If they asked Mr. Robinson, one of the Directors of the Company, to give a special guarantee for the payment of the money, they would precious soon find that no money would be taken. This Canal, in times past, had been able to do very little work, and yet it was a Canal on the security of which they proposed to lend a sum of £10,000; and not only that, but the Ulster Railway was in competition with it; and, in addition to that, there was a Bill in Parliament this very Session, promoted by the Great Northern Railway, by which they hoped to be able to put themselves in communication with this district, and to take coals and heavy goods at a substantially less rate than they were ever able to do before, for, formerly, they carried their goods from the quays to the goods station; whereas now, if this Bill passed, their trucks would go alongside the vessels, and the result would be that they would be able to make the position of the Ulster Canal much more untenable than it was at present. There was another canal in the neighbourhood which only paid 1½ per cent dividend to its shareholders, and that not upon the original expenditure upon the undertaking, but upon the remarkably small sum which the canal cost its present owners. What really would happen if they gave this £10,000 now was this—that the money would be spent, and then the people would go to the Secretary to the Treasury, and they would intrigue, and they would lie, and they would get a further credit from a future Parliament upon the pretence of this want of communication in the North of Ireland; while all the time they would take very good care not to work the Canal at all, and would simply pocket the money.

MR. COURTNEY said, he thought he might, perhaps, be allowed to offer an observation or two upon this unfortunate Canal, the misfortunes of which would not surprise anybody who had been connected with the Treasury. But he did not recognize, in the statements that had just been made, any absolutely complete account of the facts of the Canal. It was perfectly true that the Commissioners recommended that this Canal should be sold; but their first recommendation was that it should be sold as a canal; and even as to that there was a dissentient member of the Commission—a gentleman named Dickins.

COLONEL NOLAN: Yes; not an Irishman, but representing the Treasury.

MR. COURTNEY: He might not have been an Irishman, but he was not officially connected with the Treasury, and he was in favour of the Canal being kept up. There had of late years been a considerable modification of the opinion which prevailed a few years ago in reference to canals. At one time there was a movement in favour of their absorption by railways; but nowthey were looked upon as good checks upon railways. The first recommendation was that the Canal should be sold as a canal. He was aware that a proposition had also been made to break up the Canal; and as to that, there was a considerable objection made to it by hon. Members from Ireland when it was proposed. [Colonel NOLAN: A very small body of them.] The Colleague of the hon. and gallant Member himself raised an objection, and other hon. Members did so also. As to selling the undertaking as a canal, that was what the Treasury attempted to do; but they discovered that they could not find a purchaser—nobody would make an offer. Then came the consideration, should they make any other efforts to release themselves from the Canal; and the Lagan Company offered to buy it, if a certain sum were spent to put it into a condition for use, which sum they agreed to pay by annual instalments. This sum, therefore, was not a gift—it was a sum to be repaid by the Lagan Company; and it was, after all, a good bargain for the Treasury, for the money would be repaid by annuity, and the Treasury, would be relieved from all further responsibility. As to the security of the Lagan Company, it was a Company which realized a dividend. [An hon. MEMBER: Yes, of 1½ per cent.] He thought it was 2 per cent; but, at all events, it was sufficient.

Their surplus was quite sufficient to repay the annuity which they would have to repay, so that the arrangement under the Bill, which would have become law had it not been for the opposition of Irish Members opposite, would have been this—that the Treasury would have been relieved from the expense of £1,100 a-year; and though they would have incurred a fresh outlay to put the Canal in order, that amount would have been repaid. From the point of view of Irishmen, the Canal would have been kept in working order as a check upon the competition of the railways. They all knew the sort of complaints of which so much had been heard of late on the subject of railway rates; and it was no small gain to a country, if they could get an independent Company to keep a canal in working order, and operating as a check upon the railways. From the point of view of the present Committee, the agreement entered into with the Lagan Company was economical, and would have been adopted but for the opposition he had described; and in that way the Treasury and Parliament would have been relieved from an annual charge, and the repayment of the money advanced would have been secured. He had not heard anything to-night, nor did he hear anything last year, which really suggested a well-founded doubt about the matter.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Courtney) had stated that the hon. Gentlemen who preceded him (Colonel Nolan, Mr. T. A. Dickson, and Mr. Tottenham) had given a very incomplete account of the proceedings in regard to this matter—that they had left out some items in the Estimates which ought to be taken into consideration. But the hon. Gentleman had himself given a very incomplete account of the scheme which was proposed. One part of the business was that there was an annual sum of over £1,000 in connection with this Canal taken under an Act of Parliament, and it would require another Act of Parliament to alter the present arrangement. The Ulster Canal was perfectly worthless as a going concern. It involved a dead loss every year, as had already been pointed out. The Treasury wished to get rid of that annual charge of over £1,000, and they proposed to sell this Canal to the Lagan Navigation Company. But there would be absolutely no security at all for the £12,000 which, in that event, would have to be expended to enable the Lagan Navigation Company to make the Canal a paying concern; and in the very Bill which the Government last year introduced to sanction the proposed arrangement there was a provision that, in case the £12,000, or any part of it, was not enough, the Treasury should again assume the position of mortgagees of the Canal; and, therefore, they had no security at all, except the security of the Canal itself, that the Lagan Navigation Company would ever repay the sum for which they became indebted to the Government. He maintained that that was a most ridiculous arrangement. They would get rid of a charge of over £1,100 a-year on the Estimates; but, in order to do that, they would have to undertake to make an outlay of £12,000. They affected to consider that they would have a security for that sum in the Lagan Navigation Company, which undertook to take the Canal over; but the only security was this—that when they had paid £12,000, they would have the Canal itself in case the mortgagors failed to discharge their liability. They would be in a worse position than before, because they would have expended £12,000 which there was no necessity for expending at all. Since he had had the honour of a seat in Parliament, he had raised his voice every year against the system of these navigation arrangements in Ireland. Hon. Members might not understand that there was, from Coleraine in the North of Ireland, down to Limerick in the South, a system of water communication; but, as a matter of fact, it was only nominal, not real. It was supposed to connect the North with the South by means of Lough Neagh and certain other loughs and canals; but, as a matter of fact, one canal in that chain was altogether non-existent. One of the so-called canals was not a canal at all—he doubted very much whether there was any water in it, but certainly there was no boat at all upon it. There was no system of navigation along that line at all, and the Ulster Canal did not connect them. The hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Courtney) said that the first proposal was that the Canal should be sold as a canal. Now, in page 14 of the Report

of the Commission the hon. Gentleman would find it set forth that in 1861, long before the appointment of the Commission, Sir John Macneil reported that the only plan he could suggest by which any return could be made for the undertaking was to take up the lock-gates and drain the Canal, and convert its bed and slopes into grass-lands which could be let for grazing. That was after the Treasury had spent no less than £147,767 of public money on the Canal, with the result that the annual income was £55, and the annual expenditure somewhere about 30 times as much, the Government having to make up the difference. The Commissioners went on to say that since that Report of Sir John Macneil, £22,000 of public money, in addition to the annual expenses, had been expended with no substantial result in increasing the traffic. They further pointed out that for the purposes of the navigation the water had not been shut off, nor had the drainage area of the country been interfered with, and that it was now worked at an annual loss of £1,098 for want of traffic. The Commissioners added that they did not think there was a probability of the Canal being profitably used within such a time as would justify any immediate outlay of public money for the purpose of putting it into order. Now, in the face of that Report, the Treasury were prepared to fritter away a further sum of money. The Commissioners said—

"Nor do we think there should be any further outlay made. In our opinion no more public money should be expended upon it. We recommend that the Canal, with all the property attached to it, should be as soon as possible offered for sale to the public, for we cannot doubt that if there is really a reasonable prospect of its becoming a profitable enterprize as a water communication, its value as such will be understood and appreciated in the prosperous and wealthy towns of the North, and it would be purchased and put into proper working order."

But it should be borne in mind that that was not a recommendation of its prosperity. The Commissioners merely said, in effect—"We do not believe it is worth anything as a canal; but, if not, those who understand it may take it up." In any case they recommended that no further public money should be spent upon it. This was all the Irish Members had contended for; and, moreover, it should be remembered by the Government that, in this instance, they had the Irish Members asking them not to expend public money in Ireland. Of course, there was a reason for this, and here the reason was that instead of the expenditure being a useful one that would do good to Ireland, it was one that produced no advantage, and really did injury to the country by unnecessarily absorbing in one direction money that would be far better applied in other ways. In this way it was an injury to the community at large. The Irish Members wished to save the pockets of the people, and did not want to take money from the Treasury which they well knew had to be subscribed to by their own countrymen. To spend money in that wanton and reckless manner was, in their opinion, nothing but mere jobbery. The Treasury officials might not be aware of this; but, whether they were aware of it or not, it was so, and those who were committing the Treasury to this expenditure knew that the only advantage to be gained by carrying out the proposal was a present advantage to certain individuals, and that it would be of no good to the country or to the people of Ireland, or to the district in which the money was to be expended; while, in the end, the mortgagees might throw the property on the hands of the Government, as the security was a mere nominal one, and was in reality worthless, and would prove a dead loss to them as it had proved for the last 50 or 60 years. As had been persistently urged upon them for a long time, the best thing the Government could do would be to sell the property for whatever it would fetch. He would strongly urge on the Government that they should simply surrender the Canal to anyone who would buy it, and upon any terms they could get; for so long as they held it, it could be nothing but a loss, as they would have to spend more and more upon it without obtaining any return for the outlay. They had already wasted more than £150,000 upon it together with the interest on that sum, and had done no good, but, on the contrary, had done a great deal of harm to the country. He hoped, therefore, the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert), if he had not fully examined the Report of the Commission and did not know the circumstances of the country, would pause before com-

mitting the House to a scheme involving so utter a waste of public money and so utter a defiance of the opinions entertained by the Irish people.

MR. T. A. DICKSON said, the hon. Gentleman the Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) had asked what was the recommendation of the Royal Commission on this subject. The fact was that the Royal Commission had made two recommendations. Their first recommendation was that the Ulster Canal should be offered for sale as a going concern—namely, as a canal. The Treasury had adopted this recommendation, and offered the Canal for sale on the stipulated condition; but they could not find a buyer. The second recommendation of the Commission was that it should be offered for sale without any stipulation, and in that case there need be no hesitation in disposing of all the works and land and buildings, so that the undertaking might be converted into some useful purpose. Well, he wished to know why had not the Treasury acted upon the Commissioners' second recommendation, and offered the Canal for sale without imposing any stipulations that might have the effect of preventing anyone from purchasing it? They had, however, done nothing of the kind. With regard to the question of railway competition to which the hon. Member for Liskeard had referred, he would place before the Committee one fact which was put before the Commission in the evidence they had taken on this question. He (Mr. T. A. Dickson) had asked one of the witnesses what was the charge for the conveyance of coal from Belfast to Monaghan by the Canal, and the answer given by the witness was 6*s.* 6*d.* He then asked—"What is the rate by rail?" and the answer was "4*s.* 6*d.*" Now, he would put it to the Committee, was there not in this one answer sufficient evidence to show that the Canal never could be made a paying concern? Was it not evident from this state of things that it would be utterly useless to expect that, with a railway running alongside it, the Ulster Canal would ever be made to pay? But, as far as he was concerned, he had no desire to see the Canal closed. He would say let the Lagan Navigation Company take it over without any purchase all, but as a free gift; but he was utterly opposed to its being handed over in this way, and to the proposed Vote of £3,000 being also made. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Liskeard had impressed on the Committee the desirability of keeping the Canal upon; but in a clause contained in the Bill which was to be brought under the consideration of the House, it was provided that subject to any undertaking entered into by the Navigation Company, the Company might close the Ulster Canal, and might sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of the land and other property of the Canal. The Bill proposed to confer these powers for the advantage of the Company; why should not the Government exercise those powers now? If the Canal need not be kept open, why not sell it at once without the stipulation requiring it to be kept open? Did the Committee believe for a single moment that if this question were to be referred to the whole of the Irish Members, they would report that the useless expenditure proposed by Her Majesty's Government should be continued. But notwithstanding the recommendation of two Irish Peers—Lord Monck and Lord Monteagle, concurred in by four Irish Members of that House—this suggestion had been entirely put on one side. It would seem as if it were thought that the hon. Member for Liskeard, who had occupied the position of Financial Secretary to the Treasury, and other hon. Gentlemen who were also connected with that Department, knew all about these questions, while the Irish Peers and Irish Members, who had inspected the Canal and walked over the ground and had gone fully into the whole matter, knew nothing about it. He must say that if the recommendation of the Royal Commission were not carried out in regard to the disposal of the Canal, and the proposed expenditure of £12,000 was gone on with, there would be no use in again going through the farce of appointing Royal Commissions to inquire into the mismanagement of Irish affairs.

MR. HIBBERT said, after what had fallen from his hon. Friend behind him (Mr. Courtney), who had had a good deal to do with the previous management of this matter, he should have been very much inclined to listen and act according to his views; but the observations that had been made by so many hon. Members representing Irish constituencies made him feel that he

ought to take time to consider the position the Government ought to take in reference to this Vote. It seemed to him, however, that there were two sides to the question. If the Government had proposed to do away with the Ulster Canal, as had been suggested during the debate, and to drain the Canal and sell the land through which it ran, they might have been met with the complaint that they were raising another Irish grievance by seeking to deprive the Irish farmers of an alternative route for conveying their goods to market. He must say that this was what would have been his first idea in looking at this question, as he admitted that the Canal was not paying. Well, then came the question, had the Government taken what means they could in order to carry out the proposal that the Canal should be sold? The Committee had already been told that the Government had endeavoured to sell the Canal, but that they were unable to find a purchaser. Then he came to the suggestion that they should get rid of the Canal by giving it away, and not trying to sell it. Several hon. Members had asked, "Why do not you give the Canal away?" The answer to that question was that it appeared that no one would have it. [Mr. BIGGAR: I will take it.] He did not think the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) would have a very good bargain if he were to take it with the view of keeping it up. But, without going further into the matter, it appeared to him that the best thing they could do, under the circumstances, after what had taken place, was to propose that the grant of £3,000 which was then being discussed should not be made, unless the Bill before the House, to which attention had been called, was passed. Before that Bill was proceeded with he would take time to consider the question, and decide whether the Bill should be proceeded with or not. This was as far as he could go on the present occasion. He would undertake to consult with his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Childers) on the question, and he trusted that the Committee would, in the meantime, allow the matter to remain where it was.

COLONEL NOLAN said, his difficulty was as to whether his hon. Friends behind him desired to press the matter to a division, in order to show what the feeling of the Irish Members really was in regard to this particular question. The Committee had had the opinion of the Royal Commission upon it as well as that of hon. Members on that side of the House, and he believed the opinion of those who represented Belfast was the same. If the Treasury persisted in the payment of the £12,000 for the purpose intended, the matter would not end there, because, under the Bill to which reference had been made, it was proposed to give power to the Navigation Company to borrow a further sum of £10,000, which, added to the £12,000, would make a total of £22,000. After the election of the next Parliament there would be an agitation among the farmers in the district for lowering the level of Lough Neagh, and this could not be done without some provision being made for payment of compensation to the Navigation Company. When this was done the position of matters would be simply this—that the Company would have £12,000 of the public money in their pockets; they would have raised another sum of £10,000 under their borrowing powers; they would have the Canal to drain and break up into land, which they might sell for £10,000 or £15,000 more, for it would be worth something like that when capable of being utilized for agricultural purposes; and they would also have a claim upon the Treasury for compensation for the stoppage of the Canal. That was what would be the result of the passing of the intended Bill. The Government clearly had paid very little attention to the second recommendation of the Royal Commission, and he did not know whether they had consulted Lord Monteagle or Lord Monck upon the matter; but he certainly did think they ought to be glad to get out of the matter without having to pay the £12,000. He should feel obliged to his hon. Friends if they would not insist in pressing the question further on that occasion after the promise that had been made on behalf of the Government.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he had listened to the discussion that had taken place on this subject with a good deal of interest, and he thought the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury had come to a very wise conclusion in promising to take time to consider the

position in which he found himself with regard to the matter. It certainly seemed to him that it would be a perfect piece of folly to go and spend the proposed amount on the Ulster Canal at the present moment. He never knew a case in which all the Members for Ireland in all parts of the House were so unanimous. This being so, the Government ought to attach the greatest weight to their views upon the question; and unless he heard very strong reasons why the opinion of the Irish Members should be passed over, he should urge upon them the advisability of giving to that opinion a favourable consideration.

MR. T. A. DICKSON said, he only desired to say another word. He was very strongly opposed to this Vote, and he thought the Government ought to withdraw it, and agree to refer the Bill which was to deal with the subject to a Select Committee of the Irish Members for them to send in a Report upon the question. If the Government would promise to do this, the time of the Committee would be saved. There would be no difficulty in the withdrawal of the Vote, and no hardship would be involved in such a procedure, and it would, he thought, be much better to let the question be left, like so many others, for the House to deal with.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. CHILDERS) said, he hoped his hon. Friends would not press the matter any further on that occasion, as he thought it would be quite sufficient if he promised, on behalf of the Government, that full consideration should be given to the Bill, and that the money should not be expended unless the Bill was proceeded with.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS thought there could be no objection to the course proposed by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, because the present grant was mixed up with other matters which might make it difficult to withdraw it from the Vote.

MR. BIGGAR asked for some explanation with reference to the Vote for the Lough Erne Canal. He wanted to know what was to be done with the money?

MR. HIBBERT said, that was a matter altogether separate from the grant for the Ulster Canal.

MR. BIGGAR wished to know what the money put down in the Estimate for Lough Erne was to be given for?

MR. HIBBERT said, the Vote was in connection with the drainage of Lough Erne. Last year £3,000 was paid towards that expenditure.

MR. BIGGAR said, the explanation was very satisfactory, and he was not prepared to oppose any Vote of money that was to be given for drainage purposes in Ireland. Another matter he wished to mention was that he had made inquiry of the Great Northern Railway Company as to the different rates charged for the carriage of coal delivered along that line, and he had found that the rates were quite as low at all the non-competing points as they were at the points where the line competed with the Canal; so that, as far as those carriage rates were concerned, there was no benefit derivable from the Canal.

MR. HIBBERT said, he was quite of opinion that, as far as possible, the navigation should be made subservient to drainage.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, if the Government acted on the view just expressed by the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert), the Irish Members would have every reason to be satisfied. Their complaint had always been that the rivers provided by Nature had not been allowed by the Government to do the work rivers were intended to do. The business of a river was to carry the surplus water from the land to the sea; but either the Government or private Companies had interfered to prevent this, and had erected all sorts of artificial barriers, so that the rivers could not do their legitimate work, and the water was consequently kept back in many cases until it flooded hundreds and thousands of acres, and inflicted a vast amount of damage and ruin upon the country. He wished for a few minutes to call attention to another matter in connection with this Vote—namely, the sum put down for the purchase of sites and for new works and alterations. The sum for the purchase of sites figured in that Vote at the small amount of £15; but last year it was £520. The sum for new works and alterations was put down at £87,321, which showed an increase of £16,311 on the amount voted under the same head last year. In the Appropriation Account of last year the large sum voted under Sub-head B for new works and

alterations included new post offices to be built or premises to be converted, and for this purpose £6,900 was voted, of which only £1,600 was spent, so that over £5,300 had to be returned to the Treasury, the explanation being that sites were not available. Then there was an item for new barracks for the Constabulary in Galway, of which the greater portion was not spent, the explanation in that case also being that no site was available. There were similar items for Constabulary barracks in other places, and the money voted had, in the same way, remained unexpended for the same reason. The Government had obtained money year after year for these purposes, and had not been able to erect the intended buildings, because they could not get land for the sites, in consequence of which the money had had to be returned to the Treasury. They were now asking for money again for the purchase of sites, although the amount was small; and what he wished to suggest was that the Government should not ask for money to purchase sites until they had the sites to purchase. What, he asked, was the use of going on in such a manner? It was, in fact, sheer nonsense to submit to reasonable men such Estimates as these. He would ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he understood such a mode of doing business; for he (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) confessed that he could not? He had examined the Appropriation Accounts and the Estimates, and he could not find out how it was the Government carried out all the works they proposed. The system adopted required amendment; as it was, a large number of works were put down every year under the head of this Vote, and the money was voted by the House, but not expended, while there were a large number of other works that were never submitted or mentioned, and he supposed the money was expended in that way. On page 69 of the Estimates there was a long detailed account, from which it would be seen that sums varying from £20 to £1,800 had been expended on matters that were never even mentioned in the Estimates, and of which the House of Commons never knew anything. He asked the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer to explain how it was that the Government spent money they never asked for?

MR. HIBBERT said, the sites for which the money was asked in the Vote had already been arranged for. He very much agreed with the hon. Member (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) in some of the remarks he had made. When the Estimates were in course of preparation, he had struck out certain amounts that were proposed for new barracks in various places for which the sites had not been already obtained, because he thought the money should not be put down in the Votes if the money was not to be expended.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked if the hon. Gentleman would explain how, if this Vote were passed, it was possible for the Board of Works to expend in the purchase of land so small a sum as £15?

MR. HIBBERT said, that sum was merely wanted for the purpose of compensation, and was not for the purchase of sites.

MR. T. A. DICKSON said, he agreed with hon. Members opposite in the hope which they had expressed that Her Majesty's Government would not incur any further expenditure in connection with the Ulster Canal Navigation, seeing that the weirs, locks, headings, and other things which impeded the drainage ought to be swept away. If the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert) would read the evidence given before the Royal Commission which sat to inquire into this question by the people of Antrim, he would perceive that they contributed annually a large sum towards the expenses of the Canal—that was to say, that the farmers who lived towards the lower part of the district had to pay from £1,000 to £1,200 per annum as taxation for the purpose of keeping up this perfectly useless navigation. It had been shown that the tolls charged on the Canal did not produce more than an average amount of £50 annually. The £1,100 or £1,200 a-year was a very considerable tax upon the farmers of the district; and especially so, when it was considered that it went for the purpose of keeping up a system of navigation on which there was no traffic. But that was not the sole objection to the Canal. Not only had the farmers to pay the sum mentioned, but they lost several hundred pounds per annum in consequence of the damages sustained from the floods caused by

keeping up weirs that ought to be condemned. He thought that a promise that no more money should be spent on the Canal would be satisfactory to the people of the district.

MR. HIBBERT said, he was somewhat surprised that the opposition to the Vote should continue, because he had, on the part of the Treasury, expressed almost the same views with regard to the Ulster Canal Navigation as had been expressed by hon. Gentlemen in the course of this discussion. He had replied to the objections raised by hon. Members for Ireland by saying that the best thing probably that could be done under the circumstances was that the Vote should be allowed to pass, and that the £3,000 now asked for should not be used, unless the Bill already before the House was passed. As he had said, he was prepared to give an undertaking that that Bill would not be proceeded with without very careful consideration.

MR. MOLLOY said, his hon. Friend the Member for Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) had pointed out, with regard to the money voted by Parliament, that if there was any portion of it not applied to the purposes for which it was intended, it should be returned into the Exchequer. There was a question which presented itself to him in connection with this Estimate to which he desired to call the attention of the Committee and the hon. Gentleman in charge of the Estimates. The question he desired to put to the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury was this—Was it a fact that sites had been obtained for the erection of public buildings on account of which the sums that appeared on this Estimate were asked? If so, he would then ask from what source the money was derived, because, as he had said, he understood from his hon. Friend the Member for Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) that money not spent on the purchase of sites as intended by Parliament was returned to the Exchequer? If no money had been obtained since the money formerly voted was unavailable, he admitted that he was quite unable to understand how the Board of Works in Ireland could obtain funds for the purchase of sites for the new buildings proposed to be erected. For these reasons he appealed to the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury for information with regard to this matter, and he certainly thought that before the Vote was passed by the Committee a clear explanation ought to be forthcoming from the Treasury Bench on the subject of the purchase of sites.

MR. HIBBERT said, with reference to the question of the hon. Member for King's County (Mr. Molloy) as to this item in the Estimate, he regretted that he was not at the moment able to give the cases in which sites had been obtained for new buildings. But he might say with regard to coastguard stations that one or two works were in progress, and that, therefore, sites must have been obtained for those works. With regard to the Royal Irish Constabulary barracks, he was unable to state what works were in progress, and, consequently, what sites had been obtained; but he would make inquiries into the matter, and give the information asked for by the hon. Member for King's County.

COLONEL NOLAN said, there was an item of £1,800 for estimated cost of a new post office at Galway, and he would ask the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury if he was in a position to give him any information with regard to that proposed new building? He would like to know whether the arrangements for the purchase of a site for the building had been completed, because he was certain that any number of suitable sites could be obtained in Galway? Was any progress being made with the work at Galway? He observed that part of the total estimated sum of £1,800—that was to say, £900—was called a Re-Vote in the Estimate. He would be glad to know if there was to be a new site for the post office?

MR. HIBBERT: Yes, I think so.

MR. MOLLOY said, in page 56 of the Estimates there was an item on which he desired to have some information before the Vote was agreed to. Under the heading "State and Official Residences in Phœnix Park and Dublin Castle," there was a charge to the amount of £5,000 for sanitary improvements. As the Estimate gave no details of the improvements in question, he thought that before the Vote passed out of the hands of the Committee, hon. Members were entitled to receive an ex-

planation from the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury with regard to the nature of those sanitary works.

MR. HIBBERT said, that the Vote on which the hon. Member for King's County asked for information related to Dublin Castle and the Viceregal Lodge. It had been found that the whole of the sanitary arrangements there were in a bad state, and it was accordingly thought desirable that they should be placed in a more satisfactory condition. He might mention that the reason why attention had been called to this matter was that the hon. Member for North Northamptonshire (Mr. Spencer) had suffered from typhoid fever at the Castle. An inquiry had been afterwards made into the state of the buildings, and it was then discovered to be necessary for the health of public servants and others that improved sanitary arrangements should be carried out.

MR. MOLLOY said, there were a number of items in connection with the State and Official Residences and Departments in Dublin to which he felt it his duty to call the attention of the Committee and the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury. He found on page 59 of the Estimates charges amounting to a very large sum—no less than £15,000 — on account of maintenance and repairs in the course of the year at the official residence of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, at the Viceregal Lodge and Gardens, and at the Chief Secretary's Lodge and the departments connected with the Office of Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. If so large a sum were proposed to be spent by the Treasury on the maintenance and repair of the official residence of the Prime Minister, or any other official in England, he asked what would be said? The Committee must bear in mind that these charges were for the maintenance and repair of the private residences of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and the Chief Secretary, as distinguished from their public offices, for which there was a large Vote presently coming forward. They had to deal with the fact that they were now asked for a sum of no less than £14,000 for painting, papering, mending window-sills, and such like matters, at the private residences of the Lord Lieutenant and the Chief Secretary.

MR. HIBBERT: I think the hon. Member is taking the total brought forward from the previous page.

MR. MOLLOY said, that was not so. The particular items he was referring to were all stated separately on page 59, and they were as follows:—Dublin Castle, Residences, £5,971; Under Secretary's House, £198; Viceregal Lodge, Gardens, &c., £3,808; Private Secretary's Lodge, £312; Chief Secretary's Lodge, Gardens, &c., £1,607; Under Secretary's Lodge and Demesne, £1,000; Chief Secretary's Office and Branches, £1,174. The total of these sums amounted, as he had already pointed out, to about £15,000, or, to speak with accuracy, £14,070. Now, the sum in question was so very large that he considered the Committee were fairly entitled to ask for some of the details of the maintenance and repairs of the residences of the Lord Lieutenant and the Chief Secretary for Ireland. He would draw attention particularly to one of the items relating to the Dublin Castle Residences. The Committee would observe under the general head of "Maintenance, Repairs, Fittings, &c., by Servants of the Board of Works," that there was in column E a charge of £39 for materials used by them. Without the attention of the Committee being drawn to the circumstance, he believed hon. Members would hardly imagine the amount of the charge for labour in using up the materials supplied to the servants of the Board of Works. It was no less than £1,080—the cost of the materials, as he had already pointed out, being £39 only. Then, again, if the Committee would refer to the charge on account of the Chief Secretary's Lodge, Gardens, &c., it would be found that the amount of payment for labour was £300, while the charge for the materials used by the servants of the Board of Works was £10 only. Now, without the details, it was impossible for the Committee to see how these large amounts were arrived at; and, in the absence of such details, he was obliged to say that the whole thing had very much the appearance of a job.

MR. SEXTON said, there were a number of questions arising on this Vote in which hon. Gentlemen on those Benches took a strong interest; and at that point of the discussion he thought it might be convenient if he stated what

course he and his hon. Friends proposed to take with regard to it. His hon. Friend the Member for Wicklow (Mr. W. J. Corbet) desired to refer to the subject of the harbour at Arklow, and to raise the question as to the manner in which that harbour had been dealt with. The vital question would also be raised as to the way in which the Office of Works in Ireland were in the habit of dealing with the piers and harbours in the country generally. Under the circumstances, therefore, and seeing that the discussion of the points referred to were likely to occupy some time, he would put it to the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert) to consider whether it would not be convenient to postpone the further discussion of the Vote, and to proceed with Votes No. 21 and 22—that was to say, the Votes for the Royal University, Ireland, Buildings, and the Science and Art Buildings, Dublin. He thought those Votes might be passed, if his suggestion that the present discussion should determine were agreed to.

Mr. HIBBERT said, a Report would be laid on the Table of the House with reference to Piers and Harbours, and he thought that discussion of the question had better await the publication of that Report. He did not think the policy of the Board of Works, Ireland, could be discussed on this Vote. He asked that they might be allowed to proceed with the Vote for Public Buildings that evening, and take the discussion on the Arklow Harbour when hon. Members were in possession of the Report he had mentioned.

Mr. SEXTON said, he could assure the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury that the suggestion he had made for the postponement of the Vote was for the purpose of meeting the convenience of the Committee; if, however, the Government insisted on the discussion of the Vote continuing, all he could say was that he and his hon. Friends would proceed. The discussion of the question that would be raised by his hon. Friend the Member for Wicklow (Mr. W. J. Corbet) would occupy a considerable portion of time; and if the Government desired to get on with other Business, he thought their general plan would be served by falling in with the suggestion he had thrown out.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, with regard to the Registration of Voters (Scotland) Bill, it had been expected by hon. Members for Scotland that the Motion for going into Committee on the Bill would come on at a reasonable hour of the evening, and therefore they had not thought it necessary to block the Bill.

Mr. HIBBERT said, he should be glad to agree to an arrangement which would be convenient to the hon. Member for Wicklow (Mr. W. J. Corbet); but he doubted whether it would be right to raise the question of the policy of the Board of Works, Ireland, with respect to fishery piers on this point. There was no money taken for fishery piers in the Estimate.

The CHAIRMAN said, it would not be in Order to discuss the action of the Board of Works, Ireland, with reference to fishery piers on this Vote. He gave no opinion as to the other point with regard to the harbour at Arklow; but the discussion on fishery piers could not be taken on the Estimate before the Committee.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he would ask the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury if he would consent to postpone the Vote until after the discussion suggested on the policy of the Board of Works, Ireland, had been taken on the Vote for the Board of Works?

Mr. HIBBERT assented.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

(3.) £29,000, to complete the sum for Science and Art Buildings, Dublin.

(4.) £23,428, to complete the sum for the Royal University, Ireland, Buildings.

Mr. SEXTON said, there was one question that presented itself in connection with this Vote. The sum asked for was for the Royal University Buildings, the foundation stone of which had recently been laid by a distinguished Person. He would point out that the gross Estimate for the buildings had been £74,000, that the gross expenditure, actual and estimated up to the 31st of March last, had been about £42,000, and that the amount of the Vote now asked for was something over £27,000, leaving a further amount of between £4,000 and £5,000 to be voted

to complete the work. As this matter had occupied some years, he urged that it should be concluded without delay, and with that view he would suggest that the balance of about £4,000 left over for next year should be added to the current Vote, and that an effort should be made to close the work in the current financial year.

MR. HIBBERT said, it was considered impossible to complete the work this year, and, therefore, the Vote had been proposed as submitted, and could not conveniently be altered.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR rose to Order. It appeared that the question which his hon. Friend the Member, for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had been discussing was that of the Royal University, Ireland, Buildings; but he was under the impression that, before the Chairman put that Vote, he had read the heading of the Vote for Science and Art Buildings, Dublin.

THE CHAIRMAN said, he had put the Vote for Science and Art Buildings, Dublin, first.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that was his impression, whereas the Vote for the Royal University, Ireland, Buildings, came first in order, and the Vote for the Science and Art Buildings, Dublin, afterwards. He had been turning over the pages of the Estimates, and had never contemplated that the Chairman had come to the Royal University Vote.

THE CHAIRMAN said, he was going somewhat on the statement of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), who had suggested to the Secretary to the Treasury that the two next Votes should be taken, and the discussion on the Vote for Public Works and Buildings, Ireland, postponed. Having put the Science and Art Buildings Vote, and seeing no one rise, he had passed it.

Vote *agreed to*

(5.) £16,398, to complete the sum for Lighthouses Abroad.

(6.) £25,103, to complete the sum for Diplomatic and Consular Buildings.

Committee report Progress.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow;*

Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—[BILL 132.]

(*The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (MR. J. B. BALFOUR): In moving that you, Sir, do leave the Chair, I will, as requested by some hon. Members, explain the purposes and objects of the Scottish Registration Bill. I may say that I do not propose to ask that anything more be done than that the Committee be set up to-night, so that there shall be time for the Bill to be circulated in Scotland, and the clauses taken not sooner than next week. In regard to the Bill, I may say that there is one clause in it which has a similar object, and is analogous to a clause in the English and Irish Bills. I mean the 5th clause, which contains a special provision as to voters in 1885, which provides that—

"Any person deemed to be an inhabitant occupier, under section 3 of the Representation of the People Act, 1884, shall be registered in like manner as though the Representation of the People Act had been in existence throughout the year 1884, and had been duly carried into effect."

That clause is framed to meet the possibility of its being held that the service franchise could be defeated by saying that, inasmuch as it was created for the first time by Section 3 of the Act of 1884, there had not been the requisite period of possession. The person entitled to the service franchise is to be deemed to be an inhabitant occupier of such dwelling-house for the creation of the new qualification; and in case it should by any possibility be held that that is a new qualification, this clause has been introduced for the like reason as the corresponding clauses in the English and Irish Bills. With respect to the rest of the Bill, I may say it is directed substantially to obtain an amendment of the Valuation Roll, which, as is well known to the Scotch Members, is the basis of the voters' list, and there are various particulars in which there seems to be room for amendment of that Roll, and obtaining a simpler and speedier method of making out the voters' lists. Under the Valuation Act of 1854, comparatively simple forms of Schedule were provided.

The forms of Schedule there provided, and the enactments regarding them, were repealed by the County Voters' Act of 1861; and somewhat more elaborate forms of Schedule were there provided, containing some things which we regard as unnecessary, and not containing certain things which are now essential to meet the requirements of the existing law. I may mention, for example, that in the form of Schedule provided, the heading "Tenant" was divided into three classes—tenants under 19 years, tenants between 19 and 57, and tenants over 57 years. It appears to us that that was an unnecessary subdivision, and we propose to simplify it by simply making one class of tenant. There was another entry in the Roll which I think, by almost universal consent, is unnecessary. I refer to the head which deals with the matter of feu-duties. Now, feu-duties are no longer a qualification for voting as regards the future. As regards the past, of course, there is already the information contained in the existing Rolls. And the requisite information can now be obtained without encumbering the Roll, which will now be a much longer document than it was formerly, by keeping up that heading; and so we propose no longer to continue it. There are various other matters with regard to which we think that the present Roll has been simplified. We propose by one of the sections here to allow an Order in Council to vary from time to time the forms of the Roll, and to obviate the necessity of any Parliamentary sanction being obtained for that end. That, I think, is common to this Bill with the English and Irish Bills. Then, in regard to Clause 4 of the Bill, I may explain that that has been introduced with the object of providing certain additional means of obtaining the requisite information to those provided by the Act of 1884, which has been represented by many experienced assessors as scarcely applicable, and scarcely so simple as might be desired; and, accordingly, we have provided certain additional means for obtaining that information. As regards Section 6, it has been thought necessary to provide for each dwelling-house having a separate entry, inasmuch as each dwelling-house may be the subject of a separate qualification. It has been thought right that a separate entry of it should be made. No doubt, it may sometimes happen that the whole of a dwelling-house may be occupied by a person not a voter, possibly by a woman, or by a minor; but, still, that is by common consent agreed to be a useful entry, as well for rating as for every other purpose. Then, as regards Section 7, that is directed to provide that, where the parish is divided into, or forms part of, more than one polling district, the register of voters in such parish shall be made up separately for each polling district. In regard to Section 8, I may say that if there had been no question except that of Parliamentary registration, it would probably have been unnecessary; but then, even in the case of burghs which under the Bill now going through Parliament—I mean the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill—may cease to return, or may continue to return, a Member to Parliament, they will continue to have a municipal registrar, and, consequently, it has been thought right to preserve the separate entity of the burgh, rather for municipal than for Parliamentary purposes. In regard to Section 9, that has been directed to providing a simple and cheaper form of advertisement than formerly existed. There was great complaint that the method of advertising was unsatisfactory and very expensive, and, accordingly, Section 9 is directed to a cheaper method of making the requisite publication. Section 10 is quite an executive clause, intended to provide for the appointment of assessors to counties that are divided, and I scarcely think that any explanation is required in regard to it. With regard to Section 11, it is, probably, enough to say that it has been suggested from various parts of the country, and I think with very good reason, that it is better that the assessor should not hold some of the offices which are mentioned in this section. We propose that he should not be employed as a collector of poor rates, or as a factor or labour agent. That will meet with the general sense of the House, I think. With respect to the 12th section, I may simply say that it is directed to provide for the case of police burghs. Under the Valuation Act there were only Parliamentary and Royal burghs provided for; but in many cases, under present law, the police burgh is such

an important community that it seems reasonable to provide for a separate valuation of the accounts of property, which have previously been provided for in the case of Royal and Parliamentary burghs. I have gone through all the clauses in a very few words, because I do not propose that they should be considered now; but I think any hon. Members who are familiar with the work of making up the register in Scotland will see that the various provisions here are all directed to simplify and make more effective the provisions of the existing law. I do not say that the Bill is not susceptible of amendment, and between now and the time when we come to consider the clauses hon. Members will have an opportunity of suggesting any Amendments that may occur to them. But what I have said will, I think, make plain the objects with which we have introduced the Bill in its present form.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

MR. WARTON said, he wished to call the attention of the House to the particular form of this Bill. The right hon. and learned Lord Advocate would pardon him (Mr. Warton) for saying so; but he had noticed all through the speech they had just listened to that the word "section" had been used instead of "clause," which it was usual to adopt in connection with Acts of Parliament. He (Mr. Warton) did not know whether, in this matter, there was a difference between Scotch and English law; but, according to ordinary Parliamentary proceeding, it was customary to use the word "clause." So far as the 5th clause was concerned, it seemed to him (Mr. Warton) an extraordinary proposition, that after they had solemnly arranged the date at which the Franchise Bill should come into force as an Act—that it should not come into force until 1st January this year—they should assume, under this clause, that the Franchise Act had been in existence during the whole of 1884. It seemed most absurd that, after all the discussion which had taken place on the subject, and the serious Amendments which had been moved—notably the Amendment moved by the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey)—as to the date at which the Franchise Act should come into operation, they should pass a measure which assumed that it had come into force a year before it did. With regard to the service franchise, in respect of which the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate had inserted this 5th clause, he (Mr. Warton) remembered moving an Amendment to the proposal in the Bill to provide that the service franchise was only to come into operation in the event of a contract entered into between the master and servant, and requiring evidence of the contract. This singular and new kind of franchise was very undefined as compared with every other kind. It was difficult to see service in the same way as one could see a house that a man was occupying. He had moved an Amendment so as to secure a starting point in the case of the service franchise; but he had been met by the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. Gladstone), and other right hon. Gentlemen opposite, with the statement that it was not at all necessary. Now, they saw the result of his Amendment being refused. They found that there would be all sorts of doors open to fraud and imposture. Persons would be coming forward on all hands, saying they had been occupying the relative positions of master and servant, and arrangements patched up in a few days for a political purpose would be declared in the coolest manner possible, and would, under this 5th clause, stand as if they had existed during the whole of 1884. This seemed to him a most extraordinary provision, and he was not all sure that the House would consent to it when it came to consider it in Committee. He anticipated that if it were passed it would lead to a wholesale manufacture of service qualifications, and would, consequently, become a prolific producer of fagot votes. He hoped the 5th clause would be rejected. He did not intend to follow the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate through the other clauses of the Bill.

MR. BUCHANAN said, they were all indebted to the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate for his clear statement with regard to the provisions of the Bill before them. They were especially indebted to him for making his speech to-night, because they were all anxious that the Bill should be pushed forward with the least possible delay. It seemed, so

far as he was able to judge, that it would effect a substantial improvement in the Registration Law of Scotland. They had the advantage at present of a more simple system of registration than either England or Ireland, and the Bill would still further simplify that system. It would have the further advantage of putting the counties more on a level with the boroughs in this respect—that the county assessors would have the obligation laid on them of making up the voters' list more rapidly than they were obliged to do at present. He hoped the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate would take care that they should have sufficient time for the due consideration of the clauses. He did not wish, at this moment, to go into the details of the Bill; but seeing that it was only put into their hands this morning, and that those interested in the subject had not had sufficient time to consider it, he would ask the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate to take care that sufficient time was given for the due consideration of the clauses.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he agreed with what had fallen from the last speaker (Mr. Buchanan), that the registration system of Scotland was better than that of England, and much more self-acting. They had not the worry and expense of looking after the registration as in England, where candidates for seats in this House were put to great trouble and expense—in addition to their other numerous troubles and expenses—in looking after the voters on the list. He thought it should be a public burden, and not a burden on the candidates; and he was confident that the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate would do his best to maintain and improve the good registration which prevailed in Scotland. He (Sir George Campbell) only wished to express a hope that the right hon. and learned Gentleman would take very great care that, in extending the system to the counties—which would be a delicate and, perhaps, a somewhat difficult task—he did not throw on the candidates similar burdens to those imposed by the English law. His experience in England was that whenever duties of this kind were to be performed, under statutory obligation, by people who held their office for life, they were performed extremely ill, and to that, he believed, was due all the trouble and expense candidates in England were obliged to incur in regard to the registration of voters. His attention had been called to the unsatisfactory way in which jury lists were prepared in England, and he trusted the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate would take care to maintain the superior system which existed in Scotland. No doubt it would be difficult to bring the new voters thoroughly and efficiently upon the Roll. His own experience was that in Scotland, under the new system, there was a danger of the compound voting system prevailing in England coming in by superiors undertaking to pay the public rates, and still more would it be so with regard to the service franchise, and he had no doubt great care would require to be taken in that respect. He was sure the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate would do his best, and consult the best authorities in Scotland, and give a reasonable interval for the consideration of the clauses.

MR. SEXTON said, he had understood, at Question time to-day, that as soon as Mr. Speaker left the Chair, the Government would agree to report Progress, and would fix some day next week for proceeding with the clauses. He would ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate, if he would be kind enough to say, before the Question was put, when he proposed to go on with the clauses?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, it would be either Tuesday or Wednesday; he was not quite sure which. It would probably be Tuesday; but it might be Wednesday. He proposed to put it down for Tuesday.

MR. DICK-PEDDIE trusted the right hon. and learned Gentleman would not take the Committee stage on Tuesday. The Bill came out only last night, and it was quite impossible that the constituents could communicate with Members before that time. He trusted that Wednesday would be the day.

MR. WARTON said, he wished to point out that Report of the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill was down for Tuesday next. If the Registration Bill were put down for the same day, there would be two Bills fixed, each having precedence over all other measures. There would then arise a question as to which could be taken first,

each having precedence over the other. He could not understand, under the circumstances, how the Government could think of putting these two Bills down for the same day. Which Bill would have precedence?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): The Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill.

MR. SEXTON: The Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill was introduced first and obtained its precedence first.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): Yes; that is the senior Bill.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill *considered* in Committee.

Committee report Progress.

MR. SPEAKER: To sit again—on what day?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): Monday next; but not with the intention of proceeding with it on that day. We will announce then when it will be taken.

MR. SEXTON: I object to Monday. The right hon. and learned Gentleman a short time ago distinctly declared that it was proposed to take the Bill on Tuesday.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): Monday is fixed, not with the intention of proceeding with the Bill on that day, but of announcing when it will be proceeded with.

MR. SEXTON: Very well; but I cannot help thinking it would be much more satisfactory if original promises were kept.

MR. WARTON said, he thought they were not guarding themselves with sufficient care against possible contingencies. They had already put down the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill for Monday; but they were told that it might not be taken on that day, as they would be engaged then in considering the Vote of Credit. But it was possible that the Vote of Credit might not last long. The policy of the Government in that respect might be considered wise, and the Vote of Credit might not take long to consider. In that case they would have two Bills down, each taking precedence of the other, and in all probability they would get into a mess. They had better not have down for the same day two Bills, each of which was entitled to be taken first on the day it came on.

LORD RICHARD GROSVENOR said, that if the Bill were put down for Tuesday or Wednesday it would immediately take precedence, and that the Government did not wish at present. If it were put down for Monday, it could be placed for any other day when they saw what arrangements could be made for the Business.

Committee to sit again upon *Monday* next.

EAST INDIA UNCLAIMED STOCKS BILL.

(*Mr. Kynaston Cross, Mr. Hibbert.*)

[BILL 125.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. WARTON: I rise to Order. This is not a Money Bill in the proper sense of the word, and, therefore, is subject to the half-past 12 o'clock Rule. The second reading has been challenged, and I ask your opinion on the point, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: This Bill, under the Standing Order, is the same as an ordinary Money Bill. It is essentially a Money Bill.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

MOTIONS.

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS (VOTING).

ADDITION TO SELECT COMMITTEE.

Select Committee on School Board Elections (Voting) to consist of Twenty-three Members: —Mr. JOHN MORLEY and Mr. GORST *added* to the Committee.—(*Mr. Dillwyn.*)

MR. SEXTON: This is a most objectionable and surprising Motion. The right hon. Gentleman in charge of the matter is not here, and he is perfectly aware that the subject is one of contention and of difference of opinion in the House. I respectfully ask the noble Lord whether it is necessary to go on with the matter now?

LORD RICHARD GROSVENOR: The hon. Member made no objection, otherwise I should not have proposed to

go on with the Motion. The Motion is merely a formal one.

MR. DILLWYN said, there was no objection taken to the Motion.

MR. BIGGAR asked where the first meeting of the Committee would be?

LORD RICHARD GROSVENOR: I am not a Member of it.

MR. WARTON thought the Motion was in rather a peculiar form. There was nothing to show from the Notice given that the Committee was now composed of 21 Members. They could only guess or assume that it was.

MR. SPEAKER: The number 21 were originally nominated, and now two have been added.

METROPOLIS MANAGEMENT ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Viscount LEWISHAM, Bill to amend the Metropolis Management Act, *ordered* to be brought in by Viscount LEWISHAM, Sir CHARLES MILLS, Sir TREVOR LAWRENCE, Mr. JAMES STUART, Mr. GRANTHAM, and Mr. BOORD.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 138.]

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT (1875) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. TOMLINSON, Bill to declare the true meaning of section twenty-two of "The Friendly Societies Act, 1875," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. TOMLINSON, Mr. STANHOPE, Mr. WHITLEY, and Captain AYLMER.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 139.]

METROPOLITAN STREETS ACT (1867) EXTENSION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER, Bill to extend the area to which "The Metropolitan Streets Act, 1867," applies, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER and Secretary Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 137.]

House adjourned at a quarter before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 24th April, 1885.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Metropolis (Tabard Street, Newington) Provisional Order Confirmation * (81); Metropolis (Hughes Fields, Deptford) * (82); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Public Health Act) (No. 2) * (83); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 3) * (84); Arbitration * (85).

Second Reading—Referred to Select Committee—Burgh Police and Health (Scotland) * (57).

Committee—Report—Drainage and Improvement of Lands (Ireland) Provisional Orders * (70); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 2) * (71); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 3) * (72); Royal Irish Constabulary Redistribution * (75); Egyptian Loan * (74).

Report—Infants * (78).

Third Reading—Local Government Provisional Orders * (66); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) * (67); Solicitors (Ireland) * (53), and *passed*.

BURGH POLICE AND HEALTH (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 57.)

(*The Earl of Dalhousie.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that about a week ago a Memorandum was circulated among their Lordships describing the general scope and operation of the Bill. That statement contained a very concise and lucid description of the provisions of the Bill, and as he presumed that those of their Lordships who were interested in the subject had read the document, they would not expect him to enter into the matter at such length as would have been necessary if that Memorandum had not been issued. He would, nevertheless, say a few words as to the reasons which had induced the Government to deal with the subject in this particular form. In the first place, he would remind their Lordships that this Bill was no new measure. It had already been before the House of Commons, and, in fact, had passed through a Select Committee of the House last year. The Bill was now before their Lordships precisely in the shape in which it left the Select Committee of the House of Commons last year, with the exception of a few verbal changes. The Bill dealt with the whole municipal administration of towns. It consolidated and amended the existing legislation. It covered the same ground as was covered by the Police Bills of 1883 and 1850, and the General Police Act of 1862. The series of enactments had a twofold object. In the first place, they provided a municipal government for populous places which had grown up without

having any constitution granted them by Royal Charter, or any other form of municipal government. And, secondly, they conferred upon the authorities of the existing Royal burghs and other burghs such additional powers as they did not then possess. These burghs had already a constitution of Magistrates, of Councillors, and other officers. The Magistrates exercised considerable jurisdiction, both criminal and civil; but under their constitution the powers of assessment which they possessed were of a very limited character. They had no means, and, indeed, it was not their duty by statute, to support any regular Police Force. Neither had they the means of making improvements of any kind—of providing for a water supply, or of taking any effective measures in reference to public health. These serious defects it was intended to remedy by these several Acts. The previous Acts of 1850 and 1862, were permissive in their character. They could be adopted either in whole or in part; but, as a matter of fact, they generally were adopted by a great majority of the towns. The last Act, that of 1862, was adopted by a very large majority of the burghs of Scotland. That Act was passed five years before the present Public Health Act, and it dealt with various topics relating to public health. Some of these matters were afterwards dealt with by the Public Health Act, such as cleansing of streets, the ventilation of buildings, the management of public sewers, the management of slaughterhouses, and many other matters of that kind. But it was a matter for serious consideration whether these subjects should be left out of this Bill, in order to be dealt with by some future measure as an amendment of the Public Health Act, or whether the Municipal Code, which was already provided by the series of Police Acts, should in these matters as well as in other respects be brought up to the present day. After much consideration the latter course appeared to Her Majesty's Government to be, on the whole, the best course to pursue. In the first place, the Public Health Act was a general Act, and applicable not merely to the urban, but also to rural communities. Any amending Act would also have to be general in its character, and would have to apply to all sanitary matters in urban as well as in rural districts. It appeared to the Government that any such general measure of amendment ought to be followed by a reform of local county government. The Government were already pledged to deal with that question; but the period at which they could hope to deal with it was still distant, and the matters requiring to be dealt with were of most urgent importance. The second reason was, that the municipal burghs of Scotland were taking a great interest in this Bill, and were very anxious that their sanitary provisions should be incorporated in a Burgh Police Code. In proof of this, he might mention that the largest towns in Scotland had private Police Acts of their own, and that most of these had been passed subsequent to the passing of the General Public Health Act. The Convention of Royal Burghs, to whom the Government were very much indebted for their careful consideration of this Bill, had unanimously approved of this manner of dealing with the subject. In fact, the opinion of Scotland was unanimous, with the exception of the Police Commissioners of Glasgow. Their objections, however, were only recently raised, and until quite lately this Bill had the absolute and unanimous approval of the burghs of Scotland. As he had already said, the previous Acts were permissive in their character; but after an experience of 50 years of nearly all the towns of Scotland, it was thought that probably the right principle of dealing with the municipal administration in Scotland ought to be pretty nearly settled. The great majority of the existing police burghs and the inhabitants of those populous places which had no previous municipal constitution of their own, having adopted the Permissive Bills, the provisions of the present Bill were made compulsory. But there was a partial exception. Six of the largest towns in Scotland had obtained in recent years private Police Acts of their own. These Acts had been found to meet the peculiarities of each case. These Acts, consequently, the towns themselves were very anxious to retain so far as they possibly could. It seemed reasonable, however, that those provisions in the Bills which applied to certain matters pertaining to the public law should be made compulsory in all towns—such provisions, for example, as the estab-

lishment and regulation of the Police Force. The Police Force was, of course, supported in great part by the Imperial Government of the State. That alone was some reason for dealing with it in a compulsory manner. But it was desirable that the case should be dealt with by one uniform system. The second matters which were compulsory were those portions of the Bill which related to public health, and also matters pertaining to the Criminal Law. While all these portions of the Bill would be compulsory, the remainder would be optional to the large towns. Therefore, while the Bill provided for a general repeal of the Police Acts, those parts of the private Police Acts which dealt with other matters which the Bill did not make compulsory were saved; while the other parts of the private Police Acts dealing with matters which were dealt with compulsorily by this Bill were repealed. This might, perhaps, seem rather a complicated explanation; but the Bill itself was as clear and as well-arranged as the complicated nature of the subject admitted of. The complication was in the subject, and not in the Bill. To sweep away all existing Private Acts, as was suggested, and to substitute a General Act of Parliament to simplify the law, would be a very unpopular measure, and would meet with considerable opposition. An objection to this Bill was that it had a somewhat grandmotherly tendency. To that he would reply that there was scarcely anything in the Bill that was not already contained in Private Acts of Parliament. There was very little new matter in the Bill, and certainly it contained no new principle. Therefore the Government, in asking the House to pass the measure, were not asking their Lordships to take a leap in the dark. An experience of 20 years, it seemed to them, ought to suffice to discover the right method of dealing with municipal matters. If their Lordships sanctioned the second reading, he would move that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee of their Lordships' House. It was a very long measure, and one which the House would hardly care to deal with, except by a Select Committee. He begged, therefore, to move the second reading, on the understanding that it would be afterwards referred to a Select Committee of their Lordships' House.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª." —(*The Earl of Dalhousie.*)

LORD BALFOUR said, he was glad to hear from the noble Earl that he proposed to move that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee of their Lordships' House. When their Lordships considered that there were 529 clauses in the Bill, besides 50 pages of Schedules, they would probably be of opinion that that was the right way of dealing with it. At the same time, there were one or two matters of general principle in the Bill to which he wished to call the attention of the House before the Bill went to a Select Committee—chiefly some of the provisions in regard to the police administration, and as to the enormous powers—he believed the unprecedentedly large powers—given to magistrates in burghs to deal with offences, many of which were of the most petty kind, and which he could not help thinking would be much better left to the general good sense of the community. With regard to the administration of the police, the present state of the law was this—that all burghs of 7,000 inhabitants or more might, if they chose, maintain their own police. The proposal in the Bill was that all burghs of 20,000 inhabitants should do so, and that all burghs which had more than 5,000 inhabitants, and which at present maintained their own police, should continue to do so. He thought it would be much more satisfactory if this Bill had gone a little further in abolishing independent jurisdiction in the matter of police. The Bill itself admitted this principle, because it said that in future no more new independent jurisdictions of this kind would be created, and it just continued those which were at present in existence. He did not think he should be contradicted when he said that it was in conformity with the general policy of Parliament—and it was a sound policy—that these small independent jurisdictions in the matter of police should be as far as possible abolished; and he ventured to express the opinion that no burgh which had less than 10,000 or 12,000 inhabitants was large enough to maintain its own police. It was the experience of everybody connected with the administration of police matters in Scotland that these small jurisdictions were very prejudicial to the efficient service of the

police; that in many cases in small burghs there were constant complaints that the discipline of the police was not so efficient as in the counties; and there were also frequent complaints that in the small independent jurisdictions obstacles were raised to prompt apprehension of criminals who had committed crime within the bounds of their jurisdiction. In a small community of 5,000 or 6,000 inhabitants it was impossible to expect that the authorities would be able to engage a Chief Constable of the same education, efficiency, and ability as was the case in a larger community. There was not scope for the energies of an energetic and efficient public servant in such a small district. He wished to call their Lordships' attention to some of the large powers which the Bill proposed to confer on magistrates. He did not think it would be possible for the State regulation of individual conduct to go further than this Bill proposed. There were pages upon pages dealing with some of the most minute offences. How far these provisions were in advance of some of the Private Acts of burghs he was not able to say; but this he would say—that if the present Code as it stood was to be extended to all the burghs in Scotland, it would cause a very great deal of inconvenience and heartburning, and it would be a great surprise to the population, because he did not believe that one-half of them knew what was being proposed in their name by the magistrates and Commissioners of Burghs. He would like to mention one or two of the provisions of the Bill by way of illustration. It was provided that no refreshment of any kind might be sold after 12 o'clock at night, not even in a baker's shop, under a penalty of £5. A chimney sweeper might not walk on the footpath, and you might not carry a bundle on the footpath if it incommoded anyone else. There was no definition of a bundle, and he believed this would be a fruitful cause of litigation. If anyone had a spite against a person, he might jostle against that person when he was carrying a bundle, and that person might be taken before a magistrate and accused of "incommoding." Then there was a provision that no colourable imitation of a bank note was to be made or exhibited. That was a reasonable provision; but he did not see why there should be any further regulations as to a forged bank note in a burgh than in a country district. Then there was a provision against unlawful games, and a person could be find 40*s.* for playing any unlawful game in the streets. But there was no definition of an unlawful game. All tables for billiard playing were to be licensed; and if they were kept open and anyone was found playing upon them between 12 o'clock at night and 8 in the morning, they were to be fined 40*s.* or £5—he forgot which. Just to show their Lordships how very far-reaching this Bill was, he would tell them what it was thought necessary not to make an offence. Sub-section 36 of Section 393 provided that—

> "It shall not be deemed an offence to lay sand or other materials in any street in time of frost to prevent accident, or litter, or other suitable materials, to prevent the freezing of water in pipes, or, in case of sickness, to prevent noise, if the person laying such things causes them to be removed as soon as the occasion for them cases."

When anything of that sort had to be specially exempted, it showed how far-reaching the provisions of the Bill were. There were provisions which were extremely onerous upon another matter. As had been shown more than once on the Criminal Law Amendment Bill, there was a difference of opinion as to the clauses anent the keeping of disorderly houses; and he thought a very general opinion had been expressed in the House, or a very considerable body of opinion, that many of these clauses were not in conformity with public policy. They would find all these clauses embodied in this Bill. He knew what the answer would be. Some large towns had got Acts, such as Edinburgh and Glasgow and Dundee, and he thought Greenock, in which these clauses were incorporated, and the surrounding districts and other burghs, such as Leith and other places, complained of the effect of these clauses in Private Acts for large towns. Houses which these clauses were intended to suppress simply migrated beyond the bounds of these large towns, and went to the country district; and if they extended all these clauses to other parts of Scotland round the outskirts of every town, the same class of houses would grow up, and there would be no proper supervision. There would not be even

the same amount of possibility of dealing with these matters as in towns. He thought it would be better if these matters should be dealt with comprehensively in one general Bill for the whole country. As the noble Earl had said, this Bill was now compulsory. Formerly any burgh might or might not adopt the measure if it wished it, according to a plebiscite of the inhabitants; but under this Bill, in any burgh of 2,000 or more inhabitants, any seven ratepayers might present a petition to the Sheriff, and the other inhabitants of the burgh would have no option but that the Act should be adopted. Surely the 1,993 other inhabitants might be allowed to have some say in the matter as to whether this Bill was or was not to be adopted. There were also some provisions as to the compulsory taking of land which he should certainly like to have explained. He did not know how far they came in advance of the present law; but there were provisions in the Bill to enable the Commissioners of any burgh to take land compulsorily for the purpose of storing manure, and for making gasworks and waterworks. They had not to go to Parliament for the powers, but might go to the local Sheriff-substitute, whose judgment was final. It seemed to him that this was a provision which should be very carefully considered by Parliament before it was allowed to pass. Then there were various other matters of detail; but he thought he had said enough to show that this Bill required most careful consideration, and that the Select Committee upon it should be a strong and representative one, and that plenty of time should be given for its consideration. He might venture to make a suggestion. He had a strong impression that before such a Bill was passed affecting Scotland everybody should be made thoroughly aware of its provisions, and he would not be sorry to see the Select Committee sitting in public. He had no intention of opposing the second reading; but the subsequent stages of the Bill would require most careful consideration.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS said, from the speech which the noble Lord had just delivered, their Lordships must see how desirable it was that a measure of this character should be carefully considered before it became law. The Bill embodied, in a compulsory general Act, all those different provisions intefering with men in their private business; and it confirmed, he thought unnecessarily, those provisions which had already been passed by both Houses of Parliament in Private Bills. When clauses such as these were inserted in Private Bills, those who were opposed to them had an opportunity of appearing by counsel or otherwise in opposition. It became, therefore, more necessary, when all these provisions were to be embodied in a general Bill, to carefully consider how far they should apply. Under the provisions of this Bill the municipal authorities could regulate the size of every room and of every window in every dwelling house, and the ventilation of every dwelling house. It imposed heavy fines on omnibuses that were not in a proper state of repair; and if the horses were not properly trained there was a heavy penalty. There was a penalty of £2 or £5 if a slow vehicle did not immediately get out of the way of a faster vehicle passing. But he thought the most extraordinary provision of all was one dealing with morals. The object, no doubt, was that everyone should live in the Palace of Truth. It was provided that anyone who attempted to commit a falsehood would be liable to a penalty of £10 or two months' imprisonment. What they were fast coming to, if this kind of legislation was about to pass, was a state of things where every citizen would only be able to live and move and have his being by the favour of the Secretary of State, or of some municipal authority. He hoped their Lordships would put their foot down on this kind of legislation, and that the Bill would come out of the Committee very different to what it was now.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL said, this was, no doubt, a very important Bill. Having devoted weeks to the consideration of the measure, he had tried to understand it, but had failed to do so. The whole principle upon which the Bill was drawn up was most inconvenient. It was partly a mere condensation of the existing law, and it was partly an addition to the existing law. It was very difficult to make out what clauses were new legislation and what clauses were old legislation. He suggested that what was a mere re-enactment should have been treated in one type, and what was

new in another type. His noble Friend who had charge of the Bill (the Earl of Dalhousie) said there was very little in it that was new; but he (the Duke of Argyll) could not believe that all the provisions that had been detailed could be found in existing Statutes. Certainly, he had never heard any such powers in regard to the classes of offences which had been mentioned being exercised by magistrates, although he had no objection to sweeps being prevented from walking on the footpath. There were one or two clauses in the Bill with respect to which he had heard very serious remonstrances. One in particular was a very important one—that was the power given to populous places to annex parts of counties with the view to include them in the rates. That was a very important question. He had heard contests on behalf of his own tenants and feuars, who objected to be included in towns or cities that wanted to annex them. As he understood the Bill, this power of annexation was carried much further than under the existing law. Under the Bill, not only great cities and important towns, but populous places, constituted into police burghs, would have the power of annexing parts of neighbouring counties at the discretion of the Sheriff of that part of the district which had the majority of ratepayers, which was, of course, the populous place itself. Therefore, the Sheriff had the power of annexing new land to these populous places; and if the Sheriff of the less populous place objected to the annexation he would have no power to resist it. He had heard remonstrances on these points from persons well versed in the law. It would be absurd to oppose such a Bill as this on the second reading; but it was one that would require the very close attention of their Lordships.

The Earl of ROSEBERY said, it might be as well to state, with reference to the expression "falsehood," which had a somewhat ridiculous appearance, that the Scotch law phrase "commit falsehood, fraud, and wilful imposition," was a synonym for the old English word "swindling."

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *referred* to a Select Committee.

INFANTS BILL.—(No. 78.)

(*The Lord Fitzgerald.*)

REPORT.

Amendments *reported* (according to Order).

Clause 3 (Mother may appoint guardian).

The Earl of LIMERICK said, he objected to the provision in the clause which gave the mother of the infant power to appoint and nominate a guardian by deed or will. Whatever was to be done on behalf of the wife ought to be done openly during her lifetime. It ought not to be possible for her to make an arrangement in secret, which should be kept secret until after her death. It was a dangerous and invidious power to give to enable a wife to appoint a guardian by will. He, therefore, proposed to amend the sub-section of the clause by providing that the Court might, upon the application of the mother of an infant, appoint a person or persons to act as guardian or guardians jointly with the father if the Court was satisfied that this was necessary or desirable.

Amendment *moved,*

In Sub-section 2, line 22, leave out from ("The") to end of sub-section and insert ("court may, upon the application of the mother of any infant, appoint some fit person or persons to act as guardian or guardians of such infant after her death, jointly with the father of such infant, if satisfied that such appointment is necessary or desirable for the welfare of such infant."—(*The Earl of Limerick.*)

Lord FITZGERALD said, the objections of the noble Earl would in some respects apply to any appointment of a guardian by will, for until the death of the testator, if it was the testator's wish, the provisions of a will must be kept secret. As the clause stood, it was the clause of Lord Cairns; and the Amendment would restore the clause to its original form. There might be cases in which the wife had the strongest reason for believing that her husband was not a proper person to be intrusted with the charge of their children after her death.

Lord INCHIQUIN said, he could not agree with either the Amendment or with the clause as it stood. The noble and learned Earl (the late Earl Cairns) said that in case of a temporary differ-

ence between the husband and wife the latter might make an application to the Court to annoy him and put him upon his defence. In any case the clause would be a fruitful source of inconvenience. The person or persons appointed by will would most likely be hostile to the husband, and even if not hostile could scarcely assert a claim to act without offending the father. The father might say that if he was to be interfered with the children might be taken from him altogether, and he would not leave them any of his property. There might be individual cases in which the father should be interfered with; but for that the law already provided. He should, therefore, move that the sub-section of the clause be omitted.

Amendment *moved*, to leave out Sub-section 2.—(*The Lord Inchiquin.*)

LORD WATSON said, he approved of the clause as it stood rather than of the proposed Amendment. The clause could have no operation until it was proved that the father was not a fit person to have the control of the children, and that the person nominated was a fit person. A person nominated as guardian would have to make up his mind before applying to the Court whether he was likely to obtain the confirmation of his appointment. He would enter the Court with the responsibility that the case for his appointment must be proved.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, there was some inconvenience in having two Motions before the House at once. He had already explained that the law at present was very different from what it would be under that clause. It was true that the Court had power to take children from their father, either in the lifetime of the mother or at any other time, for causes which the precedents had established as sufficient. But that power was circumscribed by the rules for its application laid down by Lord Eldon and other Judges, and was never exercised save in the most extreme cases, not only of immorality or profligacy on the part of the father, but of such immorality as was proved to be likely to directly influence or affect the child. Even if the father was living in scandalous profligacy, but did not bring his children into the society of his paramour, or did not deprave the child by wicked teaching, the Court would not interfere. The cases chiefly meant to be provided for by the sub-section were those in which, in the opinion of all reasonable persons, it must be altogether wrong to allow the child to fall back under the power of the father. Take an extreme case. When the father and mother were living apart, and when there were young children, girls, living under the care of the mother during her life. In such cases, after the mother's death the children fell back under the power of the father, however undesirable such a result might be, and even if the mother, herself being pure and blameless, had obtained a divorce from her husband. In such a case as that, this clause would enable the wife to anticipate and make provision for the event of her own death, and to name the person whom she would wish to succeed to her own place, so far as that was possible. But the clause as framed by his lamented Friend Lord Cairns did not give her an absolute power, or enable her to do even this, for any reasons which were not grave reasons. The Court could only confirm the exercise of the power in cases where it was absolutely necessary to do so for the benefit of the child.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, he must protest against the use which had been made of the name of his noble and learned Friend the late Earl Cairns, whose authority was so great in that House. He knew that at the end of last Session his late noble and learned Friend had expressed himself privately as perfectly horrified with this Bill, and his wonder that it had ever been allowed to pass the House of Commons. What Earl Cairns might have said to the Committee to mitigate legislation which he did not feel himself strong enough to avert in the way of compromise he did not know; but as the noble and learned Earl was now no more, he asked their Lordships to dismiss from their mind any prejudice in favour of this Bill which might be raised by citing the name of Earl Cairns. It was impossible to exaggerate the importance of the decision at which they had arrived, because it was a decision which might affect the happiness of any married man who had the misfortune to be a widower. A man might be exposed to interference to which he had never been exposed before. It became them,

therefore, to watch whether the securities were sufficient to save a father against whom there might be no complaint from undue and improper interference. The language of the noble and learned Lords who had spoken was very different from that of the Bill. They said it was necessary, where a wife was living separate from her husband, and the father's influence would be dangerous to the children, that they should be saved from his influence; but there was nothing of that kind in the Bill. If their language could be imported into the Bill he should not have so much objection to it. The Bill said nothing of the cases to which the Lord Chancellor had referred, or of a father who wilfully corrupted his children's mind. It allowed a wife, by a will secretly made and locked up in her desk, to appoint any guardian or guardians, male or female, no matter what their character or capacity as guardians, who were to have equal power with the father; and if there were two of them they could outvote the father in everything which appertained to the bringing up and management of his own children. What security was there that the wife would exercise such a power wisely? None whatever. Of course, in a vast number of instances the power would not be exercised at all, or if it were it would be rightly exercised; but there might be a case where a woman, living in loneliness, subject to the influence of mischievous or gossiping persons, misled by false stories, or guided by mistaken spiritual advisers, might exercise this power in circumstances which would make it improbable that she was exercising it wisely. The mother would have the power of projecting into the family of the father two representatives of her own, who would have the right of determining how the children should be educated. Let their Lordships consider what cases might arise. There might be the case of a Catholic or a Protestant mother, the father being of the opposite religion. Or there might be a very Low Church father and a very High Church wife, and the latter might appoint two High Church guardians, who would proceed to bring up the children in a manner wholly opposed to the wishes of the father. The Bill would enable the wife to exercise after her death a power which she could not have exercised while living. The two guardians appointed by her would obtain a power which she never possessed, and however odious they might be to the father, she, being dead, would be incapable of retracting what she had done. Keeping cases of scandal out of view altogether, they would wreck hundreds of households if they were to allow guardians to be forced into a family at variance with the opinions of the father. The father might be a man who took an old-fashioned view as to the way his daughters should be educated. The wife might be a strong-minded woman, and appoint as guardian a woman with a taste for male studies and occupations. They might, on the other hand, have a father with an austere view of the duties of life, and wished to bring up his sons in virtue and frugality, and perhaps an undue abstinence from the amusements of the world; and the friends of the wife might be of an opposite character. They might be persons who had a great love of amusement, who might, perhaps, attach an exaggerated importance to our great national sports at Epsom and Newmarket. What would be the effect on the children? It was bad enough for the father, for he could not imagine anything more deplorable to a father than having his children wrested from him in this way, and brought up in a manner he did not approve of. But what would be the effect on the children? There would be constant squabbling between the father and the guardians as to what kind the religious teaching should be—what morality should be considered right or wrong. It would completely wreck the morals and the faith of the children, who would see those who had the bringing of them up differ on every point on which their bringing up depended. He was aware the answer would be that this was not to take place unless a Court deemed it necessary and desirable. No doubt, there was a great deal of majesty in a Law Court, and his noble Friend thought he had disposed of every question when he said it would be decided by a Court. For his own part, however, he was not an absolute believer in the divinity of a Court. He was not prepared to give that absolute confidence to the Court except under well-defined conditions. Under the Bill, if only a single Judge thought it desirable not to interfere

with the dying wishes of a wife, the guardians she appointed would be thrust upon the father.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: No, no. The burden of proof was the other way.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: The words of the Act were—

"The court, after her death, if satisfied that such appointment is necessary or desirable for the welfare of the children," &c.

He did not say that in a considerable number of cases the Judge would not insist on confining the confirmation to cases of proved incapacity or unfitness of the father; but they had no security whatever that that would universally be the case. If they laid down in an Act of Parliament what they required to be done, no doubt the Judges would give effect to their wishes; but if a Judge were to decide, without any guidance whatever, whether he would set aside the nomination of guardians by the mother, the decision would be left absolutely to the accidents of his own individual disposition. The Judge's intentions might be good, but then he might be a man with peculiarities. For instance, he might think that religion was not of much importance. He had been treating the matter on the supposition that the High Court would have to decide the question; but, under the provisions of the Bill, a County Court Judge would have the power of forcing guardians into a family at the will, perhaps, of a wicked, an infamous, or a frivolous wife. He could not conceive that their Lordships would, with light hearts, make such a revolution in all English families as was shadowed forth by this Bill. If words were introduced to supersede the father, where he was shown unfit to have the guardianship, he would not resist any such proposal; but the Bill, as it stood, seemed to him to be the greatest interference with the rights and privileges which men valued more than they did their own lives, on the mere opinion of a County Court Judge. To oust the father from all care of his own children seemed to him so unwise, and so unlike anything ever done in legislation before, that he earnestly hoped the House would pause before agreeing to it. He thought the best plan would be not to divide, but to bring up a clause dealing with those cases on which they were all agreed.

EARL GRANVILLE said, the noble Marquess had spoken in an impassioned way against reference to the opinion of the late Earl Cairns, and had called on their Lordships not to allow their minds to be biassed by what had been said in that connection, and then the noble Marquess proceeded to give a very strong expression of opinion on the part of Earl Cairns against the Bill, which, it appeared, had been confided to the noble Marquess last year. He (Earl Granville) thought it better to be guided by the public utterances of Earl Cairns; and, so far as he knew, Earl Cairns had never expressed his opposition to this Bill, though he had said it was a Bill which required great care and attention with regard to its details. Acting upon that opinion, Lord Cairns suggested that the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee," and in that Select Committee he took immense pains himself. It was an extraordinary thing for the noble Marquess to ask the House to vote against a clause on the authority of Lord Cairns, which Lord Cairns himself had framed. The noble Marquess went further, and made a speech in which he spoke of the danger of giving a posthumous power to a wife to overrule her husband in respect of guardians, and then, at the end, the noble Marquess anticipated what their answer would be—namely, that they should read the words of the clause, which showed that there was no such power given. The Bill provided simply that the Court should have power to intervene, and if it thought proper, might confirm the appointment of the guardians so nominated. But if the noble Marquess was right, the argument was strong against the power which the Court of Chancery possessed in regard to children. Then he said he was putting his case too weakly; this decision was to be taken, not by a Court of Chancery, but by a County Court Judge.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH: Hear, hear!

EARL GRANVILLE: Of course the noble Lord was quite right to cheer his Leader, whatever he might say. But he was going to state what was in the Bill itself. If the noble Marquess had read the Bill, he would have found that it was in the option of either of the parties to go to the County Court Judge or require the case to be taken to a higher Court,

and if first decided by the County Court Judge, there was a right of appeal to the highest Court in the Kingdom. He really never saw a case which more completely disposed of the arguments of the noble Marquess than the present.

LORD BRAMWELL pointed out that by the 5th clause of the Bill the wife would have the power to go to the Court in the lifetime of her husband; and it occurred to him that unless some such provision as that under consideration were inserted, the wife, if she had reason to be dissatisfied with her husband, would be almost driven to go to the Court in his lifetime to get the power to appoint guardians, and scandals would thereby arise which otherwise would never be made public.

Amendment *negatived.*

On Question, That Sub-section 2 stand part of the Bill?

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK said, he hoped the clause would not be struck out altogether, as he felt the force of the remarks of the noble and learned Lord who had just sat down, as the wife might be driven into Court to do what, under the Bill, she could do in private. He thought it would be most undesirable to drive the husband and wife into a quarrel. There were many cases in which a wife would endure a great deal for the sake of the children rather than raise a scandal.

THE DUKE OF RICHMOND AND GORDON suggested that it would be well to strike out this particular clause then, and to bring up another clause which would more completely meet the views of noble Lords on the third reading. He thought the power of the wife in respect to appointing guardians to act after her death should be confined to cases in which the husband had been guilty of misconduct as to make him an improper person to have the absolute control of his children. What was desired was, the introduction of words which would set out the cases in which it would be desirable the wife should have the power to appoint guardians.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR hoped his noble and learned Friend would not agree to the suggestion. It would be better to amend the clause on the third reading if thought necessary.

On Question? Their Lordships *divided:*—Contents 42; Not-Contents 28: Majority 14.

Amendment *disagreed to.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 5 (Court may make orders as to custody).

EARL BEAUCHAMP moved an Amendment limiting the power of the Court to make an order to cases in which the father and mother are separated by deed or decree of a Court or otherwise. He explained that the Amendment was drafted and proposed by the late Lord Cairns, when the Bill was before the Select Committee. If some such alteration were not introduced into the clause a mother would be able to make an application to the Court upon any frivolous pretext. To prevent such occurrences the power of applying to the Court ought to be limited to cases where the parents had separated. Under the clause as it stood husbands would be at the mercy of their wives, should the latter choose to carry their domestic quarrels into Court.

Amendment *moved,*

In page 2, line 12, to insert at the beginning of the clause ("Where the father or mother of any infant are living separate under a separation by deed or decree of the Court or otherwise.")—(*The Earl Beauchamp.*)

LORD FITZGERALD opposed the Amendment. There was no public expression on the part of Lord Cairns as to the proposal contained in the clause. Was it not a shocking thing that this right should not be given to the wife unless she was divorced or lived separately from her husband?

LORD BRAMWELL said, that by the clause as it stood when the husband and wife were living together the wife might require the Court to make an order, the effect of which would be to transfer the control of the children, which the father now rightly possessed, to both father and mother. That would be a Dual Control of the most vicious kind. The reason why this right should be given to the wife when living separately was that she was no longer a member of the household, and then it might be proper that she should have a voice in the management of the children. When husband and wife were separated in that way there was no increase of scandal

in her going to the Court. What he remembered that great lawyer and consummate Judge, whose loss he so much regretted, did when he dealt with this provision was, he objected to it on the ground, among others, that every little quarrel between husband and wife, which might otherwise be easily made up would enable her to rush off to the Court.

LORD BRABOURNE said, that whilst the Law Lords on the Select Committee had differed upon this Amendment, the three Lay Lords had all voted against it; and as he had the honour to be one, he wished to say why he had ventured to dissent from Lord Cairns's opinion. In most cases of husband and wife disagreeing, the wife would never desire to apply to the Court, and the question would never arise. But there might be cases—as for instance, when it had been agreed before marriage that the children of one sex should be brought up in one religion, and those of the other sex in another—in which the wife might desire so to apply. If this Amendment were carried, she could not do so whilst she lived with her husband; but the moment she separated from him, "either by the decree of a Court or otherwise," she could make the application. Therefore, this Amendment would offer a direct premium to the wife to separate from her husband, by making that separation the only way by which she could acquire a right which it was generally conceded that she ought to have. His (Lord Brabourne's) noble and learned Friend (Lord Bramwell) said that the clause without the Amendment would strike at the supremacy of the husband; but he should recollect that the whole of this Bill was based upon the desire to elevate the *status* of the mother, and give her a greater right over her children than she had hitherto possessed, and if his noble and learned Friend wished to maintain unimpaired the entire supremacy of the husband, he should have opposed the Bill upon its second reading.

On Question? Their Lordships *divided*:—Contents 28; Not-Contents 30: Majority 2.

Amendment *disagreed to*.

Clause *agreed to*.

Bill to be read 3ª on *Thursday* next.

Lord Bramwell

PUBLIC HEALTH—CREMATION.

QUESTION.

THE EARL OF ONSLOW said, he wished to call attention to the erection of a public crematorium at Woking, and the cremation of a body there on the 26th of March last, and to inquire, Whether Her Majesty's Government would use whatever powers they had in the matter for the discouragement of the practice?

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE asked what powers the noble Earl referred to?

THE EARL OF ONSLOW said, he understood the Home Secretary to state in "another place" that Her Majesty's Government had power to discourage the practice.

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, he was not aware of the existence of such power. Some time ago the Government was asked to legislate, with a view of surrounding the practice by certain safeguards. The reply of the Secretary of State was that the people of this country were not in the least inclined to adopt cremation as an ordinary mode of disposing of the dead. He would, however, endeavour to ascertain what the views of the Home Secretary were upon the subject, so that he might be able to give the noble Earl a more satisfactory answer if he desired it.

THE EARL OF ONSLOW said, he would repeat the Question on a future occasion.

METROPOLIS (TABARD STREET, NEWINGTON) PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION BILL [H.L.] (NO. 81.)

A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State for the improvement of an unhealthy area situated at Newington, within the Metropolis: And

METROPOLIS (HUGHES FIELDS, DEPTFORD) PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION BILL [H.L.] (NO. 82.)

A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State for the improvement of an unhealthy area situated at Deptford, within the Metropolis:

Were *presented* by The Earl of DALHOUSIE; read 1ª; and *referred* to the Examiners.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (PUBLIC HEALTH ACT) (NO. 2.) BILL [H.L.] (NO. 83.)

A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland re-

lating to the Drumcondra, Clonliffe, and Glasnevin Township, and to waterworks in the town of Cavan: And

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (LABOURERS ACT) (NO. 3) BILL [H.L.] (NO. 84.)

A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland under the Labourers (Ireland) Act, 1883, relating to the Ballymahon, Carrick-on-Shannon, Enniscorthy, Gorey, Kanturk, Longford, Wexford, and Youghal unions:

Were *presented* by The LORD PRESIDENT; read 1ª; and *referred* to the Examiners.

ARBITRATION BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to consolidate the law relating to arbitration—Was *presented* by The Lord BRAMWELL; read 1ª. (No. 85.)

House adjourned at Seven o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 24th April, 1885.

MINUTES.]—SUPPLY—*considered in Committee*—*Resolutions* [April 23] *reported.*

PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—London Street Tramways (Extensions).

PUBLIC BILLS — *Ordered* — Water Provisional Orders.*

Ordered — First Reading — Sunday Closing (Wales) Act (1881) Amendment * [141].

Second Reading—Gas Provisional Orders * [126].

Report of Select Committee—Registration (Occupation Voters) * [No. 162].

Committee — Registration of Voters (Ireland) [110]—R.P.

Committee—Report—Highways * [89].

Report—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) * [120]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 5) * [117]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 6) * [118]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 7) * [119].

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

LONDON STREET TRAMWAYS (EXTENSIONS) BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Dodds.*)

MR. GREGORY, in moving the rejection of the Bill, said, he desired to call the attention of the House to the important nature of the provisions of the measure and the very considerable powers which it proposed to take. A measure very similar was introduced by the London Street Tramways Company last year, but was rejected by the Select Committee to which it was referred. As originally introduced in the present year, it was a very large scheme, which would have materially affected an Institution with which he had the honour to be connected — the Foundling Hospital; but that part of the scheme had been dropped, and therefore he did not speak on behalf of that Institution, which was satisfied with the course which had been taken. He was authorized, however, to speak on behalf of other persons who opposed the scheme in the last Session of Parliament, and who succeeded in getting a decision of the Committee in their favour. The Bill consisted of several parts, and proposed to authorize the Company to construct additional tramways, and, in connection therewith, to improve certain streets in the Metropolis; and he would deal with it as the promoters themselves dealt with it. In the first place, the measure comprised some small extensions in the neighbourhood of the Fleet Road. He did not know whether there was any objection to those extensions; his own objection related not so much to them as to other parts of the Bill. The measure further comprised extensions down the Chalk Farm Road, down a road called Crowndale Road, and also a considerable extension down King's Cross Road. Having had some personal experience in the matter, he deemed it necessary to point out to the consideration of the House the objections to the scheme of the Company which that personal experience enabled him to mention. In regard to what, for the purposes of argument, he would call scheme No. 1—the extension down Chalk Farm Road—it was a road upon which, as many Members of the House would be aware, there was a very considerable traffic, and a main road running as far as Hampstead Heath. Many omnibuses passed along it, and in parts the traffic was of a very congested and difficult nature. An iron bridge carried it over the Regent's Canal in Camden Town, and along a

portion of the road which was approached by gradients of considerable steepness. The bridge was a girder bridge, which only admitted of one carriage with two lines of passage, one up and the other down, which were only wide enough to admit of one carriage passing to or fro at the same time. It was proposed by the Tramway Company that they should have the power of passing over that narrow bridge, and up and down that incline, without any alteration of the gradient or any lateral extension of the bridge. The consequence would be that under the powers which the street tramways usually possessed they would have complete control over the traffic. They talked themselves of "marshalling the traffic," which he presumed to mean that they would stop all other traffic until their own tramcars had passed; and as it would be impossible for any other carriages to pass at the same time, the rest of the traffic along the road would be completely at the mercy of the Tramway Company. It was quite evident that such powers would be highly inconvenient, and might be exercised very much to the detriment of the general public. He could not find that there was any great reason for this extension, and it would only be necessary for the tramway to make a small detour in order to reach the same point, and the traffic was already abundantly provided for. So much, then, for the proposed extension along the Chalk Farm Road. He now came to scheme No. 2, by which it was proposed to extend the tramway system down the road from King's Cross, where the Great Northern Railway Station was situated, so as to carry on the traffic down the Farringdon Road to Blackfriars Bridge, along and across roads upon which there was also, at the present moment, a considerable amount of traffic. This road would be carried along the whole line of the old Fleet Ditch, following pretty closely the valley through which the ditch formerly ran, and having on each side very steep, sloping streets. In one instance a street ran down to the valley at a gradient of something like 1 in 13. There were streets on both sides along which the traffic was very considerable. It would, therefore, be pretty well imagined that the running of tramcars along this route would be a source of great danger to the traffic coming down at right angles from the steep roads on each side. That fact was felt to be a strong ground of objection to the Bill when it was before the Select Committee last year; but they were told now that it was proposed to undertake certain engineering works in the neighbourhood of King's Cross which, in future, would obviate the difficulty. The nature of the ground, however, would render it almost impossible to construct a tramway with safety to the ordinary traffic, because, as he had pointed out already, the streets on both sides of the valley sloped down to the centre upon very steep gradients, and unless the banks were dealt with it would be impossible to obviate the difficulty at all. The provisions of the Bill were fully considered by the Committee last year; and it was for the House to consider whether by allowing the Bill to pass now they would reverse the decision then arrived at, and also whether they would sanction the principle of allowing the promoters of Private Bills to come before Parliament, year after year, with the same scheme, in the hope, in the end, by the enormous expenses incurred, of wearing down their opponents. It would be manifest that a powerful Company like this, coming before Parliament year after year, would gradually wear down any power of resistance on the part of their less wealthy opponents. It must be borne in mind that Parliament had already intimated, as plainly as possible, that tramways would not be allowed to be constructed in the centre of London. There could only be one object in promoting this King's Cross extension—namely, to bring the system of tramways which now existed in the outskirts on the Northern side of the Metropolis into the heart of London. As the scheme was now presented, it terminated in nothing — indeed, there was no terminus indicated at all; but, no doubt, the object of the Company was to connect the system hereafter with Blackfriars Bridge and the tramways now existing on the South side of the river, so as to carry the tramways across the Thames, and place the lines on the North and South side of London in immediate connection with each other. He ventured to submit that he had shown sufficient grounds to induce the House to refuse to read the Bill a second time; but his hon. Friend

the Member for West Essex (Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson) would probably state, by-and-bye, what the views of the Committee of last year were. Even without taking into consideration the grounds upon which the Committee threw out the Bill, he thought he might safely appeal to the House, on public grounds, not to permit these tramways to find their way into the heart of London. They were already able to reach the City by means of the City Road, and they should be kept to that perfectly clear and well-defined line. There already existed sufficient means of communication between the North side of London and the City; and while the Northern tramways were restricted to the North side of London, those on the South side of the Thames should be kept to the South side as they now were. He begged to move that the Bill be read a second time on that day six months.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Gregory.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. W. M. TORRENS said, that in supporting the second reading of the Bill he wished to express his regret at the course which his hon. Friend had taken. There were a great number of provisions contained in the Bill to which his hon. Friend took no objection at all; and it would be a departure from the ordinary and almost uniform practice of the House, where a Bill contained provisions of a separate and distinct character, not to send that Bill to a tribunal upstairs specially appointed to decide upon its merits. If the House consented to depart from that rule now, there could be no doubt that they would be called upon to do so in other cases; and their decisions in reference to Private Bills would hereafter depend upon the chance of bringing up a certain number of Members to support or reject a measure without the possibility being afforded of entering into the merits of any case of the kind. There was one ground which might induce the House to take a favourable consideration of the present measure which he thought the hon. Baronet the Member for West Essex, who presided over the Committee last year, would be the last person to disregard when his attention was called to the matter. He (Mr. Torrens) had now been for 12 months engaged upon a Royal Commission appointed to investigate the cause, and to suggest remedies to get rid of the overcrowding of the population in the centre of large towns; and he would be guilty of no violation of confidence, although the Report of the Commission had not yet been laid upon the Table, if he said that the Commissioners were in absolute despair where to find sufficient remedies for the cruel pressure which now existed. Not only was the pressure seriously felt, but it was positively detrimental to the health of the whole community; and yet his hon. and learned Friend said that Parliament ought to keep these tramways from getting into the centre of the Metropolis. He (Mr. Torrens) frankly avowed that his object was to bring them as close as possible to the centre of the town, and he took that course for the sake of the community at large, because it was impossible at present to find vents enough to relieve the pressure which now existed—a pressure full of future danger, and calculated to produce ultimately every evil that could be enumerated. He regretted that his hon. Friend the Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory) had not been a Member of the Commission, so that he might have been able to bring his great knowledge and sagacity to bear upon its deliberations; but, owing to the fact that his hon. Friend was not upon it, he was unable to appreciate the pressing necessity for relief, and, by the action he was now taking, was, in point of fact, attempting to get rid of a source of relief. He (Mr. Torrens) contended that the first duty of the House was to consider the interests and welfare of the community at large. What was the case of those who objected to this tramway line? His hon. Friend said he appeared there to advocate the claims of certain persons who opposed a similar scheme when it was introduced last Session. About 210 owners of property along the proposed route were interested in the matter, and of that number about 50 had petitioned against the Bill. Surely the House of Commons were not to be bound by one-fourth against the other three-fourths. Considering the matter upon that ground, he entirely denied that there was any case for the opposition. No doubt the

Bill of last Session was rejected by the Committee; but that, he thought, did not bind the House in regard to a new Bill, and it would be very unfair to prevent the promoters from going before a Committee again. A Committee upstairs, after the Bill had been read a second time, would fully inquire into all the provisions of the Bill, and would be able to say whether the question of the narrow bridge referred to by his hon. Friend ought to be regarded as a valid objection to a particular clause of the measure. It would, however, be no reason for throwing out the whole Bill, which was a measure of many clauses, which clauses, for the most part, were unopposed. He asked the House, therefore, not to depart from their usual practice, but to repose confidence in the tribunal to which they were accustomed to intrust these questions. Seeing that the House itself was altogether unfit to discuss such questions, let them hesitate before they usurped the functions of their ordinary tribunal. They had hitherto found their Committees thoroughly reliable; but that was no reason why they should be bound by a single decision, and for all future time refuse to reopen a question which had been once decided. The promoters believed they would now be able to remove the physical objections which were raised against their scheme last year, and that their new proposals would meet with the approval of the hon. Baronet the Member for West Essex, who presided over the Select Committee. The promoters had displayed every willingness to show deference to the opinions of the Committee; but the House had something even more than that to consider—namely, the interests and welfare of the people of London generally. He trusted the House would not be led away by the objections which had been raised by his hon. Friend, and which were very small indeed when compared with the general public advantages which would be conferred by the Bill, which advantages were of a nature that could scarcely be realized by those who had not served upon the Commission of which he had the honour to be a Member.

SIR HENRY SELWIN-IBBETSON said, he would much rather not have taken any part in this discussion; but as he was Chairman of the Committee which considered what was practically the present Bill as it stood, with a very slight alteration, he felt bound to say a few words, and to put before the House, in the first place, the reasons which induced the Committee last year to decide unanimously to reject the Bill as it was then promoted, and the difference which existed between the present measure and that of last year. The principal object of the Bill of last year was identical with that of the measure now under the consideration of the House—namely, the construction of a system of tramways along the Northern road by the extension of existing tramway lines in the neighbourhood of Camden Town and Chalk Farm Road, and a proposal to carry those tramways on by way of King's Cross Road to Farringdon Street. There was also a further proposal to connect two existing tramways running down the Crowndale Road, which was not in the Bill of last year; but, with that exception, his hon. Friend the Member for Finsbury (Mr. Torrens) would not be able to show that this Bill differed in any material point from the one which was carefully considered by the Committee last year, and after that careful consideration thrown out upon public grounds. The Committee took considerable pains to make themselves masters of all the engineering details of the Bill; they visited the sites in each instance, and had those sites fully explained to them, as well as the engineering difficulties. In dealing, for instance, with the Chalk Farm Road route, they inspected the bridge over the Regent's Canal and the gradients of the road leading to the bridge, and the proposals contained in the measure with regard to that bridge certainly formed one of the chief objections they took to the measure. The bridge itself was divided into two narrow compartments sufficient for the passing of a single carriage each way, and the gradients of the approaches were unusually steep. In these respects the present Bill did not propose to alter the provisions of the measure of last year, and if the tramway were constructed the existing traffic must necessarily be materially impeded. As many hon. Members knew, the traffic was at the present moment very much congested; but, by making a detour, a delay of some four or five minutes only would take place, although he admitted that the altera-

tion would involve a change of carriages. But the whole saving which the proposed scheme would effect really would not amount to more than that; and at the present moment there existed a tramway line running along part of nearly the same route as the projected extension, which was utilized for the conveyance of the same people which the new line was intended to serve. Consequently, the masses of the population, which his hon. Friend (Mr. Torrens) was desirous of serving, would sustain no serious injury; and he (Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson) was quite as anxious of providing them with every facility for getting to and from their daily labour as his hon. Friend. The length of the line would be a little shorter, he admitted; but, practically, the persons whom the present Bill was intended to serve would be placed at no disadvantage, and the connection between two existing tramway lines could be made, and one route formed at the present moment by going a little further round. The engineering difficulties involved in carrying out the proposed scheme were very great, and the construction of a tramway line would inflict considerable injury upon the public by blocking up the already crowded traffic along the Chalk Farm Road. Both the goods traffic and the passenger traffic by omnibus would be impeded, and it was upon that ground mainly that the Bill of last year was rejected. The scientific men who were examined before the Committee were entirely agreed as to the engineering difficulties; but, beyond that, the Committee examined the line of route, and were able to form their own opinion as to the inconvenience and confusion which a block at the Canal Bridge would occasion. By the other part of the scheme, the Tramway Company sought power to construct a line running from King's Cross to Farringdon Road, and in that case the danger to the traffic would even be still greater than it was on the other line. As his hon. Friend the Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory) had pointed out, the road along which it was proposed to carry the tramway occupied the site of the old Fleet Ditch, and ran down from the Pentonville Road to a street called Wharton Street, the gradients along the whole line being exceedingly steep. Not only would a block there be extremely dangerous, as his hon. Friend suggested, but several accidents had taken place quite recently, before the visit of the Committee, in consequence of horses getting the better of their drivers, and galloping down the street at a pace which rendered it impossible to stop them. The footway was consequently rendered exceedingly unsafe; and he might add that the footway which ran upon one side of these inclined streets, along the whole of that part of King's Cross Road, was most dangerous even at the present moment, and would be infinitely more so if this tramway were constructed. Indeed, the present Bill would increase the danger, as it would be impossible to diminish the levels, and it was proposed to increase the height of the road. Therefore, all the dangers which were pointed out to the Committee last year would be retained, and, to his mind, would even, if possible, be increased. His hon. Friend the Member for Finsbury had spoken in the interests of the working classes; but it so happened that, although this tramway line would be dangerous if it were allowed to be constructed, there did exist in the Metropolitan Railway, along the whole line of the contemplated tramway, that cheap means of conveyance which his hon. Friend would like to see established for the working population. They practically had at their disposal now, by the Underground Railway, and, in the Northern part of the district, by existing tramways, although in one instance for a shorter distance, a double means of conveyance, without any of the dangers involved in the construction of the proposed line, which dangers, although they induced the Committee to reject the Bill last year, did not appear to have been obviated in the least degree. He certainly thought the Committee were right in the decision at which they arrived last year, and that it ought to be maintained in the present instance. In conclusion, he would merely point out to the House that, although he would be the last person to advocate that the House should take into its own hands the decision of questions involved in Private Bills, which were far better threshed out before a Committee upstairs, yet he did think that when the same Bill was brought forward year after year without any material alteration, notwithstanding the fact that the

reasons for rejecting the measure were the engineering difficulties and the danger to the public, the House, in this instance, would be perfectly justified in supporting the conclusion come to by the Committee of last year, and in rejecting the Bill.

MR. GORST said, he thought that the principle laid down by the hon. Baronet was a rather objectionable one, because it amounted to this—that if people went before a Committee with certain evidence, the decision of the Committee upon that evidence was to be a decision for all time, which was never to be upset hereafter upon any additional evidence or consideration. He had no doubt that the Committee last year came to a perfectly legitimate decision on the Bill then placed before them; and if the House were now asked to support them in that decision he should certainly feel inclined to do so. But circumstances had changed, and in the present year another scheme was brought before Parliament, and it would be stretching the procedure of that House to a very unwarrantable extent if, because the Committee decided against the Bill of last year, the House were to refuse to read the present Bill a second time now. What was the Manchester Ship Canal Bill but a great scheme which came before Parliament year after year. So far from finding the decision of one Committee rigidly adhered to, it was notorious that in the case of that Bill both the House of Commons and the House of Lords had in each successive year reversed the decision given in the preceding year. It was generally admitted that this scheme, if carried, would be an enormous boon to the Metropolis; and Parliament had long been attempting to find a remedy, in the interests of the working classes, for the congested condition of certain districts. The answer of the hon. Baronet was that there was provision already; that the passengers could get out of the tramcars at King's Cross and get into a train on the Metropolitan Railway which would take them on to Farringdon Street. Was that a reasonable proposal? Was it more convenient to go the whole way by a tramcar, or to go part by tramcar and the rest by the Metropolitan Railway? He certainly thought that when the hon. Baronet mentioned the Metropolitan Railway he really let the cat out of the bag, and that the opposition which was that day directed against the second reading of the Bill was not the opposition of the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory), or of the landowners and frontiers who could not afford to come there to oppose the Bill year after year, but the opposition of the Metropolitan Railway Company, and an expression of the determination of a powerful and influential body to prevent a scheme for the cheap conveyance of the people to and from their daily labour from being heard in the usual way before the ordinary tribunal. Having listened carefully to the discussion, and especially to the speeches of the hon. Baronet the Member for West Essex (Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson), and the hon. Member for East Sussex, he had arrived at the conclusion that the whole question was one of engineering, which it was quite impossible for the House to settle offhand in half-an-hour. According to the practice and procedure of Parliament it was eminently a question which ought to be submitted to the consideration of a Committee upstairs, who would come to a decision after hearing the engineering evidence which would be laid before them. For these reasons he should support the second reading of the Bill.

MR. PULESTON said, he had only one remark to make in reference to the opposition which the hon. Baronet the Member for West Essex had given to the Bill; and it was to call the attention of the House to a curious fact which occurred the other day. On the occasion to which he referred there was a similar discussion on another measure, and it would be found that the hon. Baronet strongly supported the second reading, urging as a reason that the second reading of a Private Bill was very seldom refused in the House itself, and pointing out that if the Petitioners could show any case against the Bill, they would have full opportunity of being heard before the Committee. [SIR HENRY SELWIN-IBBETSON: Hear, hear!] His hon. Friend said "Hear, hear;" but he did not think that cheer was quite consistent with the course taken by his hon. Friend in regard to the present Bill.

SIR HENRY SELWIN-IBBETSON said, the circumstances were altogether different. In the one case it was a new Bill; but in the other they were asked

to read a second time a Bill which had already been considered by a Committee and rejected.

MR. PULESTON said, his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) had already pointed out that the Manchester Ship Canal Bill was a case strictly in point. In that case the engineering evidence had been rejected by one House one year, and by the other in the next year; and although the question was entirely one of engineering difficulties, the Bill was still brought forward this year and referred to a Select Committee. Then upon what ground were they, in this instance, to reverse the usual practice of the House, and to come to the conclusion that because a Bill had been thrown out one year it must not be introduced, even in another form, in a following year? So far as he was acquainted with the procedure of the House that would be an entirely new practice. There was also another ground for referring the Bill to a Committee upstairs. Last year the promoters had no reason to expect that they were going to have any opposition, and they were not prepared, as they were now, to bring forward rebutting testimony. They would be able to do so this year, and they believed they would be able to give a complete answer to the engineering difficulties which were urged against the Bill last year. He hoped, therefore, that the House, duly considering the importance of the Bill to the public, and the fact that on some of the proposed tramway extensions all the persons interested in the property, who were the only persons who ought to be consulted, were almost unanimously in favour of the Bill, while on the remaining sections of the line the Petitioners only represented one-fourth or one-fifth of the owners and occupiers of property, would allow the measure, as the least thing they could do, to go before a Select Committee.

SIR ARTHUR OTWAY said, he had brought a very open mind to the consideration of this question; but he must say that the speeches of his hon. Friend the Member for West Essex (Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson), and his hon. Friend the Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory), had convinced him that the Bill was one which ought to be read a second time in order that it might be inquired into by a Committee. His hon. Friend the Member for East Sussex said that his desire was to keep the tramways out of the heart of London. That was quite another question. Tramways might be a very desirable thing, or they might be objectionable; but this was not the case of an encroaching railway sending out its feeders much to the detriment of other persons. It appeared to him that the construction of this tramway would be of great advantage to the public and to the poorer classes of the community. These tramways were used mainly by the working classes; and the question he asked himself was whether this extension was desirable or not, and whether it was likely to confer benefit upon those classes? In passing, he might say that it was very much to be regretted that other subjects had been imported into the consideration of a question of this kind, such, for instance, as engineering questions, which were clearly matters to be decided by a Committee after investigation and the hearing of evidence. He quite accepted the statement of his hon. Friend who presided so ably over the Committee last year. There might have been reasons then upon which it was thought desirable not to pass the Bill; but those reasons, as far as he was informed, did not exist to the same extent this year. As he understood the project, it was that of a Tramway Company already in possession of some considerable tramway lines not in a part of London where their existence was considered objectionable, but in a part of London crowded with working classes, and leading from their doors to the nearest place where they could really obtain fresh air—namely, Hampstead. What was the object of the Tramway Company in this instance? So far as he was able to judge, it was to shorten, as an examination of the map would show that it did, the time occupied in the journey to Hampstead by about ten minutes. It was true that another matter had been referred to by his hon. Friend the Member for West Essex; but it was entirely an engineering difficulty which could not be discussed in the House itself, but must be investigated by a Select Committee, and dealt with by them in such a way as to provide for the general traffic without detriment to the public. These, however, were essentially matters for the consideration of a Committee, because such

details could never be discussed in the House, nor could it be of advantage that such questions should be decided in the House. To his mind, the principle on which the Bill was founded was one of public advantage—to give the general public a better and cheaper means of locomotion which all desired to see carried out. The means by which effect was proposed to be given to that desire were questions entirely for the consideration of the Committee upstairs. For these reasons, and for higher reasons still, he thought the House would act most unwisely if it were to reject the measure; and he felt it his duty to advise the House to pass the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. GILES said, that when the first tramway was laid in London it was generally objected to, and was very soon taken up. We had become wiser since, and had discovered that tramways were a great benefit to the working classes. London was now so well provided with tramways that the working classes were enabled to get into the country when they desired to do so, and to obtain not only cheaper rents, but purer air. It would, therefore, be very much to be regretted if the House were at this stage to throw out the Bill. He thought that the engineering difficulties could be much better settled by a Select Committee than in the House itself; and he trusted that the House would assent to the second reading of the Bill.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

MERSEY RAILWAY BILL.

REFERENCE OF PETITION.

RESOLUTION.

Sir JAMES CLARKE LAWRENCE, in moving—

"That the Petition of Peter Williamson Dumville and Henry Daniel Davies, presented on the 17th instant, be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, with an Instruction to report whether Standing Order 62 has been complied with,"

said, that the Petition complained of a grievance; and he did not know upon what ground the Motion could be resisted, seeing that the House had always been willing to consider grievances which were set forth in a respectful manner.

Sir Arthur Otway

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Petition of Peter Williamson Dumville and Henry Daniel Davies, presented on the 17th instant, be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, with an Instruction to report whether Standing Order 62 has been complied with."—(*Sir James Clarke Lawrence.*)

Mr. RAIKES said, he felt himself compelled to oppose the Motion, and he trusted that the House would not entertain it. As far as he could ascertain, there was no precedent for the course which had been taken in the matter, or, at all events, if there was, he had been unable to find it. The question was one which could not greatly interest the House; but it was, nevertheless, of considerable importance to those who were immediately concerned in it. The circumstances under which the hon. Baronet the Member for Lambeth (Sir James C. Lawrence) made the Motion were these: Mr. Dumville and Mr. Davies, the gentlemen whose names were mentioned in the Motion, had presented a Petition against the Mersey Railway Bill, which had been referred by the House to a Select Committee. The Court of Referees, in accordance with the usual practice of the House, had inquired into the *locus standi* of the Petitioners, and, having disallowed it, Mr. Dumville and Mr. Davies were not in a position to appear before the Committee against the Bill. It was now sought, on their part, to go behind this decision of the Court of Referees, which was the recognized tribunal of the House, and to have the Bill referred back to the Examiners of Petitions on Private Bills, with an Instruction to the Examiners to report whether Standing Order 62 had been properly complied with. He understood that Mr. Dumville was a proprietor of 12 shares in the Mersey Railway Company, and that in July last he parted with those 12 shares to Mr. Davies. The Wharncliffe meeting, at which the consent of the shareholders was given to the Company to proceed with the Bill, was held in February last, seven months after the transfer of shares took place. Mr. Dumville had, of course, ceased to be a shareholder; but Mr. Davies, to whom the transfer had been made, went to the office and requested to be allowed to register them in an irregular manner. He was desired to comply with the usual formality, which, although he had been

in possession of the shares for more than six months, he had not complied with, and had, therefore, never become a registered shareholder of the Company. At the Wharncliffe meeting resolutions were passed in favour of proceeding with the Bill, and it was now sought by persons who had never represented more than 12 shares in the Company to have the progress of the Bill stopped, and to evade the decision of the Court of Referees by endeavouring to convert the Examiners of Private Bills into a legal Court, which they had never claimed to be, to determine a question of registration under the Joint Stock Companies Act. He ventured to think that the House of Commons, which had quite enough to do, would be unwilling to undertake a novel and embarrassing duty of this kind. As he had shown that there was no ground for the Motion, and that no precedent existed for it, he should oppose it in every possible way.

MR. PEMBERTON said, the case had been before the Court of Referees, to which he had the honour to belong, and he would explain how the matter had arisen. The House would be aware that, under one of the Standing Orders, a shareholder of a Company was not allowed to oppose a Bill introduced by the Company, provided that the opinion of the shareholders had been expressed in its favour at a properly constituted Wharncliffe meeting. The facts of the case had been fully stated by his right hon. Friend the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes). There had been a transfer of shares from Mr. Dumville to Mr. Davies; and the question whether the Company were right or wrong in refusing to recognize and register the transfer was not a question for the Court of Referees. If the Company had acted wrongly, the Courts of Law were open to the persons who felt themselves aggrieved for the purpose of compelling registration, and it would have been a most improper course for the Court of Referees to have assumed the functions of a Court of Law. That was one of the reasons why he and his Colleagues came to the decision to refuse to admit this Petition; but there was a further reason—namely, that by the certificate of the Examiners, who had certified that all the proper notices had been given, and all the necessary forms had been complied with, the question had been, in point of fact, taken out of their jurisdiction. To call upon the Examiners to decide a question which a Court of Law only could deal with, and to ask them to pronounce whether the Company had or had not good reason for refusing to register the transfer, would, in his opinion, be most improper.

Question put, and *negatived.*

QUESTIONS.

—o—

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—NORTH DUBLIN UNION—BANK ADVANCES.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Bank of Ireland has agreed to make advances to the Guardians of the North Dublin Union, free of interest, in the early part of each year, in consideration of the balances to credit of the Union in the later portion of the year; whether the Bank of Ireland has offered to give the loan now required by the guardians on the same terms as those agreed to by the Hibernian Bank; and, what is the issue of the correspondence between the guardians and the Local Government Board with respect to the resolution of the guardians appointing the Hibernian Bank their treasurer?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The arrangement which has obtained for several years in the North Dublin Union is that the Bank of Ireland charges the Guardians interest on overdrafts, and allows them interest on credit balances. The terms on which the loan for building purposes will be advanced by the Bank of Ireland have yet to be arranged between the Guardians and the Bank. I have already stated what the issue of the correspondence has been—namely, that the Local Government Board have declined to sanction the proposed change in the treasurership of the Union.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS—MAGHERACLOGHER, &c. DIVISIONS.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What is the decision of the Irish Local Government Board with respect to certain illegalities and irregularities af-

fecting the elections for Poor Law divisions of Magheraclogher, Meenacladdy, and Dunlewey, which have been reported to the Local Government Board by the Rev. James M'Fadden; and, also, as to claims to vote which have been made by occupiers whose valuation is under £4 per annum, but is higher than their rent, and who are liable to pay Poor Rate on the difference between the rent and the valuation, and are not entitled by Law to deduct the Poor Rate on the amount of such difference from the rent?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The decision of the Local Government Board in this matter cannot be given for some days to come. The correspondence is not yet completed.

IRELAND—THE INCOME TAX COLLECTOR, DROGHEDA.

MR. SEXTON asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether Mr. John Farrell, Collector of Income Tax at Drogheda, was dismissed by the Local Government Board from the office of Poor Rate Collector, for not having accounted for the rates; and, whether, if the fact be so, Mr. Farrell can retain the collectorship of Income Tax?

MR. HIBBERT: Mr. Farrell was compelled to resign his local appointment in 1883. On the other hand, he has an extremely good character as an Income Tax officer, and his conduct to the latest dates was very satisfactory. The attention of the Board of Inland Revenue has been called to the circumstances of the case.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—THE KINSALE MAIL SERVICE.

MR. DEASY asked the Postmaster General, Whether the Post Office authorities intend to make the alterations in the mail service to and from Kinsale which the Town Commissioners have suggested to them?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: The day mail to Kinsale is forwarded by the first available train, and the suggestion of the Town Commissioners could only be complied with by establishing a train specially for the Postal Service at a cost out of all proportion to the correspondence to be benefited. I regret, therefore, that it is not practicable to meet the wishes of the Commissioners.

POOR LAW EXPENDITURE (IRELAND).

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, as President of the Local Government Board, his attention has been directed to the table of expenditure of Poor Rates for twenty-one years, as printed at page 19 in the last Report of the Board; whether it is a fact that the total expenditure for the year 1883 was £1,326,963, as against £716,523 in 1863, or an increase of £610,440; whether he has observed, at page 9, that the inmates of workhouses have decreased from 206,504 in January 1851 to 49,884 in 1884; whether he has noticed that the cost for maintenance, including out-door relief, and the blind and deaf and dumb in extern hospitals, is £669,382, while the salaries and rations of officers are given at £137,025 and "other expenses" £236,438, as against £96,222 and £105,821 in 1863; whether, as the expenses under the Medical Charities, Burial Grounds, Registration, Sanitary, Contagious Diseases, Superannuation, and National School Teachers Acts are all excluded, he can say what items are included under the head of "other expenses;" what is the cause of the annual increase of establishment charges concurrently with the decrease of population; and, can anything be done to put a stop to it?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The figures given by the hon. Member are correctly quoted; but he has not taken the same years in his comparison of the expenditure with the number of inmates. Under the heading "other expenses" are included all establishment charges other than the salaries and rations of officers, such as expenses for furniture, implements, fuel, light, books, printing, stationery, drugs, medical and surgical appliances, rent, taxes, and so forth. The increase of establishment charges to which the hon. Member alludes is in a large measure due to the increased cost of the rations of officers, of which some idea may be formed from the fact that within the past 20 years the cost of inmates of the workhouse for provisions and officers has increased 40 or 50 per cent. The Local Government Board are not aware that there has been any undue expenditure, and every proposed increase of salary or emoluments is carefuly scrutinized.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked whether, under the heading "other expenses," any extra charges were made for duties performed by the officers of Poor Law Guardians in connection with other matters?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have seen a list this day, and my impression is that nothing of the kind is allowed.

IRELAND—NATIONAL LEAGUE MEETINGS—COOTEHILL—INTRUSION OF THE POLICE—SERGEANT HARVEY.

MR. O'KELLY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that Sergeant Harvey, Royal Irish Constabulary, attended a meeting of the Cootehill branch of the Irish National League, in the county Roscommon, on Sunday last, and refused to withdraw at the request of the Secretary, Mr. James O'Hara; whether it is true that Sergeant Harvey has used insulting and threatening language to Mr. O'Hara on several occasions; and, whether he will inquire into the truth of the allegations made against Sergeant Harvey?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Sergeant Harvey did not attend the meeting of this branch of the National League on Sunday last. He applied for admission to the meeting on the 12th instant, but was refused, and at once withdrew. I am informed that he has never used insulting or threatening language to Mr. O'Hara.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—GALWAY AND ARRAN ISLANDS' DISPENSARIES.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he be now in a position to make a statement in reference to the union of the dispensaries of Galway and Arran Islands?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Local Government Board have decided that they could not properly impose on Arran Island the serious financial charge entailed by the existence of a separate Dispensary Committee. The separation of the two districts could not affect or benefit the sick poor, as the members of the Committee resident on the principal Island can give orders for medical attendance whether the Committee meets in Arran or in Galway; and while the result of separation would be a very slight financial relief to Galway, it would involve for Arran the very serious addition to the rates of something like 10*d.* in the pound.

SPAIN—EXTRADITION OF CRIMINALS.

MR. GREGORY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any Treaty exists between this country and Spain by which persons who have absconded there to avoid the consequences of gross fraud or robbery in England can be made amenable to the Law, or the extradition of such persons can be demanded; and, if not, whether Her Majesty's Government could make a friendly representation to that of Spain upon the subject?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: An Extradition Treaty between Great Britain and Spain was concluded on the 4th June, 1878, and is at present in force. It contains provisions for the extradition of persons accused of robbery or fraud. The Treaty was laid before Parliament during the year in which it was signed.

FISHERIES BOARD (IRELAND)—BOARD OF CONSERVATORS, COLERAINE DISTRICT.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that the working licensed fishermen of Lough Neagh, upwards of three hundred in number, complain that they have power to elect only four out of twenty-four members of the Board of Conservators of the Coleraine district; whether the total number of licences of all kinds issued annually in that district is not more than about four hundred; what proportion of the funds administered by the Board of Conservators is derived from the licence duty paid by the working fishermen; whether the fishermen represent that some of the Conservators, being themselves the owners of salmon fisheries on the Bann, between Lough Neagh and the sea, are hostile to the industry of the working men who fish the lake, and have caused the institution of regulations which impede and harass the working fishermen to such an extent as to deprive them of the means of subsistence; whether the fishermen claim that Lough Neagh should be constituted a separate district; whether, the voting

for elections of members of the present Board being open, the water bailiffs are in the habit of using intimidation to induce the working fishermen to give their votes for certain candidates; whether the fishermen declare that the loss of the lives of four of their body in the Lough, on the 26th November last, was caused by the want of a suitable landing place; and, whether the Inspectors of Irish Fisheries will hold a public inquiry into, and make a report upon, the several complaints in question?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Perhaps the hon. Member will kindly repeat this Question on Monday. It only appeared yesterday, and I have not had time to procure Reports on the subject.

IRELAND—EXTRA POLICE TAX (LIMERICK).

MR. LEWIS asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What is the amount due to the Government from the Corporation of Limerick for extra police; when such debt was incurred; when was judgment recorded against the Corporation for the amount; whether the Corporation continues to resist payment of the demand; whether it is the fact that the Lord Lieutenant, some time since, invited the Corporation to a meeting to discuss a possible compromise or arrangement; whether the Corporation refused to attend such meeting; whether the Government has, for nearly a year past, allowed the matter to rest, and the judgment of the Court in its favour to remain unexecuted; and, whether the Government has enforced, and received payment, from other Irish municipal bodies of similar claims, incurred at the same time, under similar circumstances, under the same Law?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The net amount due by the Limerick Corporation for extra police down to the last presentment made, and exclusive of a sum of nearly £400 due for detachments sent into the city on occasional emergencies, is £1,305 5*s.* 3*d.*, and the charge has been accruing since October, 1881. The position of the Irish Government in the matter, and their views as to the mode in which payment should be enforced, have been frequently explained, and have undergone no change. It was not until late in last year that the situation was exactly defined, and no opportunity has since offered for obtaining the legislative powers necessary to carry out the proposals of the Government. I trust, however, such an opportunity will soon arise. Other Municipal Bodies have become liable to similar claims; but it has never been necessary for the Government to resort to extreme powers with a view to enforce payment.

MR. LEWIS asked if the right hon. Gentleman was prepared to state when it was intended to introduce the necessary legislation on the subject?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir; I cannot say when.

MR. LEWIS: I will repeat the Question this day fortnight.

RAILWAY RATES AND CHARGES BILLS—THE NORTH-EASTERN RAILWAY COMPANY'S BILL.

SIR BERNHARD SAMUELSON: I beg to ask the senior Member for South Durham (Sir Joseph Pease), Whether he is prepared to state, on behalf of the North Eastern Railway Company, what course they intend to take in regard to their Rates and Charges Bill? Perhaps the hon. Baronet will also be able to explain what course the other eight Railway Companies, who have introduced similar Bills, propose to take.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE: The North-Eastern Railway Bill was brought in in order to carry out some of the recommendations contained in the Report of the Committee on Railway Rates and Charges, especially those having regard to the classification of goods and the consolidation of those Statutes by which powers are given to the North-Eastern Railway Company to levy tolls. It proposed in the Bill also to settle the terminal question, and to subject the terminals to the control of the Railway Commission, as suggested in the Report of the Committee on Rates and Charges. While modifications of existing tolls were proposed, there was no desire on the part of the North-Eastern Company to ask for powers to increase the gross amount they could levy by the tolls already granted to them by Parliament. The Company never supposed that the provisions of this Bill would be accepted by Parliament as a solution of those difficult questions without the minutest care and criticism. They were perfectly

prepared to pass this Bill in review before any of the usual tribunals of Parliament.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I rise to Order. I wish to know whether the hon. Gentleman, in answering a Question as to the course he proposes to take in reference to a particular Bill, is in Order in entering into a lengthened statement of the contents of the Bill, and indirectly arguing in its favour?

MR. SPEAKER: As far as the hon. Member has as yet proceeded, I have not observed any argumentative statement, but simply an explanation of what was intended to be done. Of course, any statement of the kind referred to by the noble Lord would be entirely out of Order.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE: The promoters of this Bill, from the communications they have had with traders using their railways, have no reason to suppose that they could not have been able to arrange with the traders of their own district such modifications as would have made this Bill generally satisfactory to them. Having reference to what has passed in this House from the President of the Board of Trade as to the position of the Government in relation to the Railway Bills, and also to the opposition manifested in the country, directed, perhaps, more to questions not dealt with in these Bills than to the contents of the Bills themselves——

MR. SPEAKER: I must ask the hon. Baronet to leave out any controversial matter.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE: I shall propose either not to take further steps with this Bill, or I shall ask leave of the House at an early date to discharge the Order for the second reading of the North-Eastern Railway Company's Bill; and on that occasion perhaps the House would give me leave, should I think it needful, to make some observations more in detail on the reasons which led to the introduction of the Bills, and for taking the course indicated. The same course, I believe, would be followed as regards the Bills of the other Companies.

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND) BILL—MEMORANDUM OF THE JUDGE OF THE COURT OF PROBATE.

MR. GIBSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Government will lay upon the Table, without delay, the Memorandum of the Judge of the Court of Probate upon the provisions of the Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) Bill?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I shall be prepared to lay the Memorandum in question on the Table with some other Memoranda relating to the same subject.

ARMY (INDIA)—PROMOTION IN HER MAJESTY'S INDIAN FORCES.

MR. GIBSON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the Government intend to consider the claims and grievances of the Indian Military Officers, with a view to the removal of their discontent at the present slowness of promotion?

MR. J. K. CROSS: I am not aware that discontent prevails among the officers of Her Majesty's Indian Forces in respect of promotion. Recently, on the issue by the War Office of a Royal Warrant, giving promotion in the Corps of Royal Engineers to the rank of captain in 11, instead of as heretofore in 12, years, the change was introduced in the Indian Staff Corps, promotion in which is made on the same lines as in the Engineers. I do not know that any further change is now contemplated.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, that if this matter were again brought before the House, he would ask the Under Secretary if it was not a fact that the promotion of officers was better and quicker now than it ever was in the days of the East India Company?

ARMY (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT)—THE MARTINI-HENRY CARTRIDGE.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL asked the Surveyor General of Ordnance, Whether any further official reports have been received from the Soudan confirming the statements in the newspapers as to the defective manufacture, and frequent jamming, of the present service Martini-Henry rifle cartridges, and the inefficiency, in many instances, after use, of the bayonets now in possession of the troops; and, if so, whether he has any objection to lay such reports upon the Table; whether, without detriment to the public service, he can state what exertions are being made to substitute,

as soon as possible, either by increasing the manufacture at Woolwich, or by contracting with private firms, for the present cartridges now in store in India and elsewhere, the new solid drawn metal cartridge, definitively adopted as the service pattern cartridge of the future; and, whether the new Maxim machine gun has yet been approved, and its manufacture ordered?

MR. BRAND: Further official Reports regarding the rifle cartridges have just been received; but there has not yet been time to examine them in detail. No Reports have been received as to the alleged inefficiency of the bayonets now in possession of the troops; and I would remind the noble Lord that I made a statement the other day on this point. I can only repeat the statement I made then—that in the opinion of the authorities the bayonets issued to the troops are perfectly serviceable. Supplies of cases for the solid-case cartridges to the full extent required can be obtained without difficulty from the trade; but, in the event of a final decision being taken to adopt the solid-case cartridge for use in practice as well as in the field, steps will at once be taken to alter the plant at Woolwich. The Maxim gun is now under trial, but no pattern has yet been approved.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL: Are we to understand that the solid-case cartridges are not to be supplied from Woolwich?

MR. BRAND: What has been done was stated by me the other day. In compliance with Lord Wolseley's urgent request, the solid-case cartridges have been manufactured for the Forces in the field. It has long been known that the solid-case cartridges have advantages over other cartridges.

MR. MACFARLANE asked if the hon. Member could say when the troops would be supplied with the new metal cartridges?

MR. BRAND: No, Sir. And I do not think it is at all desirable to answer Questions regarding the precise details of our military equipment and armament.

SUPERANNUATION AND RETIRED ALLOWANCES (IRELAND)—CORRY CONNELLAN.

MR. HEALY asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If Corry Connellan has called for his pension since the debates of last year; and, if not, has it been paid to him, and, if paid, how and where was it paid?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Corry Connellan died three months ago?

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT, 1884—HOUSEHOLD QUALIFICATIONS.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the occupiers of houses of the yearly value of £4, held without any written title, each occupier paying £1 a-year as rent or ground rent, together with 4*s.* on account of taxes, will be qualified to be put on the roll of voters under the new Reform Bill?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): I consider that the persons referred to, assuming them to be men of full age, will be entitled to be registered and to vote under the new Act. Upon the facts stated in the Question, they appear to me to be qualified as inhabitant occupiers or tenants.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—M. DE GIERS' DESPATCH IN REPLY TO EARL GRANVILLE.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Despatch from M. de Giers, published in the English newspapers of the 22nd and 23rd, and purporting to be a reply of the Russian Government to Her Majesty's Government, is authentic; and, whether the following or similar passages occur in the Russian Despatch:—

"It is impossible for us not to trace back the cause to the military aspect with which the English Government thought it their duty to invest their boundary commission.

* * * * *

"We cannot pass by the facts that certain Officers in its suite directed the movements of the Afghan troops, and that the loudly proclaimed interview between the Amir and the Viceroy, and its bellicose surroundings, must certainly have contributed to embolden the Afghans to the point of committing such acts of provocation as could not be tolerated by the representatives of Russian Military authorities?"

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Until the moment arrives for presenting Papers to Parliament, it would not be in the public interest that I should make any statement in regard to documents published in the newspapers which, if

they are what they profess to be, are evidently of a confidential character.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Then the noble Lord does not deny that there is a Despatch?

[No reply.]

CYPRUS (FINANCE, &c.)—REPORTED REVENUE FRAUDS.

Mr. GORST asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Chief Inspector of Revenue in Cyprus has resigned his office; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will withhold their acceptance of his resignation until further inquiry into the recent revenue frauds has taken place?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: I am not able to answer the first part of the Question; but as to the second, which is really the most important, I am able to reply that the day before yesterday we telegraphed to the Governor that should there be any question of resignation he should refuse to accept it until he receives further instructions.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN — DIPLOMATIC NEGOTIATIONS—TREATY OF PARIS, 1856.

Mr. RICHARD asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in case ordinary diplomatic negotiations have not or may not prove successful in settling the points in dispute between this Country and Russia, the Government will act on the declaration of the Treaty of Paris of 1856, which expresses the unanimous wish of the Powers who were parties to the Treaty, that States between which any serious misunderstanding may arise should, before appealing to arms, have recourse to the good offices of a friendly Power, as set forth in the Protocol of April 14th 1856?

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in voting the exceptional amount to be asked for armaments on Monday next, this House may assume that Her Majesty's Government adheres to the following declaration of the 23rd Protocol of the Treaty of Paris:—

"The Plenipotentiaries do not hesitate to express, in the name of their Governments, the wish that States between which any serious misunderstanding may arise should, before appealing to arms, have recourse, as far as circumstances might allow, to the good offices of a friendly Power;"

and, that this House and the Country may rest assured that a proposal will be made to refer any matters in dispute between this Country and Russia to such arbitration, should it so unfortunately happen that an amicable solution of them fails to be arrived at by direct negotiation?

Mr. GLADSTONE: What I have to say in answer this Question is that Her Majesty's Government have never, during the course of the recent or present Correspondence, or in answer to Questions in this House, said anything to the prejudice of the idea which is put forward in these two Questions. But it must be borne in mind that every declaration made in this House in reply to a Question is virtually an announcement or a declaration to the Government of Russia. It does not appear to us convenient or desirable in the public interest that declarations to the Russian Government should be made through the channel of Answers to Questions.

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether information has been received from Sir Peter Lumsden, explaining if the advance of an Afghan reconnaissance on 27th March was previous to, or subsequent to, the reconnaissance of the Russians on the same day, and to what point the Afghan reconnaissance was pushed; whether any Report from Captain Yate, with regard to the advice tendered by him to the Afghan Commander on the 29th of March, and referred to in the extract from the Letter of the Afghan Commander to General Komaroff, has been received; whether Copies of the Letter of General Komaroff, which called forth the above Letter, and of the private Letter of General Komaroff to the Afghan Commander, received a few hours before the Russian attack, have been received; whether it is known if any reply was sent by the Afghan Commander to General Komaroff's second letter; and, whether, with reference to Sir Peter Lumsden's statement that the Afghans were induced to extend their defensive position, any subsequent information has been received explaining more clearly the nature of this extension, and if a withdrawal on their part to the positions occupied on the 17th of March constituted the Russian ultimatum alluded to in Sir Peter Lumsden's telegraphic Despatch of 17th April?

MR. ONSLOW also asked whether Her Majesty's Government had received from Sir Peter Lumsden, or from any other source, information of the "incessant irritation" which Sir Peter Lumsden described the Russians as having kept up against the Afghans; and, if so, what action the Government had taken on receipt of that information?

MR. GLADSTONE: I was about to answer my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) to the effect that, owing to Lord Granville's heavy engagements, I have not been able to hold any communication with him on all the points of this Question; and I would therefore ask my hon. Friend to be kind enough to postpone it until we should have an opportunity to consider it. It is rather a nice matter whether in the end it would be desirable to carry on a detailed discussion of points of this kind with the Russian Government. I quite admit that it is our duty to take care, if, in questions of this kind, as is perfectly possible, any new light is thrown upon any point of the case, or any suggestion made which ought to lead to some extension of any explanation made by us, it would be our duty to advert to it. For the present I should be glad if the hon. Member would postpone his Question; and I must ask for Notice of the Question which has just been put by the hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Onslow).

LORD JOHN MANNERS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Government are in possession of telegraphic information from Sir Peter Lumsden on the subject of his removal from Gulran to Tirpul, and the circumstances preceding and attending it; if so, whether he will communicate that information to the House?

MR. GLADSTONE: In general my answer would be that we are not in possession of any full statement at all of the reasons which determined him to remove his camp from Gulran to Tirpul. That was my impression when I heard the Question of the noble Lord yesterday; but I was desirous of refreshing my memory. What we have heard from him is as follows:—On the 6th instant he telegraphed that he had arrived at Tirpul on the previous day, with the loss of some followers in crossing the pass in a hurricane of wind and snow and rain; and subsequently, on the 10th, he reported more fully to the effect that 24 followers, including three Afghan sowars, and eight Persian muleteers, together with many mules and baggage, had perished from the inclemency of the weather. That is all the information we have had, and we can only form our own judgment as to why he took the step.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is a fact that the Russian Forces are now marching on Herat; and, whether Her Majesty's Ministers are taking any steps for the defence of that important position?

MR. GLADSTONE: With regard to the first Question there is no information, and we have no reason to believe that the Russians are marching on Herat. In regard to the second branch of the Question, I do not suppose the hon. Member desires me to say more than that the subject is receiving the attention of the Government.

EGYPT—SEIZURE OF THE "BOSPHORE EGYPTIEN"—RECALL OF THE FRENCH CONSUL.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I beg to ask the Prime Minister or the noble Lord, Whether Her Majesty's Government have any information as to the French Government having recalled their Consul General from Egypt?

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir; we have no information.

ARMY—COMMISSIONS TO CANADIAN CADETS.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it was true that the Government had offered 25 commissions in the Army to be competed for by graduates of the Military College in Canada; and, if so, whether it was in contemplation to offer similar advantages to candidates from other Colonies who might be properly qualified?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: In addition to the four commissions usually granted to that institution, 26 commissions in the Army have this year been offered to duly qualified graduates and cadets of the Royal Military College, Kingston, Canada. The Dominion of Canada is the only Colony which pos-

sesses a Military College; but the War Office is also in communication with the Colonial Office on the subject of offering, this year, a limited number of commissions in the Imperial Army to members of the local Military Forces of the Colonies.

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH (IRELAND)—THE ARCHBISHOPRIC OF DUBLIN.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to ask the Prime Minister or the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, with regard to the positive statements which have appeared in the Press, Whether it is true that the British Government has caused representations, thrpugh Mr. Errington, to be made to the Sovereign Pontiff, with a view of influencing His Holiness in the appointment of an Archbishop to the Catholic See of Dublin, other than the capitulary of Archiepiscopal See, contrary to the wishes of the clergy of the diocese?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I must ask the hon. Member to give Notice of that Question.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Does the noble Lord require Notice to answer a Question as to whether the British Government meddles in a matter of internal government like the appointment of an Archbishop of Dublin?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Yes, Sir; I do require Notice.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: When the Question of which Notice has been given by my hon. Friend (Mr. Sexton) is put, I beg to give Notice that I shall ask, Whether, when Her Majesty's Government instructed Mr. Errington to interfere, they at the same time caused a copy of *Vaticanism* and other works of the Prime Minister to be sent to the Holy See?

EGYPT AND FRANCE—RUPTURE OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it was true, as reported, that the French Government had broken off diplomatic relations with Egypt; and, secondly, whether the French Government had offered to release Her Majesty's Government from the unfortunate financial agreement in respect of Egypt to which the House recently gave its assent?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No such information has reached the Foreign Office.

Afterwards,

MR. GLADSTONE said: The answer I gave to the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition just now was with respect to the information received up to that time. I am sorry to say that within the few minutes that have since elapsed a telegram has been received stating that the French Chargé d'Affaires left Cairo this morning. I am not sure of the technical term Chargé d'Affaires; but what I understand is, that it means the Representative of the French Government.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Is that communication from Cairo?

MR. GLADSTONE: It is a telegram from Sir Evelyn Baring. It has been sent down to me, and I have no doubt that it comes from Cairo.

MR. BOURKE: Will the right hon. Gentleman state whether or not there is any other telegram from Sir Evelyn Baring leading up to that one?

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked whether the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs would now answer his Question as to whether the French Government had broken off diplomatic relations with the Egyptian Government?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The information given by the Prime Minister is all that is in possession of the Foreign Office.

MR. O'KELLY asked if the noble Lord could state under what conditions the French Chargé d'Affaires has left Cairo? Had he merely gone on a visit to Alexandria, or was there any diplomatic reason for the step?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: There are no details. The actual words received by the Foreign Office have been given to the House.

MR. O'KELLY asked whether it was M. Barrère or his Representative who had left Cairo?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: M. Barrère is in Paris sitting on the Suez Canal Commission. It must, therefore, be his Representative.

MR. O'KELLY inquired whether the Government would telegraph to Sir Evelyn Baring to ascertain under what

circumstances the French Chargé d'Affaires had left Cairo, in order that the House might know the facts as soon as possible?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have no doubt that in the ordinary course we shall receive full information, and it will not be necessary to make a special inquiry. I should take the information which I have just given to the House as a proof that the Agents of the British Government will communicate with us with all possible rapidity.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION) BILL.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I shall place on the Paper this evening my Amendments to the Redistribution Bill; but I am anxious to take the earliest opportunity of mentioning to the House a difficulty which has arisen with regard to Westminster. I stated in Committee that I thought a fair case had been made out from the opposite side for treating Westminster as an ancient borough, and for assigning to it four Members instead of the three which had been allotted to it by the Bill. I had made inquiries of the Leaders of the Opposition, and had found that it was their opinion that the additional seat required should be taken from some other part of London. I examined which was the least under-represented part of London, and, finding this was the centre of the Tower Hamlets, I suggested to the Committee that the seat must come from thence. I undertook that Sir John Lambert and Sir Francis Sandford should, after local inquiry, advise us as to the division of Westminster into four, and should also advise us as to the re-division of the Tower Hamlets. Their Report will be circulated to-morrow morning, and will contain maps. It yesterday came to my knowledge that the Leaders of the Opposition so greatly disliked the proposed division of Westminster, and so greatly preferred the original division into three, which had been made by myself without the advice of the Boundary Commissioners, as to lead me to doubt whether it will be wise for me to propose to go forward with the changes which I had intended to make. I regard those changes as mutually dependent, and I should be prepared to revert to them should I find a decided change of opinion on the other side of the House.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked if the right hon. Baronet would amplify his statement by saying which Leaders of the Opposition had informed him of their views—which Leaders wished Westminster to have four Members, and which Leaders wished it to have three? Otherwise, isolated Members of the Party had great difficulty in knowing what course to take.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I must say that the Leader of the Opposition wished for four as against three.

MR. W. H. SMITH intimated that when the right hon. Baronet proposed to reduce the number of Members for Westminster he should oppose it.

MR. GORST asked whether, when the Amendment was proposed, the right hon. Baronet would take into consideration the feelings and views of the inhabitants of Westminster as well as the opinions of the Leaders of the Opposition?

MR. RITCHIE asked whether the claims of the Tower Hamlets to have seven Members was to be dependent upon an agreement between Her Majesty's Government and the Leaders of the Opposition as to the representation of Westminster?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that if Westminster was to have four Members instead of three, the additional seat was to be taken from the Metropolis. He should propose that it should be taken from the Tower Hamlets.

MR. RITCHIE inquired whether it was an open question with the Government whether the additional seat was to be taken from the Metropolis or from some town in the Provinces?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE replied that, on former occasions, he had stated that there had been a suggestion made that an additional seat for Westminster might be obtained from other sources besides the Metropolis.

MR. ONSLOW remarked that, as communications appeared to have been going on between the Leader of the Opposition and the Government, he should like to ask the Leader of the Opposition what course he proposed to ask the Party to take on this question?

MR. RAIKES said, that, as the Mover of the Amendment, he would remind the right hon. Baronet that it was unanimously accepted by the Committee. He wished to ask, if upon Report there was

still a strong feeling shown as to the claim of Westminster to have four Members, the right hon. Baronet would adhere to the decision already arrived at by the House?

MR. BRODRICK suggested that a seat might be taken from one of the over-represented counties in Ireland.

MR. LEWIS observed that Wolverhampton was an over-represented borough from which a seat might be taken.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that Wolverhampton was mentioned on a former occasion as one of the boroughs from which a seat might be taken. He would remind the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University that the view which met the general concurrence of the House was that the question of dividing Westminster into four districts should be decided on the advice of the Boundary Commissioners.

MR. RITCHIE wished to know whether, in the event of the Tower Hamlets retaining its seven Members, there was to be any fresh scheme of redistribution, or whether the original scheme of the Bill was to be carried out?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that, in the event of the Tower Hamlets retaining its full number of Members, the original scheme of division would be carried out, and there would only be a change of name, the separate divisions continuing parts of the borough of the Tower Hamlets.

MR. ONSLOW asked the Leader of the Opposition what the arrangement was with regard to Westminster and the Tower Hamlets?

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I can only say that I understood it was the wish of the House to change the number of Members for Westminster from three to four, and I entirely approve of that alteration. That, however, involves a change of the redistribution of the divisions of Westminster. But when the re-arrangement of the borough came to be made the division which was suggested and approved by Sir John Lambert and Sir Francis Sandford appeared to me and to the right hon. Member for Westminster to be an unfortunate division, and one which would not be satisfactory to the people of Westminster; and I certainly intend to support my right hon. Friend the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) in his endeavours to obtain a better division for the borough than that proposed by the Schedule.

MR. HEALY asked whether the arrangement between Lord Salisbury and the Government was that any arrangement come to by the Boundary Commissioners the Government pledged themselves to carry through the House; and whether, in consequence of that, the Government had refused every Amendment in the case of Irish divisions, whereas they had consented to a change in the case of Westminster?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE replied that the division of London and the Metropolis generally was made by himself, and not by the Boundary Commissioners.

VISIT OF H.R.H. THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS OF WALES TO IRELAND—THE CITY OF LONDONDERRY.

MR. PARNELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true, as stated, that the Prince of Wales is, on his visit to Derry on Saturday next, to receive an address from the local Orange and apprentice boy parties; whether the Orange address is to be presented by Mr. Robert M'Clintock, who was rebuked by the Lord Chancellor for his participation in an Orange apprentice boy meeting on the 1st of November last, when two Nationalists were shot and badly wounded, and for which one apprentice boy was convicted and sentenced to a long term of imprisonment by Justice Murphy, who described the Orange proceedings as "the wild work in Derry;" whether, on a previous Royal visit, party riots took place, in which the police shot dead three men; whether, under the circumstances, and having regard to the local party feeling, it is deemed desirable that addresses should be received from societies and individuals notorious for violent party displays; whether a demonstration of protest by the Nationalists is to take place; whether, at a meeting of the Royal Reception Committee in Derry, a vote on the subject of the propriety of receiving the Orange Address was taken, when the Committee equally divided, three Presbyterian Liberal magistrates, one Catholic Liberal magistrate, and one Presbyterian Liberal merchant protesting against the arrangement for receiving the Orange Address

as a party affair; whether, some days previously, the Address of the County Derry Liberal Union was refused on the ground that the visit was non-political; and, whether the Government will take steps to prevent possible disastrous consequences on the occasion of the Royal visit to Derry by advising against the reception of the Addresses referred to?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I telegraphed to Ireland this morning, but have not yet received a specific Report with regard to the matters of fact on past occasions referred to in this Question. I understand, however, that no addresses have been received or will be received by His Royal Highness from associations which are in their constitution distinctly political, and no addresses are received which contain any political allusions. The addresses from the Orange Lodge and Apprentice Boys of Derry will not be allowed to be presented as a Party display; and as no partizan character attaches to the addresses, it is hoped that no Party feeling will be evoked which might mar the peaceful character of the reception. It is needless to add that steps will be taken to prevent any disturbance arising from any mistaken conception as to the character of the addresses. The Government are fully alive to the existence of a strong Party feeling in the City of Derry, and to the importance of taking every precaution to prevent disturbance.

MR. PARNELL: Does the right hon. Gentleman mean that the Orange Lodges and the Apprentice Boys Association are not political organizations?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am neither an Orangeman nor an Apprentice Boy; but they utterly deny that they have any political meaning, and that is the general understanding.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND) BILL.—[BILL 110.]

(Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 23rd April.*]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Special provisions as to voters in 1885) *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Power of Lord Lieutenant in Council to prescribe forms).

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, in rising to move an Amendment, to leave out the first part of the clause down to the word "not," in line 22, for the purpose of inserting—

"The forms contained in the First Schedule to this Act, or forms to the like effect, may be used for the purposes of the Parliamentary Registration Acts in substitution for the corresponding forms used for the same purposes before the passing of this Act."

said, that the object of the Amendment was to alter the manner in which the forms for carrying into effect the Parliamentary Registration Acts were to be prescribed, in consequence of the decision which had been come to by the Committee upstairs in connection with the English Bill. There were two ways of settling the forms in regard to registration; one by Order in Council, and the other under the authority of the Act which would require the forms themselves to be embodied in the Act. The Committee upon the English Bill had resolved that it would be better to prescribe the forms in a Schedule attached to the Bill; and as this clause in the Irish Act gave power to the Lord Lieutenant in Council to prescribe the forms, the object of the Amendment was to omit that power, and to substitute a Schedule in which the forms required for the purposes of Parliamentary registration would be set out.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 17, leave out from beginning of Clause 10 the word "and" in line 22, and insert "The forms contained in the First Schedule to this Act, or forms to the like effect, may be used for the purposes of the Parliamentary Registration Acts in substitution for the corresponding forms used for the same purposes before the passing of this Act."—(*Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

MR. HEALY said, he thought the Amendment showed how unfairly the Irish Members had been treated in having been allowed no representation whatever upon the English Committee. If there was one subject which was highly technical and complicated, it was the question of registration in Ireland; and he would point out to the Government that, in the forms proposed to be

Mr. Parnell

included in the Schedule, there were a series of gross mistakes. The forms themselves were only laid on the Table yesterday, and hon. Members had not had very much time to look into them; but in the short time which had been allowed he had been able to detect very extraordinary errors. He did not propose to discuss the Schedule now; but he simply desired to point out that the best mode of promoting the despatch of Business would be to pass the Schedules, when they had gone through the clauses, with little or no debate; and then, when they had the Bill reprinted, for the Government to give a week or 10 days for consideration, and, if necessary, re-commit the Bill in respect of the Schedules. No questions of policy would arise upon them; but they involved matters of technical detail which could not be agreed to hurriedly. He certainly did not think it would be fair to Ireland to allow English forms, shaped by English lawyers, without a single Irish Member being on the Committee, and in which he could already discover several blunders, to be accepted, as they stood, for Ireland. For instance, the 1st Schedule related to the precept of the Clerk of the Peace, and of the Clerk of the Union, and towards the end of No. 2 appeared these words, as a ground of objection—

"Firstly, if such person shall not have been rated in the then last rate made for the relief of the poor as the occupier of the same lands, tenements, or hereditaments, in such copy of register mentioned of a net annual value of twelve pounds or upwards."

There were several mistakes in that passage. One had reference to the rating, because under certain circumstances, by the provisions of the Franchise Bill, a man need not be rated at all; and he (Mr. Healy) had an Amendment to provide for such a state of things. The Government might say that that was the law at present; but the object of his Amendment was to make the law fully declared, and he saw no reason for the insertion of this extraordinary clause about being rated in the last rate made for the relief of the poor. It was quite clear to his mind that the words about rating should not occur in this Bill; because, if they were going to have household franchise, there was no necessity whatever to be rated in order to have the vote, and he did not understand that that was the opinion held by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland. Then, again, he might point out in No. 3, headed "the supplementary list of ten pounds rated occupiers," it appeared to him that after the work "register," and in all subsequent precepts of the same character, it would be necessary to insert the words "or objected to therein." The paragraph would then read in this way—

"You are also to make out, and, together with such copy of register for the said polling district or division of the said polling district, transmit to me a supplemental list [Form 11] of every male person of full age not appearing already on such copy of register who shall be rated in the last rate made for the relief of the poor or objected to therein."

There clearly ought to be such a Proviso, and it should run all through these forms. In some of the later precepts he proposed to insert Amendments; and, therefore, he was not in a position to agree generally to these forms. He wished to know from the hon. and learned Solicitor General, or the Chief Secretary for Ireland, whether, if he agreed to the forms as they now stood, when the Bill was ready for Report, it would be re-committed in respect of the forms? In the first place, however, he would ask the Chairman whether, if the Committee accepted the right hon. Gentleman's Amendment, and thereby agreed to accept the forms in the Schedule of the Bill, they would be afterwards debarred from amending the Schedules? That was to say, that by agreeing to the Amendment they would accept the proposal to insert the forms in the Schedule, but only subject to amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. and learned Member asks whether, if the Committee accept the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman, they would be debarred from subsequently amending the Schedules? No; I think not.

MR. GIBSON said, that he had read the Schedules himself with great attention, both yesterday and this morning, and he had sent them to Ireland, in order that they might be considered by those who were better acquainted with the Registration Law than he was himself. As had been stated by the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), the questions involved in these Schedules were of a very technical character. He would assume that they must have been prepared by the Law

Officers of Ireland, with the assistance of others who were acquainted with the matter; and he would be glad if the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland would say whether they had been prepared merely with a view of applying the new Reform Bill to the existing Registration Law, and to permit the registration to take place this year, as soon as possible after the passing of the Bill? Was that the object with which these Schedules had been prepared? Assuming that he received an affirmative answer to that question, he would suggest that, if this stage of the Bill was passed with these Schedules in it, after very little discussion, there should be a distinct understanding that they would not be debarred from using any information which might come, either from Ireland, or from their own examination of the Schedules, and that on the Report stage their right of criticism, revision, and amendment would be preserved.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, he could assure his right hon. and learned Friend opposite (Mr. Gibson) that the Schedules had been prepared with the single object of bringing upon the Register the different persons who were entitled to vote as £10-rated occupiers, and for the household and service suffrages. There was no other object whatever in preparing these Schedules, and he had himself intended to suggest that it would be desirable, after the Schedules had been adopted, that time should be given, in order that they might be thoroughly examined, because, originally, the Bill was framed in another way; and, therefore, it was only reasonable that such time should be allowed, and that either on the Report, or in some other way, the Schedules should be fully considered. It was not necessary that he should answer the objections to some of the forms which had been made by the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy); because there would be an opportunity afforded for discussing them. He would be glad if, when his right hon. and learned Friend received information, he would point out to him (the Solicitor General for Ireland) any point which would assist in carrying out the object of the Bill—namely, to bring upon the Register any person who was entitled to be upon it.

MR. LEWIS said, that nothing would be more inconvenient than to alter the Schedules on the stage of the Report, when it would not be possible to answer all the questions which might be raised on minute matters of detail. What occurred to his mind was this—that the body of the Bill should be settled, and then that the question of the Schedules should be adjourned for a few days, until they could make up their minds with regard to them. That would be the most sensible course to adopt, in order that the Schedules should be made as intelligible as possible. He thought it would be impossible to alter them satisfactorily with the Speaker in the Chair, and that they would never be able to get to the end of them. He would, therefore, suggest that they should go through the Bill now, and set the Schedules apart for another day. It could not be a matter on which there would be any great difference of opinion; and, with regard to the English Bill, it had been considered that day in the most friendly spirit.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, it was only reasonable that considerable time should be given for an examination of these complicated Schedules; and he quite agreed that it would be desirable to stop the Bill when they got to the Schedules.

MR. GREGORY said, he thought there ought to be some communication with gentlemen who were interested in the question of Irish registration. Therefore, it was advisable to go through the Schedules, in some sort of conference, in order to see how far they agreed, or what points of difference arose. From his own experience, in dealing with the English Registration Bill, he knew the difficulties that might arise, and he thought it was necessary that there should be some communication of that kind.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, he would be very glad to adopt that suggestion.

MR. GORST said, he would say a word to confirm what had fallen from the hon. Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory). He was quite sure they would never get these forms satisfactorily settled, except by having a conference of that kind, either by the appointment of a Select Committee, or in some other way,

by means of which Members, who had actual experience of Irish registration, might meet together and settle the forms. The English forms had been settled in a very short time, and without the slightest difference of opinion.

MR. PARNELL said, the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) had intimated that he thought some reasonable time ought to be given to the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) for the purpose of obtaining advice from Ireland in regard to these Schedules, and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland subsequently stated that he thought considerable time should be given. Now, he (Mr. Parnell) was of opinion, with regard to this matter, that it was most desirable the Bill should proceed with all reasonable speed, and that it should not be behind the English or the Scotch Bill. The conduct of the Government had been, he thought, in this matter, very negligent. He agreed with his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Healy) that, in the first instance, the Bill should have been printed long before it was printed; but the Irish officials did not seem to be able to make up their minds for a long time as to what the provisions of the Bill were to be. Secondly, the Bill was not printed until long after the English Bill was printed, and no Committee was moved for the purpose of considering it, as in the case of the English Bill. Ireland was not even given a Member on the English Committee; in fact, it was represented to the Irish Members that it was not necessary for them to have a Member on the English Committee, as the Bill entirely concerned the English registration. They now found that a vast mass of matters had been imported into the Irish Bill by the English Committee. The consequence of all this was that an excuse for delay was afforded to the Front Opposition Bench, and their Friends in that House, and it would be necessary for the Irish Members to raise a very serious question. If some considerable time, according to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, was to elapse before the Bill was again taken up, and before anything was again to be done, the other measures might come on before it. The Redistribution Bill might come on on Report and upon the third reading, and this Bill might be altogether left behind. He should regard such a circumstance as most disastrous; because it might afford an excuse for the House of Lords to object to any additions which might be made to the Bill by the House of Commons, and, in fact, to repeat the course which they had several times adopted in years past. He, therefore, wished to have a clear understanding. He desired to know, in the first place, whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) considered it necessary that the Bill should be re-committed; and, secondly, whether the Government considered it necessary that the Bill should be re-committed in reference to the Schedules? If not, whether they were of opinion that the Report stage would be sufficient for the examination of the Schedules; and, if so, at what date they proposed to take the consideration of the Report? Would the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dublin University consider that Wednesday next would be appropriate for the Report stage, and that it would afford him sufficient time for making inquiries? If it were fixed for any later date, and any considerable time was occupied in inquiry, the result would be a great and dangerous delay in the reprinting of the Bill. He, therefore, thought it his duty to ask for some further understanding from the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland and the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland as to the delay which would take place.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, the Government had only two objects in regard to the Bill, one of which was to get it passed as quickly as possible, which, for reasons other than those which had been mentioned by the hon. Member (Mr. Parnell), was of great importance to the country. That was, therefore, the first object; but it was further desirable that those who were interested in the matter should not be deprived of a reasonable opportunity for considering the provisions of the Bill. The hon. Member for the City of Cork had spoken as if the Government had allowed the English Committee to frame part of the Irish Bill. Nothing of the kind had been done. The Committee on the English Bill upstairs did not frame this Bill; but they decided that

the forms, instead of being fixed by Orders in Council, should be embodied in the Bill itself, in Schedules attached to it; and it was felt desirable that the same thing should be done for Ireland as was done for England. Therefore, the Government had added to the Bill, which was originally a small and simple Bill, these rather cumbrous Schedules. He admitted that they did contain a good deal of complicated material; but he did not think that any thorny matters were involved. Still, as the Schedules were complicated, it was only reasonable that time should be given for their consideration. The hon. Member complained that a proposal had been made which involved a loss of time before the re-committal of the Bill, and suggested that the Schedules should be considered and reported. They were quite ready to adopt that suggestion; but the complaint which was made was not unreasonable—namely, that matters of this sort would not be so well discussed in the House as in a Committee. Personally, he (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) was willing to take either course—either to re-commit the Bill in regard to the Schedules; or to stop the progress of the Bill, in order to get the Schedules discussed consistent with a reasonable opportunity of obtaining the opinion of persons interested in the question. He could not say now to what day it would be necessary to adjourn the Bill; but he could assure the hon. Member it would be the earliest day they could get.

MR. GIBSON said, he would point out that the delay had been suggested by the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy). He (Mr. Gibson) had not suggested it himself. He had only said that with 25 pages of Schedules it was only reasonable to give time for examining them.

MR. SEXTON said, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland maintained that the English Committee had not been allowed to draft the Bill. He (Mr. Sexton) contended, on the other hand, that they had, in point of fact, drafted a very vital part of it, because it appeared that the forms inserted in it were to be those which were considered suitable for use in England.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) was under a misapprehension. All the English Committee decided was that the forms in regard to the English Bill should be inserted in the Schedule, and not fixed by Order in Council; but they did not prescribe what the forms were to be. There were two courses open—either to insert the forms in Schedules attached to the Bill, or to settle them by Order in Council. As the first course had been adopted in the case of the English Bill, it was considered desirable to pursue the same course in regard to the Irish Bill.

MR. SEXTON said, that, at any rate, the principle of the infusion of the Irish forms in the Bill was decided by the English Committee. It was to be regretted that no Irish Member had been upon the Committee, and hon. Members who had been engaged in other Committees upstairs had not, as yet, had an opportunity of perusing the forms. Those forms extended over a considerable number of pages; but they were told that they contained nothing upon which there was likely to be a difference of opinion, and, therefore, might be dealt with at any time with very little legal help. He thought the proposal of his hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) was a fair and proper one, and that it would be very easy, on the Report, with the Speaker in the Chair, to settle and discuss the question. He wished to understand whether or not the Government consented to the suggestion of his hon. Friend—that they should discuss the Schedules on the Report of the Bill, and that they should take the Report on Wednesday? The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had said that the House had two objects—first, to pass the Bill; and, secondly, to afford a reasonable time for the examination of the Schedules. He (Mr. Sexton) thought the examination might be completed in a very short space of time, and he was most unwilling that the progress of the Bill should be unnecessarily delayed. He thought they were all agreed as to the necessity of passing the Bill as quickly as possible; and, personally, he should be disposed to insist, as far as he could, on the Bill being allowed to hold its place in the relative progress of the three Bills which it now occupied, and that it should not be allowed to fall behind either the English or Scotch Bill. At present, it

was in front of the three Bills, and it ought to be allowed to retain that position. It could not be forgotten that on two previous occasions the will of the House of Commons had been overborne by the House of Lords, who had twice thrown out an Irish Registration Bill passed by the Lower House. The Irish Members, therefore, required some security and guarantee as to the date on which the Irish measure would be sent to the House of Lords, so that they should be able to know what the decision of that House was before the other Bills were sent up. If the Irish and Scotch Bills were submitted before a definite verdict were obtained with regard to the Irish Bill, the Irish Members might find themselves in a hopeless position, and the Government would be unable to take any definite action. The House of Lords might even throw out the Bill, as they had done on former occasions. Therefore, the pivot on which the whole question turned was this—that the Irish Bill should retain its present place in the order of procedure, and, if it was at all practicable, that it should be the first Bill to be sent up to the House of Lords. He also wished to know how Clause 2 was intended to operate if this Amendment were inserted? It provided that—

"The forms contained in the First Schedule to this Act, or forms to the like effect, may be used for the purposes of the Parliamentary Registration Acts in substitution for the corresponding forms used for the same purposes before the passing of this Act."

As the Amendment stood, the forms now provided in the Schedule were to be the forms adopted without any power of alteration. He wished to know if those forms were to be always permanently used?

MR. WARTON said, he would suggest that after the words "Parliamentary Registration Acts," in the Amendment, the words "and this Act" should be inserted, or it might be held that the forms inserted in the Schedule did not apply to the last Registration Act. He presumed it was the object of the Government to carry out the provisions, not only of the previous Registration Acts, but also of the Act now being passed. He would propose an Amendment to that effect for the purpose of eliciting the opinion of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor-General for Ireland.

Amendment proposed, to amend the proposed Amendment, by adding, after the word "Acts," the words "and this Act."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, this Act would be cited as "The Registration Act, 1885," and, therefore, it seemed to him that it would come under the description of "Parliamentary Registration Acts" proposed to be inserted in the clause.

MR. HEALY said that the object of the Irish Members was an intelligible one—namely, that by whatever means it might be obtained, whether by re-committing the Schedules, or not re-committing them, but taking them upon the Report stage, the Bill should not be unduly delayed in finding its way to the House of Lords. They insisted upon having some security upon that point. They knew that the House of Lords would destroy their chances, if they possibly could. They had already proved their malice twice, and he did not wish to give them another chance. He complained strongly that the Government had not brought in the English and Irish Bills together. He had asked the question over and over again, but had never got a satisfactory answer. They had received a pledge, two years ago, from the Prime Minister, which had not yet been redeemed, and they had no promise that it would be redeemed. What he wished to know was, whether, now the Bill had been brought in, it would not be left to the mercy of the House of Lords to play what pranks they pleased with it, at the instigation of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), who had moved a number of Amendments without caring whether they were accepted here, but confiding in his Friends in the other House to adopt them? Therefore, the Irish Members would have no guarantee whatever that anything the right hon. and learned Gentleman proposed would not be ultimately carried, and he wanted to know what the position of the Bill would be with regard to leaving the House?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, there was every intention on the part of the Government to carry on the three Bills *pari passu*. They were all required for the same purpose, and there was no intention of unduly delaying them.

MR. HEALY asked when the Report would be taken?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, he was unable to say at present, and he would point out to the hon. and learned Member that he himself had originally proposed that there should be delay. The Government were anxious to proceed expeditiously with the Bill, consistently with a fair discussion of it. Some hon. Gentlemen suggested that it should be discussed on the Report; but, in dealing with technical matters of this kind, a conversation would be better than a formal discussion; therefore, personally, he should prefer to have it in Committee. It would not cause the Bill more delay than the other course.

MR. LEWIS said, the Committee had now been engaged for some time in discussing what day should be fixed for the Report instead of considering the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland. It certainly appeared to him (Mr. Lewis) that, instead of making progress with the Bill, they were really going backward.

THE CHAIRMAN said, that he was not prepared to rule that the discussion was out of Order, because it was intended that the subject to which the matter referred should be considered on the Report.

MR. WARTON said, he imagined that the Amendment now before the Committee was the one which he had moved.

THE CHAIRMAN said, that Amendment would not be in Order yet, because the Committee had not yet decided to leave out the words proposed to be omitted by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland.

Amendment (*Mr. Warton*), by leave, *withdrawn*.

MR. SEXTON said, that, before they arrived at the conclusion of the conversation, it was necessary to know how the Schedules were to be disposed of, and at what time they would be taken. At present, the English Bill had only been read a second time; and in the case of the Scotch Bill, the Speaker had simply been got out of the Chair. What he wished to know was, when the Chief Secretary for Ireland said that the Irish Bill was to proceed *pari passu* with the other Bills, whether they were to continue to occupy the position they now occupied; and, whether the initiative of progress would rest with the Irish Bill as at the present moment?

MR. TREVELYAN said, that, in considering the important Business yet to be disposed of in connection with the electoral system, it was impossible to give an absolute pledge of precedence, especially as it would be necessary to consult the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General, the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board, and several other Members of the Government who had taken an active part in the proceedings. His (Mr. Trevelyan's) experience of Registration Bills led him to desire to see them sent up to the House of Lords as early as possible. He would promise, on the part of the Government, that they would see that in this matter the Irish Registration Bill should not be left behindhand. He hoped that hon. Members would accept that promise.

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause," put, and *negatived*.

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. WARTON said, he believed that he would now be in Order in moving his Amendment—namely, to insert, after the words "Registration Acts," the words "and this Act." If the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) would look at that part of the clause which they had just struck out, he would see that the words were "the Parliamentary Registration Acts and this Act." He thought that, on reconsideration, the hon. and learned Gentleman would see that his (Mr. Warton's) Amendment was necessary.

Amendment proposed, to amend the proposed Amendment, by adding, after the word "Acts," the words "and this Act."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, that he had no objection to accept the Amendment; but he did not think that it was absolutely necessary.

MR. HEALY said, he would call attention to the words "as near thereto as circumstances may require," in line 25, which were made to apply to the form prescribed in connection with the registration of Parliamentary voters. He wished to know what they meant?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN thought there was a little ambiguity in the words, but he did not think they would do any harm.

MR. HEALY remarked, that in Ireland, on one occasion, a number of processes had been rendered void, because the County Court Judge held that the words should have been "County of Cork" instead of "Cork County." What he was afraid of was that the Revising Barristers might rule all the objections on the Tory side to be in order because they were "as near thereto as the circumstances required;" while, on the other hand, they would rule out all the objections on the other side because they were "as near thereto as the circumstances required." He thought it would be better to secure literal accuracy in the words used in the clause.

THE CHAIRMAN said, the Committee had not yet reached the words at which this question arose.

Question put, and *agreed to;* words *added* accordingly.

Amendment, as amended, *agreed to.*

MR. WARTON, in moving, as an Amendment, in page 1, line 24, to omit the words "so prescribed," for the purpose of inserting "the forms in the said Schedule contained," said, that he partly adopted in this proposition an Amendment which had been placed on the Paper by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland. It was quite clear that the words "so prescribed" must be left out, because they were simply an echo or trace of what had already been omitted.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 24, to leave out the words "so prescribed," in order to insert the words "the forms in the said Schedule contained,"—(*Mr. Warton,*)

—instead thereof.

Question, "That the words 'so prescribed' stand part of the Clause," put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That the words 'the forms in the said Schedule contained' be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

MR. HEALY said, he would admit that there would be some difficulty in striking out the words "or as near thereto as circumstances may require." He was only afraid that by keeping them in, if ever the other side made a mistake, they would get the benefit of it; whereas the National Party, if they made a mistake, would receive no benefit. He thought it would be far better, however, to have the forms in the Act described accurately, and therefore he would move his Amendment. He would also ask the Government if they had made any provision for the supply of these forms, and how the forms themselves were to be procured?

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 25, to leave out "or as near thereto as circumstances may require."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, he was afraid if they were to adopt the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member opposite (Mr. Healy), it would tell much more against him than he supposed, because if there was the slightest variation from the form an objection would hold good. As to the question of the forms to be supplied under the provisions of the Registration Act, printed forms would be supplied. But with regard to the Amendment, he thought it was extremely undesirable that the franchise of any man should be endangered by the omission of a single word, or a letter, in a mere form, because there happened to be a clause prescribing that all the forms contained in a Schedule of an Act of Parliament must be literally followed.

MR. HEALY said, he would not press the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 26, to omit the words, "And anything in connexion with the said registra-

tion done in accordance with the said Order in Council or as near thereto as circumstances may admit, shall be deemed to be validly done."—(*Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

MR. HEALY asked the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland to answer the question, whether forms would be procurable at a cheap rate?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. WALKER) was understood to say that there would be a Schedule of rates.

Question put, and *negatived;* words *struck out* accordingly.

Question, "That the Clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill," put, and *agreed to.*

Clause 3 (Dispensing relief not to disqualify, 14 & 15 Vict. c. 68).

MR. GIBSON said, he had to ask the Committee to agree to the Amendment he had placed on the Paper, proposing to omit the clause entirely from the Bill. The clause provided that—

"Medical or surgical assistance, or the giving of medicine under any Act relating to Medical Charities in Ireland, should not be deemed to constitute relief under the Acts for the more effectual relief of the Destitute Poor in Ireland within the meaning of the Representation of the People Acts."

Now, he thought hon. Members would see from that recital that that provision of the Bill purported to make a very grave and serious change in the laws relating to the representation of the people, not only in respect of Ireland, but also in respect of other parts of the United Kingdom. He held that it would be obviously contrary to common sense to make such a change in the Representation of the People Act, as that it should be enacted that persons receiving indoor relief should be permitted to exercise the franchise, as it would be equally foreign to the considerations which were usually supposed to prevail in these matters, to permit those who were in receipt of outdoor relief to exercise this franchise. But this was a proposal on the part of the Government to obviate that reasonable restriction, and to enact that, notwithstanding the past and present practice under the existing law, the franchise should be exercised by those who deliberately appealed to public medical aid. He repeated that this was a clause which, if it were retained in the Bill, would constitute a very serious innovation of the existing law. A few evenings ago, the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had stated to the Prime Minister that his object was to insure that the Registration of Voters Ireland Act should work an absolute assimilation of the law as administered in England and Scotland. ["No, no!"] He could assure the hon. Member below the Gangway that the words used by the hon. Member for the City of Cork were "absolute assimilation." He contended, however, that there was no such provision nor anything like such a provision as that provided for in this clause in the law of England; and although he always spoke with great diffidence of the law of Scotland, he believed he was correct in saying that there was no similar provision in the law of Scotland either. But the Committee would understand that it was a very serious thing, with reference to Ireland, to propose to introduce an alteration in the law not known in Scotland, and not proposed to be introduced in the case of England. Why, he asked, should this change be made against the corresponding laws in England and Scotland; on what foundation did it rest; on what argument of justice or common sense, or on what plea of a sounder administration of electoral law could it be defended? He ventured to think if the principle of this clause were enacted in the Bill that it might result in fast-and-loose play of the gravest possible character in respect of the administration of the Poor Law in Ireland. He reminded the Committee that if it were introduced as a proposition sanctioned by Act of Parliament, that the recipient of dispensary relief should be qualified to vote, it would be but a step further in the same direction to say that the recipient of outdoor relief should be qualified to exercise the franchise, and the whole system of the Poor Law of the country would be exposed to attacks, which he ventured to think would lead to serious consequences. Further, he did not think that the exceptional enactment of the principle of the clause would add to the self-respect of the voters in Ireland; on

the contrary, he believed it would lead to the impairing of that independence of character and status which the country had a right to expect in those who were permitted to exercise the franchise and return Members to Parliament for the administration of its affairs. He remembered a leading Member of that House pointing out, in a great discussion which took place on one of the Reform Bills, that one of the most serious and grave dangers that would have to be guarded against in the future would be a lax administration of the Poor Law under the new system; and he (Mr. Gibson) could but think that such a provision as this would, particularly if it were enacted exceptionally for Ireland, amount to the introduction of a laxity of the gravest kind. Medical assistance in Ireland was intended to be given to those who could not pay for it themselves—that was to say, to those persons who were really in need of it, and could not procure it. Although it was desirable that those who required medical relief should have it, yet he must point out that the dispensing of medical relief in Ireland was a practice which, in many cases, had been the cause of scandal and abuse; and doctors had been summoned by what were called "red tickets," or "scarlet runners," to assist those who could very well pay for themselves. And if it were found that in an Act of Parliament, it was permitted, sanctioned, or encouraged that persons should receive dispensary relief and still retain their right to the franchise without any qualification whatever, it must lead to the extension of an abuse which pressed already very hardly on the Medical Profession in Ireland, inasmuch as it would appear to have received the sanction of Parliament. The arguments relating to this question lay within a narrow compass, and they were so obvious that he did not think he should be justified in pressing them at greater length upon the Committee, or in occupying further time in the consideration of the subject; but if any arguments should be used, or any statements made, which rendered it necessary that he should re-enter the discussion, he reserved to himself freedom to say a few more words in support of the Amendment which he now begged to move.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 29, leave out Clause 3.—(*Mr. Gibson.*)

Question proposed, "That Clause 3 stand part of the Bill."

MR. SEXTON said, they were accustomed to these arguments from the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson). They always listened to him with great respect, and saw in him the apologist and champion of the Poor Law in Ireland. But they had the right hon. and learned Gentleman telling them to-night that the Dispensary Poor Law had been greatly abused. Well, he (Mr. Sexton) was ready to admit that he had seen some allegations to the effect that the dispensary regulations had been called into operation under questionable circumstances; but his own experience was, that those allegations related only to a very minute proportion of the cases in which medical aid was dispensed. Moreover, the details of dispensing medical relief under the Poor Law was as completely under the supervision of the Local Government Board as the details of any other Department; and the Local Government Board was composed of persons so vigilant—excessively so sometimes—and of persons whose conduct was so closely watched in that House, that he ventured to say no suggestion deserving attention at their hands would be passed over, and that if there had been any accidental abuse of the provisions of the Poor Law in this respect the Local Government Board would have taken good care to check it before that time. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had certainly perplexed him in the course of his speech with the argument that that House ought to strike out this clause in order to preserve the independence of character and status of those who voted. But whether men were independent or not, they were not in the habit of going to a doctor of their own choice; they did not go to the dispensary for pleasure or recreation. If a man went to a doctor, no matter the class to which he might belong, he went to him because he was ill; and, therefore, he did not see how the independence of character of the persons concerned could be brought into this question at all. He said that this independence of character and status for which the right hon. and

learned Gentleman was so anxious could be maintained, even though poverty might compel the individual to accept the aid of a dispensing doctor. If a man were able to pay for the medical assistance which he received for nothing, there was, of course, an abuse which ought to be corrected; but, looking at the matter from the other point of view, if the individual were unable to pay the doctor for the medical aid that was necessary for him or his family, the requirements of humanity and civilized life demanded that the aid of the doctor should be given to him or his family free. And if that necessity were met, how could anyone contend that a man should be deprived in consequence of the first right of citizenship, because he had not preserved his independence of character and status? He supposed, as it would seem from the argument of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, that a man's independence was to be measured by the length of his pocket; but he (Mr. Sexton) declined to accept that view of the case, and he repeated that a man's status might be perfectly independent, even if his poverty deprived him of the necessities of life. Let the Committee consider the great disproportion that existed between the fees exacted by medical men in Ireland and the incomes of the poor class of men in that country. The right hon. and learned Gentleman in the course of his remarks had delivered himself of a curious fact when he spoke of the absolute assimilation of the law in respect of the three countries, England, Scotland, and Ireland, which he stated the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) intended to bring about. [Mr. Gibson: I quoted the report in *The Times.*] He (Mr. Sexton) cared not for the report in *The Times;* he asked who was the writer of that report? Was he a sworn shorthand writer? He had heard his hon. Friend often speak of assimilation of the law; but he had never heard him reach the superlative term of "absolute assimilation." There could be no such thing as absolute assimilation of laws; because the first necessity of law was that it should conform itself to the circumstances of the country in which it had to operate, and as no one would say that the circumstances of England and Ireland were similar, there could be no absolute assimilation of law in respect of them—it would be impossible to apply an absolutely similar principle to the people of the two countries at large. The people of England, as compared with those of Ireland, were better able to live and pay the doctor; and the existence of medical aid societies was a recognized fact in England. In dealing with the poor, the doctor's fee in England was almost nominal; but, so far as he was aware, the Irish doctors as a class were not in the habit, except under compulsion of the "red ticket," of discharging any medical function for their fellow-creatures unless on payment of a guinea. Now, what, he asked, was the use of expecting poor people in Ireland to pay a guinea, half-a-guinea, or even half-a-crown, for any medical attention received from a private practitioner? The thing was an impossibility; and if they could not pay, why should it be suggested that they should be shut out from the exercise of the franchise? Here was a classification of the agricultural holdings in Ireland. The number of holdings of one acre and under was 49,000; of from three to five acres, 53,000; of from five to seven acres, 59,000; and of from seven to 15 acres, 39,000. There were in Ireland more than 200,000 holdings of between one acre and 15, occupied by families who were drawing their living from them, after satisfying the landlord by paying rent and taxes. Now, he asked if any Member of the House would have the hardihood to go to the Table and say that the income of any one of those holders of farms was such as to allow them to pay a single guinea to the doctor in the course of a year? The whole scale of medical fees in Ireland must be reduced, unless it was to remain outside the means of the population to pay for medical relief; and he challenged anyone to show in the case of the poor people of Ireland, and in face of the incomes they derived from the cultivation of their holdings, why, being unable to pay the medical fees at present demanded by the Profession, they should in addition to that have the penalty inflicted upon them of not being allowed to vote. They contributed to the rates; and that being so, they had a right to expect and to receive something in return. However, the Government had inserted a clause in the Bill which he considered to be perfectly just in principle; it would have been a mockery to

do otherwise, and the only construction he could put upon the argument of the right hon. and learned Gentleman was that, while endeavouring to exclude the class of persons in question, he hoped that the object of the recent extension of the franchise might be defeated by a side-wind.

COLONEL NOLAN said, as a general rule, hon. Members on those Benches were glad to listen to the speeches of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) on Irish affairs, because he had knowledge of the subjects on which he usually addressed the House; but, in the present case, he (Colonel Nolan) believed the right hon. and learned Gentleman knew very little of the subject practically. He was an eminent barrister, and he had lived long in Dublin; but there was nothing, or very little, in common between the people of that city and those of the districts of Ireland principally concerned in this question. The right hon. and learned Gentleman, moreover, was a statesman a good deal drawn upon by the Conservative Party, and who was in the habit of attending and speaking at large meetings in England; but he (Colonel Nolan) did not think that he knew much of the so-called "scarlet runners" in Ireland. He (Colonel Nolan) had given away many of those tickets in his capacity of secretary to one society and chairman of another, and he ventured to think that he represented the feelings of the people on the subject as well as any man in Ireland. He knew that the Boards of Guardians held strong views on this point. If the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Gentleman were adopted by the Government, and the clause under notice struck out of the Bill, it was believed that the Franchise Act, so far as an enormous number of the people of Ireland were concerned, would be a farce. With regard to the refusal of medical men in Irelend to take less than the fee of a guinea from the very poorest men, it was felt that this was something that must be changed—and it must be changed either by the general consent of the Medical Profession in Ireland, or else by action on the part of the Government. He wished to point out, however, with regard to the fees exacted by medical men in Ireland, that although they received £1 for their assistance, they saw or attended the individual three or four times for that amount. But were they to enact that because a man could not pay £1 for medical aid when he or his child, for instance, were ill, he should be deprived of his right to vote? He (Colonel Nolan) could assure the right hon. and learned Gentleman that it was not solely a question of "scarlet runners" that was involved here. Even if a person in employment who might be considered tolerably well off were ill, he was expected to go to the dispensary in the nearest town for advice and medicine; and it was absurd to say that unless people in that position paid a guinea to the doctor they should lose their vote. Then there was another argument in favour of retaining this clause in the Bill. The country was talking of war, and were they to say to officers in the Army and Navy that they would be disqualified because they received gratuitous medical advice. Everyone knew that they had gratuitous medical advice; and did the right hon. Gentleman mean to say that those officers lost their independence of status and character when they went to the surgeon of their regiment or ship? The right hon. and learned Gentleman said that the people in Ireland would lose their independence if they did not pay for medical relief. But he (Colonel Nolan) said that every one of the men who paid £6 or £7 rent for the land they farmed did pay for it. They paid for it in the shape of poor rates to the extent of 5*s.* or 6*s.* a-year; and if any of them only drew to that extent for medical aid, he contended that they were independent men. And the right hon. and learned Gentleman would shut out a man who got five or six shillings' worth of advice, although he paid a large sum for poor rate. Since he (Colonel Nolan) was a child, the old system of medical relief for the poor had been superseded by the present dispensary system. That system had been established in Ireland, and the people had been trained up to it. But for that system, medical aid clubs might have been established in Ireland; but they had not grown up there, and it would take 40 or 50 years to build them up. But the right hon. and learned Gentleman would say to the people—"Because you have not established these clubs, you shall be shut out from the franchise altogether." If the Amend-

ment of the right hon. and learned Gentleman were adopted, the most frightful confusion would be created; clerks of Unions and apothecaries would have to be summoned before the Revising Barristers to say whether they had given tickets and medicine or not; people would be called upon to produce their books and documents to satisfy the requirements of the Act; and all that, he need not say, would cause an enormous amount of trouble. Speaking with regard to his own county of Galway, if the clause which the Amendment proposed to strike out were retained, he did not believe there would throughout the county be two contested cases before the Revising Barrister; whereas if the Amendment were adopted, it would be very easy to have 20,000 such cases. If this clause was not passed, the Committee would be upsetting the whole Poor Law system in Ireland, and they would go a long way towards reversing the principle on which the Franchise Bill rested.

COLONEL COLTHURST said, he thought his right hon. and learned Friend who moved the Amendment before the Committee was under a total misapprehension as to the operation and scope of the Medical Act in Ireland. That Act, before the passing of the Medical Charities' Act, constituted the system of relief in Ireland. It provided for dispensary districts administered by subscribers, and the present law was simply engrafted upon it and adapted to it. The Committee would find that in the Act the words "poor persons" were most carefully used, and that the words "persons in receipt of Poor Law relief" were as carefully avoided; and he would point out that the reason why this was done was simply this—that not only were the circumstances of the great mass of the people in Ireland totally different from those of the great mass of the people in England, but that the Poor Laws of the two countries were likewise different. The number of people who could receive outdoor relief and medical relief in England was much larger, in proportion to the rest of the population, than it was in Ireland; and not only were laws in Ireland much more restricted than in England, but the administration of them was more restrictive. When the present law was made, the Guardians were left to decide whether individuals came within the meaning of the words "poor persons" or not. Not only was there a different practice in respect of some Unions, but it was easy to see that John Smith, for instance, might be a poor man in the eyes of people in his neighbourhood, while he would not be considered to be so by persons who lived a few miles off. If, therefore, they were to disqualify persons who received medical aid free, Parliament would not only be doing a respectable class of persons a great injustice by excluding a large number of them from the exercise of the franchise, which right had been just conferred upon them, but it would lead to inextricable confusion in view of the varying rules and practice prevailing in the different Unions of Ireland. How it could ever have entered into the mind of his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin to make the proposal that was now before the Committee, he (Colonel Colthurst) was unable to conceive; and he could only suggest that he had never thoroughly considered the Medical Charities Act, what it was intended to do, and what it had done in Ireland.

MR. BRODRICK said, it would appear, from the views expressed by the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan), that he thought that the acceptance of medical relief almost amounted to a qualification for the exercise of the franchise. That was a sufficiently startling proposition; but when the hon. and gallant Member proceeded to argue that because officers in the Army and Navy were entitled by the Regulations of those Services to medical advice they also ought to be disqualified—why, he (Mr. Brodrick) thought the hon. and gallant Member might have gone the length of proposing to disfranchise convicts in gaol, who also received medical relief; and it would do to talk about at election time quite as well. He thought the question of equality as between the two countries was worthy of consideration; and if any inequality should exist in that respect hereafter, it would surely be greatly to the disadvantage of the hard-working English labourers who had been admitted to the franchise, who had subscribed, and were subscribing, considerable sums of money to societies in order to avoid placing themselves in the position of having to apply for free medi-

cal assistance. When the Irish labourers did the same thing, that would be about the period when it would be desirable to give this class of people in Ireland the vote; and Parliament would avoid doing what he and others on the Opposition side of the House had protested against all along—namely, the giving to a class of voters, the equal of which did not exist in England, the entire preponderance of the Irish franchise, a preponderance which was pointed out, when the Franchise Bill was under discussion, to be as large as 458,000 in 760,000. The houses of these men were under £1 valuation. It would be an exceedingly good thing if, by the absence of this clause, every one of these men were cut off from the franchise; and it was upon that ground, and largely in the hope that a considerable number of the constituents of the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan), or those who would be the constituents of the hon. and gallant Gentleman, would be prevented from outvoting the intelligent classes of the community—those who had a stake in the country—that he (Mr. Brodrick) would vote against the inclusion of this clause. He hoped the Government intended to listen to reason. The hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) pathetically appealed to the Government not to allow this Bill to be dealt with adversely by another Chamber owing to its being sent up so late. If the hon. and learned Gentleman really felt the force of his own appeal, he would support him (Mr. Brodrick) in objecting to the inclusion in the Bill of provisions which no Chamber was likely to consider proper or right. It was exceedingly likely that the House of Commons would see the Bill again if they sent it up to the House of Lords containing such a monstrous and unequal provision as that which was now included in it. If the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) retained this clause in the Bill, it would be very desirable, when the proper time came, to change the name of the measure from "The Registration of Voters (Ireland) Bill" to "The Registration of Voters and Paupers Enfranchisement (Ireland) Bill." Before he sat down he wished to say that it was perfectly well understood, during the progress of the Franchise Bill last year, that even the Prime Minister most strongly objected to leaving Ireland out of the Bill, on the ground that, although he did not profess the class of voters was the same as in England, he thought that there should be absolute equality of franchise. If that rule were to be observed on this occasion, the Government could not fail to strike out this clause. If, on the other hand, they retained the clause, it was a breach of the most positive statement of intention on the part of the Government. He hoped that the Government would see fit to exclude this clause from the Bill.

MR. GORST said, he was not quite so ferociously virtuous as the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Brodrick). No doubt, it was a very attractive and general principle, and one that he (Mr. Gorst) had always supported in the House of Commons—that England and Ireland should be treated exactly alike, in all matters of principle, at all events. In England it was the law that persons who were in receipt of parochial relief, in which medical relief was included, were not entitled to enjoy the franchise; but he understood from the admirable speech delivered by the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the County Cork (Colonel Colthurst) that in Ireland the administration of medical relief was entirely separate from the ordinary administration of poor relief. It, therefore, seemed that in England and Ireland the receipt of medical relief did not stand on the same footing. If a person received medical relief in England, he received ordinary parish relief, because parish medical relief was dispensed in England exactly in the same way, and under precisely the same conditions, as common parish relief. There was no doubt that in the incidence of the franchise in England, this fact had led to great abuse; indeed, he had heard great complaints made that the power of dispensing medical relief had been used by unscrupulous politicians in English parishes for the purpose of disfranchisement. He remembered well a case in which a doctor, who was paid by the parish for attending the *accouchement* of the women of the lower classes, attended indiscriminately the wives of voters upon both sides of politics; but he put down on his list only those who belonged to the Party to which he was opposed, thereby disfranchising all the husbands; whereas the

husbands of the women on his own side of politics retained their votes. This showed in itself how the dispensation of medical relief was abused. Of course, there were cases in which a man might be driven into the receipt of medical relief whether he pleased or not; and, therefore, it was clear that this was a kind of relief that could be abused, and could be used for political purposes. If it was possible, even in England, to separate the receipt of medical relief from the receipt of ordinary poor relief, he should be much inclined to support such a separation; but in England it was not possible, whereas in Ireland it was. It appeared that in Ireland, owing to Act of Parliament, the administration of medical relief was separated entirely from the ordinary distribution of public charity. Now, he would like to call the attention of the Committee to the way in which the English poor, in a precisely analogous case—that was in the case of the receipt, not of medical relief, but of educational relief—were treated. Where an English labouring man was not able to pay the school fees for the attendance of his own children at school, he was entitled to go to the Guardians, and from the Guardians to obtain out of the Poor Law funds the amount of the fees to be paid for the education of his children. Now, that was a case of the receipt of public money, receipt in a certain aspect of Poor Law relief, but it was receipt of a kind of relief which was not the ordinary poor relief; it was not connected with the administration of the ordinary Poor Law relief. A man was bound by law to send his children to school, and to pay certain fees; educational relief, therefore, was not at all the same thing as relief in the shape of food and clothes. Under these circumstances, was a poor English labourer disfranchised? No, because, by the Elementary Education Act, it was specifically provided that the parents who were unable, by reason of their poverty, to pay the fees of their children in public elementary schools, could apply to the Guardians, and the Guardians, being satisfied with the inability of the parents to pay the fees, should make such and such grants, and then it was expressly enacted—

"That the parents shall not, by reason of any payment made under this section, be deprived of any franchise right or privilege, or be subjected to any disability or any disqualification."

He was entirely with the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) in treating the poor in Ireland exactly as they treated the poor in England; and finding that they did not disfranchise the poor in England who obtained, by reason of their poverty, additional relief, he was inclined to vote against the disfranchisement of the poor of Ireland who, by reason of their poverty, received medical relief.

Dr. LYONS said, he did not believe the Medical Profession in Ireland had any desire whatever to stand in the way of the enlargement of the franchise. This clause, however, raised a difficulty of long standing, and one which it was to be regretted had not hitherto been dealt with. It was to be regretted that Her Majesty's Government had not condescended to take the advice of one or two persons thoroughly acquainted with this matter, because, if they had done so, the difficulty might easily have been removed. It could not be properly said, or said with a shadow of truth, that the Irish people had not received very generous assistance, under all circumstances, from the Medical Profession. The people themselves were the first to recognize that fact. The remuneration of the medical men was not at all adequate to the amount of assistance they rendered in very many cases. The real difficulty in the case arose from the system of "red tickets." That system had been made for a series of years an engine of oppression and extortion upon the Medical Profession. Unfortunately, in many instances, persons of the farming class considered that, in times of prosperity, they were entitled to enforce the gratuitous attendance of the doctor just as they did in times of adversity. The habit of receiving gratuitous medical relief grew upon the people, and they remained under the impression that they were always entitled to receive that relief, no matter how great their prosperity might be. As an instance of the "red ticket" system being used, as he had said, as an engine of oppression, he might tell the Committee that if a medical man was disliked in his district, the expression had become common—"We will soon red-ticket him out of the place." "Red tickets" were very easily given;

there was no sort of control with regard to the issuing of them; everyone liked to be generous in that which cost him nothing, and the small shopkeeper was always ready, on the slightest pretence, to tell a customer—"Oh, I will send the doctor to you." It often happened that doctors were sent many miles to attend the most trumpery cases. Of his (Dr. Lyons') own knowledge, he knew of a case in which a patient living at a considerable distance expressed a great desire to see a new "iron horse" the doctor had got. A "red ticket" was issued to the applicant, and the doctor — who used a bicycle, his salary not enabling him to keep a horse—was sent seven miles, with the result that he saw the so-called patient standing at the door, who, then and there, frankly stated the circumstances under which the "red ticket" had been issued. The system of "red tickets" was one he had always looked forward to devising some means, with the consent of the House, of remedying. There was no insuparable difficulty in the matter. The clerk of the Union and the relieving officer had full knowledge of the circumstances and financial position of all persons in their districts, and nothing would be easier than to classify those at all times entitled to gratuitous relief, and those whose position enabled them to pay a fixed moderate charge. He thought that in times of prosperity the well-to-do people of Ireland should be obliged to pay a fair amount for medical assistance; and he asked the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) whether he could not, on this occasion, give some pledge that he would, on an early day, take steps to prevent the abuse he (Dr. Lyons) had indicated?

MR. HEALY, interrupting the hon. Gentleman (Dr. Lyons), asked whether it was in Order for an hon. Gentleman in the House, who was supposed to be addressing the Chair, to speak to himself?

MR. CHARLES RUSSELL said, the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Dublin (Dr. Lyons) had not condescended to tell the Committee who were the one or two persons whom the Government ought to have consulted on this matter; but, if he was right in assuming that the hon. Member was one of those persons, he (Mr. Charles Russell) was exceedingly glad that the Government had not consulted him. He thought it would be a source of great injustice in Ireland if this clause were not retained in the Bill. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) mixed up with the question of the retention of this clause, and so did the hon. Member for the City of Dublin (Dr. Lyons), the question of the possible abuse of the system of giving white or red tickets. There might be the abuse indicated; but that was not the question before the Committee; that was a matter which could be redressed, and ought to be redressed, by the action of the Local Government Board, to whom application could be made, if any hon. Members would put them in possession of the facts. Dismissing the question altogether of the supposed abuse in the distribution of medical relief, upon the general question he had only one word to say. His hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the county of Cork (Colonel Colthurst) and the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) had made this matter very clear. His hon. and gallant Friend near him (Colonel Colthurst), who understood the actual working of the system well, and who therefore was entitled to speak on the matter, had pointed out how the system worked, and the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) had made it clear to the Committee that the relief was such that it was not in truth considered by the people of Ireland as parochial relief. He was sure that no one who knew the feeling of Ireland would suppose that the person who received outdoor relief in Ireland, or parochial relief inside the Union, was regarded at all in the same category as the small farmer who, in the case of necessity, applied to the medical officer to put down disease, which was not only a matter of relief to a particular individual, but also a matter of great concern to the public generally. He could not but think that a great deal of the argument that had been addressed to the Committee, although it had not been disclosed, was really dictated by the kind of feeling which was obviously in the mind of the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Surrey (Mr Brodrick), who, in truth, wanted by this side-wind to undo, to some extent, the effect of the Franchise Bill itself.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, there was one aspect of this question on which he should like to address a few words to the Committee. It was perfectly clear from the debate that this was really not merely a question of registration, but a question of the extension of the franchise in Ireland. It had been argued by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) that without this clause the extension of the franchise in Ireland, which had been already assented to by Parliament, would be largely inoperative. That being so, the question naturally occurred why this matter was not dealt with by Her Majesty's Government in the Franchise Bill, rather than in the Registration Bill, and whether it was reasonable or not to ask the House of Commons, after the question of the franchise had been settled by common agreement, that this question should be re-opened, so far as it affected Ireland, by the clause that was now before the Committee? Now, Her Majesty's Government had themselves, in previous debates during this Session, adopted the principle that it was not right to re-open the question of the franchise, because, when Amendments upon that point were moved by various Members in the Committee on the Redistribution Bill, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke), while admitting in more than one instance his own sympathy with the Amendments proposed, declared the Amendments could not be considered, as the question was already settled. He (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) suggested, *à fortiori*, that it ought not to be re-opened by a Registration Bill which purported to be merely a measure for enacting such alterations in the law as might be necessary to carry out the Franchise Act which had been already passed, and the Redistribution Bill which was now passing through the House of Commons. But it was contended that the circumstances of the Medical Charities Act in Ireland and the Poor Law system of England were so essentially different, that if the alterations now proposed were made in the Irish law, they would be no precedent for any similar change in the English law. No one in the House could speak with more knowledge on the subject than the hon. and gallant Member for the county of Cork (Colonel Colthurst), and he (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) admitted what the hon. and gallant Gentleman had said with regard to the different administration of the Medical Charities Act in Ireland, and the system of Poor Law medical relief in England. No doubt, in Ireland the medical charities were not administered by officials of the Poor Law. It was a separate system altogether, and therefore it had come, as the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dundalk (Mr. Charles Russell) had said, to be looked upon by not a few of the population of Ireland as really no system of Poor Law relief at all. Well, that was the strongest testimony that could be given by any hon. Member to the truth of the facts alluded to by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), and subsequently dwelt upon by the hon. Member for the City of Dublin (Dr. Lyons)—namely, that there was considerable abuse in the administration of the Medical Charities Act in Ireland. It was admitted by high authorities that abuse of the system did exist. [Mr. HEALY: What is the supervising authority?] The authority supervising was unquestionably the Local Government Board; but when persons who were legally appointed to administer the system, and those who came under it, looked upon it from the point of view of the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk, he (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) did not think it would be possible for the supervising authority to check the abuse. He did not agree with the hon. and gallant Member for the county of Cork as to the essential difference between the Irish and English systems. The essence of both of them was that they consisted of relief paid from public sources—paid by the ratepayers—whether it was administered by those who were intrusted with the administration of medical relief, or by the Poor Law Guardians; and in his humble opinion, if Parliament agreed to this change in the law with respect to Ireland, it was striking a very dangerous blow at the whole electoral law of the United Kingdom, which made the receipt of relief a disqualification for the franchise. It had been urged by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham, that the arguments which had been used should not preclude the adoption of

the clause, for the reason that the administration of medical relief in England could not be so separated from the administration of other relief as to leave the acceptance of other relief a disqualification, while the acceptance of medical relief remained no disqualification. He (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) did not wish to put his opinion on a question of law against that of the hon. and learned Member; but he could not help thinking that it would be almost as easy to repeal the law in England which made the acceptance of medical relief a disqualification as to repeal the law which applied to Ireland. It was a matter of great social interest whether the acceptance of relief under the Poor Law system in England, or under the Medical Authorities in Ireland, should be felt by those who received it to be of the nature of relief from public sources, or should be looked upon from the point of view suggested by the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk (Mr. Charles Russell). Any hon. Member who had watched the progress of Poor Law outdoor relief in Ireland for the last 15 or 20 years, would know that this idea of relief—being in the nature of a charity rather than a relief from public sources—was not without conderable danger in Ireland. It was a great danger in England, too. On looking at a late Report of the Irish Local Government Board, he had seen that the amount expended in outdoor relief in Ireland had doubled during the last 10 years, whilst the expenditure on medical charities had increased 20 per cent during that period. He thought that if the disqualification for the exercise of the franchise was a bar to anyone who could really do without it from seeking for relief of this kind, it was a good thing from a social point of view to retain that; but, at any rate, he did not think that a change should be made in the law without the whole system of disqualification for the franchise being seriously considered by Parliament. He believed that it would be generally admitted by the Government and the House that the acceptance of what was called medical relief was not consistent with that independent frame of mind on the part of the voter to which the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had alluded in his speech. He thought it ought to be a disqualification for the franchise; and, therefore, he very much regretted that Her Majesty's Government should have felt it necessary to raise this important question, and propose this important change, in this Bill, which, he ventured to submit, had no proper connection with the subject. If Her Majesty's Government intended to effect this alteration in the law, the question should be raised directly, and on its own merits, and not brought forward in a measure of this sort.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he would first allude to the speech of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Dublin (Dr. Lyons). He knew several dispensary doctors in Ireland, and was aware that they occasionally had patients who paid them; but he could repudiate that they were willing to purchase immunity from the grievances they had to complain of by the disfranchisement of a large portion of their fellow-countrymen. He believed no body of men could be more surprised or indignant than they would be on finding their case mixed up with the question of the disfranchisement of their fellow-countrymen. He was convinced that they would endure ten times more rather than lend their sanction to the efforts of the hon. Member, or of anybody else, to bring about the disfranchisement of a large portion of the Irish people. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) would say this to the Committee generally—namely, that there was no proposition which could come before them in connection with this Bill, or any other Bill this Session, which could more clearly test the legislative capacity of this Assembly and its legislative grasp and its statesmanship than its method of dealing with this question. This was one question which would show the people of Ireland whether or not there was an awakening intelligence in this House as to the manner in which Irish questions should be dealt with. For what did the arguments against this clause all mean? The hon. Member for West Surrey (Mr. Brodrick) deserved the gratitude of Irish Members and of the Committee generally. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) agreed with the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk (Mr. Charles Russell) that the hon. Member for West Surrey was the one speaker on this occasion who had given the real reasons of the Party to which

he belonged for the attitude they had taken up. The real reason—and let the Committee face it and know of this hostility—was not a desire to raise the social status of the Irish citizen, but to keep down that social status by depriving the people of a voice in the destinies of their own country. The real reason had been stated by the hon. Member he had mentioned, who had been candid enough to say that, if he could have his way, 50 years would elapse before the mass of the Irish people would have any voice in the control of their own affairs.

MR. BRODRICK: I said I hoped it would be long before those persons in receipt of medical relief in Ireland were admitted to the franchise.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Yes; but the hon. Member had connected that with a statement that the persons holding small portions of land in Ireland were unfit to exercise the franchise. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) put the two statements together, and interpreted them by saying that the hon. Member's opposition to this proposal was based on a desire to deprive the poorer classes of the Irish people of any voice in the control of their own affairs. The right hon. Gentleman—a late Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach)—had disclaimed all hostility to the measure; but the right hon. Gentleman would be inconsistent with his whole career if he did not offer most vigorous hostility to everything like Irish reform. What were his arguments? He proposed to go round all the arguments of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst); but he was careful to overlook the most pregnant of those arguments. The hon. and learned Member for Chatham had pointed out that a large number of the people of this country were receiving what was practically out-door relief by having their children educated in the Board schools, although no one proposed to make that a bar to their exercising the franchise. Nothing could be more fallacious or more absurd than to suppose that things called by the same name in England and Ireland meant the same thing in the two countries. They found this fallacy existing in connection with almost every proposal which had ever been made in the interests of Ireland. With regard to landlordism, a mistake of that kind had been made. The landlord of Ireland and the landlord of England were so totally different that they might almost be called by different names. So was it also with this system of medical relief. In England there was a variable scale of all doctors' fees. The hon. Member for the City of Dublin said that nothing could be more mythical than the supposition that a guinea was given as a fee in all cases to a doctor in Ireland; but, in spite of that observation, he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) maintained that every medical man in Ireland who would accept anything less than the ordinary fee of a guinea would be "Boycotted" by the rest of his Profession. What was the case in England? Why, if they went into the poor parts of London, they would find open dispensaries where a bottle of medicine and advice was given for the small sum of 6*d*. Anyone acquainted with the relations existing between medical men and their patients in this country would know that it was possible to get medical assistance in England at a price infinitely below that charged by the doctors in Ireland. Some people said—"Why do not the Irish form clubs for medical assistance?" The answer was that there was not that system of social education among the Irish people to enable them to do it which existed in England. [MR. BRODRICK: Hear, hear!] The hon. Member cheered that observation. He had found fault very much with these poor people for being paupers, and had said that because they held small portions of land they should be deprived of the Parliamentary franchise; but he had not observed that the hon. Member had accompanied that observation with any reproach to the landlords, who were content to take a considerable amount in the shape of rack rent from these poor people. In England they had this system of clubs, and of opening practically free dispensaries, and they had a variable scale of medical fees; and they compared a system of that kind with the system prevailing in Ireland, which required a medical man to charge no less than a guinea under penalty of being "Boycotted" by the rest of his Profession. He should be very much surprised if the majority of the English Conservative Party followed the lead of the right hon. and learned Gentleman

the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) on this occasion. The right hon. Baronet, an ex-Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, had asked why this had not been brought on in the Franchise Bill? Well, it would be more convenient if right hon. Gentlemen in the responsible position of the right hon. Baronet would pay a little more attention to the history of questions like this. If he had paid a little more attention to that history he would know that the proposal was made in the Franchise Bill, and was ruled out of Order, and as not germane to the Bill, by the Chairman. That was the reason why the clause was brought forward in the present measure. Finally, he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) must altogether object to what he might almost call the hypocritical plea—that this clause was opposed because of a desire to improve the social status of the Irish people. He had said before that the object was to keep the status of the Irish people as low as possible by depriving them of any voice in the control of their own affairs. He would go further, and say that this Bill, if passed in an unamended form, while producing an apparent equality in regard to the franchise between the people of Ireland and the people of England, would be an absolute mockery and a delusion when accompanied by the disfranchisement of so many voters.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, they had had two separate estimates of the value of this clause; the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) had said—and he (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) was disposed to agree with him—that it lay in a very small compass indeed. But the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had taken a much higher ground, and had told them that this was a supreme test of the legislative grasp of the House of Commons, and of its statesmanship. He (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) did not deny that that was one aspect of the case for which there was something to be said, though it was his experience in the House of Commons that the words statesmanship and statesmanlike were always applied to that particular line of conduct which the hon. Gentleman speaking at the time happened to prefer. He himself did not profess to have an accurate criterion as to the conduct of any Member of the House; but, to come to the point, it seemed to him that they ought to consider what was the *rationale* of the disfranchisement of those who might seek to obtain medical relief in Ireland, if it were not because they were supposed to be in a position of dependence. A man who received parish relief in an ordinary sense—and there was no indoor or outdoor pauper, as no doubt all would agree, who was in a position of independence—could not be admitted to the franchise. It would be against public policy to admit him; but then came the question, was the kind of relief they were now discussing of such a nature as to interfere with the independence of the person who received it? The Government had come to the conclusion that it was not; otherwise, of course, this clause would not have appeared in the Bill. The system in Ireland had been sufficiently explained to the House to-night, and whatever might be the merits or demerits of that system about which they had heard so much, it appeared to him nothing to do with the question before the Committee; and this, at all events, was certain—that, if any accusation was brought against the present system in Ireland, it was this—that persons of too high a class of the community took advantage of the system; and therefore, from that point of view, it was not so liable to the imputation of interfering with the voter's independence as it would be in other cases. It was said, indeed, that the system was bad; but if it was so bad, this, at any rate, was not the way to improve it. If it was a bad system, injurious to the community and so forth, then, in the name of reason, let them set about reforming it; but do not let them try to reform it by a side-wind in this way by imposing the penalty of disfranchisement upon those who were obliged to take advantage of it. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) had spoken of this as introducing a change in the law. (He Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) did not know that that point had been taken up; but it was a very open question whether it was a change in the law at all; it was rather, in the view of many competent and qualified persons, a declaration of what the law now was.

If that question had not been raised, he was not disposed to raise it himself; but, even if it were a change in the law, he should not be averse to it on that account. What was the object of the opposition to this clause? The hon. Member for West Surrey (Mr. Brodrick) had, with most captivating frankness, told them a good deal upon that point. He (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) could admire and appreciate the consistency of the hon. Member, because he believed he was himself opposed to the extension of the franchise to a lower class of voters in Ireland; and, therefore, he was willing to take advantage of any means which could keep them out of it. But the House of Commons could not take that line at all. All of them who were willing and consenting parties to the Bill passed at the end of last year surely could not now by this subterfuge—because it was nothing less—disfranchise those to whom it had been understood to be one of the objects of the Bill to give a vote. On the other hand, the object might be—and he could appreciate the motives of those who acted under that contention—to bring pressure to bear upon the people in order to prevent what seemed to him to be an abuse of the present system. That, he maintained, was a thing not to be done in this particular way. If it were to be done, let the Local Government Board see to it, and if they were unable to do what was necessary, then let the Legislature be resorted to. Do not let them in this roundabout way use the electoral arrangement of the country for the purpose of effecting this object. He did not think it was necessary to go into the matter any further. As the right hon. Gentleman opposite had said, the matter lay in a very small compass, it had been now well discussed, and he trusted that they might be allowed to take a division upon it.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:* — Ayes 76; Noes 20: Majority 56. — (Div. List, No. 126.)

Clause 4 (Appeal where Chairman or Revising Barrister refuses to state a case. 41 & 42 Vict. c. 26, s. 37) *agreed to.*

Clause 5 (Polling districts).

MR. HEALY said, he would like to ask whether the Government had considered the question of providing polling districts, and whether they would consider the necessity of providing also additional Revision Courts? In the case of the county of Dublin last year, they had offered, if necessary, to pass an Act to enable the Lord Lieutenant to make additional provision for the county of Dublin. Now they would be having a tremendous number of new voters coming in, and it would be perfectly impossible to have them properly attended to unless there were an additional number of Revision Courts. He believed the Lord Lieutenant had power in some cases, with the consent of the Privy Council, to appoint additional Revision Courts; but there was great difficulty in getting the consent, and, unless pledges were given that money which was available would be used for this purpose in Ireland, they would be placed in an unfortunate position in regard to this subject. They had provided for additional Revising Barristers, and, that being so, there was no reason for their not providing that they should do the work in one district and then in another.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, there was sufficient power under the Act of 1873.

MR. HEALY said, he wished to point out that they had now arrived at a new state of things, owing to the large increase that was being made in the constituency. He wished, therefore, to ask whether the Lord Lieutenant would reconsider the entire question, and whether also the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland would give the matter his attention? It was important in a large number of cases, in which the number of voters upon the lists would be enormously increased, that a sufficient number of Revision Courts should be provided — say, one Court for every 1,000 voters—so as to render them easily accessible to the new voters.

MR. CALLAN said, he thought the Government ought so to arrange that the voters should, if possible, be able to attend Revision Courts within seven miles of their own residences. Although he himself represented the smallest county in Ireland (Louth), he found that in the Southern Division of that county voters would have to walk a distance of 17 miles for the purpose of maintaining their right to be upon the Register. If

it was necessary, under the old system, that the electors should have polling places within four miles of their residences, he did not see why, under the new Act, which so largely increased the number of electors, it should not be necessary to have Revision Courts within a distance of certainly not more than seven miles. Unless some such suggestion were carried out, and some pledge given on the part of the Government to the Representatives of the Irish people that the labourers should not be compelled to walk a distance of 17 miles for the purpose of maintaining their rights, in the face of some threepenny objection, a large number of voters would be subjected to very considerable hardship. As far as the Lord Lieutenant was concerned, they had very little hope of obtaining what they required from that authority. Attention had been drawn in that House time after time to the injustice perpetrated under the existing system; and they certainly had a right now to ask the Government to consent to such an enlargement of the number of the Revision Courts in Ireland that the agricultural labourers, who would now be placed on the Electoral Roll, should not be compelled to walk enormous distances in order to maintain their right to vote. It would be a great scandal if such a thing were permitted, for if men had to walk a distance of 17 miles one day, they would hardly be in a condition to do any work the next. He thought, therefore, that something more was required than the mere assertion of the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland that the matter was one in which sufficient power was given to the Lord Lieutenant under the existing law. The Act referred to had been in operation for 11 years, and during all that time the Lord Lieutenant had had ample opportunities of considering the matter; but in no single instance, as far as he (Mr. Callan) was aware, with the exception of the county of Dublin, had the Lord Lieutenant increased the number of Revision Courts.

MR. HEALY: Yes; in the county of Monaghan.

MR. CALLAN said, Monaghan was another exception.

MR. HEALY: It was for the benefit of the Tories.

MR. CALLAN said, his hon. and learned Friend was right. What was done in Monaghan was on behalf of the Tories, and no such enlargement was ever made in any other part of Ireland than those mentioned. Under the Act of Parliament, the Revising Barristers would receive £100 additional salary for holding their Revision Courts, and they were only called upon to sit an average of two days in the 12 months. They could not, therefore, complain if they were inconvenienced to some extent by holding additional Courts; and certainly it was they, and not the electors, who, if anyone, ought to be inconvenienced.

MR. HEALY said, he would remind the Committee that they were now considering line 25 of the clause, which proposed to revise certain Acts referred to in the Schedule. It should be remembered that the Ballot Act gave a Revision Court to every polling or Petty Sessional district—he was not quite sure which—and what he wished to suggest was that they should revert back to what had been done at the time of the passing of the Ballot Act, that they should repeal the clause which had repealed the section of that Act dealing with the Revision Courts, and having regard to the tremendous number of electors which would now be thrown upon the Register, that they should enact that the Revising Barristers should hold Revision Courts in every Petty Sessional district, which, he believed, had been the case under the Ballot Act. He would urge that this suggestion should be adopted, and made applicable to the 1st Schedule of the Bill. He thought also that line 25 of the clause required amendment by putting in the number of the Schedule. There would be a series of Schedules in the Bill, and line 25 had reference to what would be the first of those Schedules, all of which, he suggested, ought to be numbered or defined by letters of the alphabet.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, he assured the Committee that the Act of 1873 gave ample power for the appointment by the Lord Lieutenant of any Revision Courts that might be thought necessary. With regard to what had been said about the Ballot Act, he thought the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) was under a misapprehension, and that the section he had referred to gave power to appoint Revision Courts in all the polling districts.

MR. SYNAN thought there had been some confusion with regard to the operation of the Ballot Act. Under that Act there was power to increase the polling districts. These districts were fixed at the Quarter Sessions. The revision of the registration was also a matter belonging to Quarter Sessions. The question that now arose was whether, in consequence of the increased number of voters who would be placed upon the Register, they would have sufficient facilities afforded them for maintaining their rights as electors under the revision provided at Quarter Sessions. He did not think they would be sufficient, and was of opinion that further provision ought to be made under the 4th clause of the Bill, and not by an Amendment relating to polling districts, which would have nothing to do with the revision of registration. The revision of votes at Quarter Sessions was one thing, and the fixing of polling places at Quarter Sessions was another. Under the Ballot Act the polling places were increased to such an extent that every polling place was brought to within four or five miles of the electors' residences; but the revision of the Register was not similarly dealt with, and he thought that some provision ought to be made under the Bill—by which the number of voters in Ireland was almost doubled—for an increase in the number of Revision Courts. He thought the matter was one with which the Government ought to deal. The hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) seemed to think that the Ballot Act had provided for what was needed; but this was not so. The Ballot Act merely left the question of revision where it was, at Quarter Sessions, and the only way to increase the facilities for revision was by an Amendment of this Bill increasing the number of Revision Courts.

MR. CALLAN said, the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. Synan) laboured under a great mistake in attaching to the Quarter Sessions both the revision and the polling. It might have been so in the olden time, when the hon. Member first came into Parliament; but, at the present day, the registration and polling questions were settled at separate Sessions altogether, and wholly apart from the Quarter Sessions. Each of these matters was deal with at separate Sessions.

MR. KENNY said, his hon. Friend the Member for Louth (Mr. Callan), while technically correct, was essentially wrong.

COLONEL NOLAN said, the main point at issue was whether there was any reason why the electors should be under the necessity of walking a great many miles for the purpose of attending the Revision Courts. In a county like that which he represented (Galway), where there was no contest at all about registration, he did not see why the Government should be put to the expense of appointing a number of additional Revision Courts. In cases where, as in Galway, under ordinary circumstances, there would be no fighting at all, it would be a farce and a ridiculous expenditure to institute a number of new Courts. His own experience was that the calling over the Roll at Quarter Sessions was a thing that only occupied five minutes or so, and the matter was settled. But in cases where large additions of voters were made to the Register, where, for instance, there might be a supplementary list of 4,000, 5,000, or 6,000, and where every Liberal objected to every Conservative, and every Conservative to every Liberal, and any voter who happened to keep his own counsel on political subjects was objected to by both Parties, it became a totally different matter. In those cases he considered that a multiplication of the Revision Courts would be found necessary, and he hoped that means would be taken to provide the requisite facilities.

MR. T. A. DICKSON said, that, to his own knowledge, there were cases in which electors would have to walk a distance of 15, 16, and even 17 miles to get to the nearest Revision Courts. He was in the recollection of the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan), and of other hon. Members, when he stated that in many counties in Ireland several thousands of notices of objection were served upon electors on both sides at every revision; and unless a sufficient number of Revision Courts was provided, it would be next to impossible for the voters to be able to attend them and maintain their rights.

MR. GIBSON said, he agreed with the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) that there was ample jurisdic-

tion at present for the appointment of Revision Courts, to be held at such times and places in the course of the year as the Lord Lieutenant might deem fit. The Act of 1877 gave the power of holding Quarter Sessions more often than those already fixed; but he had no doubt that the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland would look into the matter and satisfy himself as to the existence of the necessary powers, as it was obvious that if sufficient power did not exist for the provision of the requisite number of Revision Courts some further provision ought to be made for the purpose of insuring that result.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, the Ballot Act of 1872 provided certain machinery for the appointment of new polling districts, and that Act was amended by the Act of 1873, which latter Act also provided machinery for the appointment of Revision Courts. The two things were perfectly distinct.

MR. HEALY said, he quite agreed that the 3rd section of the Act of 1873, which amended the Ballot Act of 1872, gave the Lord Lieutenant power to provide Revision Courts where necessary; but what he complained of was that this power was never exercised by the Lord Lieutenant. In the case of Dublin it was only after a tremendous struggle that the Lord Lieutenant was induced to give some additional Revision Courts, and he gave them with a most meagre hand. The greatest possible pressure had to be brought to bear on that occasion; several Memorials were sent to the Lord Lieutenant on the subject, and the result was that he did not give half the Courts that were wanted. When, however, the Tories found that they had not a sufficient number of Revision Courts in Monaghan, and the magistrates sent up an application for additional Courts, the county being formerly a Tory county, they were able to get what they wanted. Why, he asked, did not the Government undertake to deal with this matter? There ought to be some hard-and-fast line laid down for the appointment of a certain number of persons to hold Revision Courts, or the Lord Lieutenant should be compelled to give a Revision Court for every 1,000 electors. As the matter at present stood, the section of the Act of Parliament which gave the existing power said the Lord Lieutenant might by Order in Council appoint Revision Courts, and so forth. He (Mr. Healy) would not say that there ought to be a Court in every Petty Sessional district; but he thought there ought to be one in every town of any size—say, with a population of 2,000, or having Town Commissioners. Revision Courts ought to be held in all such places—at any rate for the present year. He would not carry his proposition beyond this—It was proposed to appoint a greater number of Revising Barristers, and to take other additional means to provide for the registration necessitated by the Franchise Act; and he thought, therefore, the Government ought to be anxious to see that the new law was properly, fairly, and efficiently carried out in every respect.

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, the circumstances connected with the present legislation would necessarily require a much larger scheme of revision than would be requisite in ordinary years; and he would promise, on behalf of the Government, that the matter should be carefully considered in the spirit indicated by the last observations of the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy).

MR. CALLAN said, he was afraid the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan did not go far enough. That hon. and learned Gentleman would be content with having a Revision Court in each town where there were Town Commissioners; but, if this recommendation were adopted, it would leave a large number of small towns that had not Town Commissioners without any means of revision at all. In his own county (Louth) there were only two Courts, which, he contended, were not enough. There ought to be one at least in each barony, which would give five instead of two Revision Courts to the county.

MR. HEALY said, he wished to know, before the clause was agreed to, whether the Government did not think it necessary to indicate the Schedules referred to in the Bill by numbers or initials?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, he was afraid they could hardly amend the Bill in that way at the present moment; but he would consider what it would be best to do on Report.

On the Motion of Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, the following Amendment made:—In page 2, line 25, after "the," insert "Second."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 6 (Remuneration of officers. 13 & 14 Vict. c. 69. s. 73; 31 & 32 Vict. c. 49. s. 23).

MR. R. POWER moved an Amendment to the effect that the power of fixing the remuneration of collectors of Unions and poor rate collectors for their services in carrying the Registration Act into effect should be vested in Boards of Guardians, and not in the Local Government Board for Ireland, as was proposed by the clause. He said he was at a loss to understand what it was that induced the Government to put such a power in the hands of the Local Government Board as would be given to them under this section if it were carried without amendment. Of all the public Boards in Ireland, he did not think there was any so unpopular as the Local Government Board. He should like to know on what ground they were to be asked to place in the hands of a more or less irresponsible authority the disbursement of those payments, an expenditure to which they did not contribute, while those who actually did contribute the means of paying the money were to have no voice in the manner in which it was to be expended? The ratepayers had no control whatever over the Local Government Board in Ireland; and this fact sufficiently showed how differently the two countries were treated, because in England the ratepayers had perfect control over the manner in which the money they contributed was to be spent. He found that in England it was necessary that a certificate should be given to the overseers by the Revising Barrister, under Section 57 of the principal Act, for expenses incurred in carrying into effect the provisions of the Act, this certificate to be final and conclusive, provided it was signed by the Revising Barrister in the open Court. In Ireland, however, there was no open Court in the case. In addition to the provision he had just quoted, the ratepayers in England had a right to inspect the accounts and object to any items before they were allowed by the Revising Barrister. Therefore, in England the ratepayers had a perfect right to object to any item of expenditure brought before the Revising Barrister for his signature; but under the present Bill the Local Government Board might expend ten times too much or ten times too little, and the unfortunate ratepayers would have no voice whatever in the matter. Another point was, that in this instance the Government had departed from the course pursued in regard to former Registration Bills. By the Bill of 1850 he found that the Guardians had the power of fixing the salaries of all the officers, and paying them for any expenses they might have been put to; and he should like the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to say why he had departed from this precedent, and thrown the power into the hands of the Local Government Board in Dublin? He (Mr. R. Power) might say that he thought it would have been much better if the expense had not to be taken from the local rates at all; but the Government had determined not only that the money was to be contributed by the ratepayers, but that those who made the contribution should have no voice whatever in regard to its disbursement. If the Local Government Board were to retain the power of paying those salaries, and the ratepayers were to have no voice in the matter, the Government ought to have brought forward some different scheme by which the Local Government Board would be guided, and not leave it to that body to pay twice as much in one place as they might pay in another.

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 12, to leave out the words "Local Government Board for Ireland," in order to insert the words "Board of Guardians,"—(*Mr. Richard Power,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words 'Local Government Board for Ireland' stand part of the Clause."

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, it was the opinion of the Government that the Local Government Board was the best qualified body to secure a reasonable and not too high a remuneration being paid to those public servants for the performance of these duties.

MR. LEWIS thought that if there were need for the intervention of the Local Government Board, or some other

sufficient authority, for the purpose of seeing justice done between the clerks and collectors of Unions and the ratepayers, this was the case in which it had arisen. He had to remind the Committee of an instance he had brought before the House on the second reading of the Bill, only two days ago. He had then informed the House that the Athy Board of Guardians had proposed to appoint certain gentlemen who were secretaries of the National League for the purpose of making out the list of voters in the various Unions. This proposal was brought before the Board without any previous notice; and although the attention of the Guardians was called to this fact, and they were asked to postpone the matter in order that due notice might be given, they had declined to do so, but had there and then, on the spot, appointed as fit and proper persons to make out the new lists seven gentlemen whose special qualification was that they were secretaries to the National League. At the next meeting it was proposed to fix their remuneration. Now, if this sort of thing were to be tolerated elsewhere in Ireland, it would be easy to imagine what sort of a remuneration would be given. One particular class of persons they would remunerate handsomely, while another class would hardly be remunerated at all. With respect to the Amendment before the Committee, he regarded it as utterly unintelligible and unworkable, and, moreover, wanting in point of definition. It was an essential matter, in which the independence of a Government Board was necessary, to see fair play between the ratepayers and the officers. In England it was a different matter; the business of making out the lists lay with the overseers, who were not entitled to receive anything but their expenses. No doubt they could remunerate any sub-official for manual labour; but the "bills" referred to on these occasions were not bills for remuneration, for he believed, as a matter of law, they were not entitled to remuneration. But they were allowed expenses, which were audited in the public accounts, the overseer, however, giving his services just as the Sheriff did in other matters, without receiving remuneration. He hoped the Government would be firm in holding to their clause.

MR. SEXTON said, it was but a trivial opposition which had been offered to the Amendment. Though the terms of the Amendment were not perhaps those a cultured lawyer would use, still the object was quite clear; it was to take away from the central body the power of fixing the remuneration of clerks and others concerned in the business of registration, giving that power in each Union to the Board of Guardians; and he thought the Board of Guardians would be a more fitting body to fix the remuneration than the Local Government Board in Dublin. In the first place, the Board of Guardians would provide the money; and generally, unless some incapacity could be shown, the people who had to provide the money for the discharge of a public duty ought, through their representatives, to be allowed to say the extent to which their money should be expended. The Local Government Board had not that knowledge of what would be the work under the new franchise to enable them to fix a scale with adequate speed. If the clause were agreed upon in its present form, and the Bill in due course was sent up to the House of Lords, where, after a time, it might pass and ultimately receive the Royal Assent, then, and not till then, the Local Government Board set about fixing the scale of remuneration. This would be productive of something very like disaster to the public interest. The demand on the time of the public rate collectors would be overpowering; and if they were left in doubt for a month or six weeks as to what remuneration they would receive for their extra duty, they would go about that duty in a careless apathetic manner, instead of with that energy the public interest required. He took it to be a prime requisite that the collectors should know immediately or very soon how much they were to get; and if the Government accepted the Amendment allowing the Boards of Guardians to fix the amount of remuneration, the Boards would at once, from their knowledge of local circumstances, knowing the number of people to be put upon the Register, the extent of work from each collector, their knowledge of the rate-producing Returns and their funds in hand, take a full view of all the elements of the case, and fix a fair scale of remuneration. If, on the

other hand, out of an obstinate desire to leave all power in the hands of a central body, taking it out of the hands of Boards having only a limited representation, if the Government persevered in that, then the result would be that nothing definite would be known for weeks to come as to the amount of remuneration to collectors, and necessarily the effect would be that collectors would not interest themselves as they ought; they would know you could not really recover penalties, though they were in the Act; and thousands or tens of thousands of people entitled to be on the Electoral Roll would have their names omitted.

MR. T. A. DICKSON said, he hoped the Amendment of the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. R. Power) would not be accepted. He thought it most undesirable to throw upon Boards of Guardians, among whom in Ireland, as was well known, strong Party feeling existed, delicate work of this kind in connection with the registration of voters; and that rate collectors and clerks of Unions should be solely dependent on Boards of Guardians. He did not think the latter wanted any such power, and he knew that rate collectors and clerks of Unions wished to have the scale of remuneration fixed by the Local Government Board; and he also believed that rate collectors knew already that they were to be paid for the work, and he believed they would enter, and were entering, on the work with pleasure. Hitherto they had done the work and were paid nothing, and it would be most undesirable to accept an Amendment, the result of which would probably be great inequality in the scale of payment throughout the Unions in Ireland, some Unions paying highly, others paying very little. He thought a fixed scale, such as was the case in preparing the jury lists, should be arranged by the Local Government Board, and then collectors would know how they were to be paid.

MR. CALLAN said, he was surprised at the grounds upon which the hon. Member (Mr. T. A. Dickson) objected to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. R. Power). The hon. Member spoke of irregularity in payments; he was surprised that an hon. Gentleman should hand himself over to the interest of a narrow class to the detriment of the constituency he represented. He stated that it was undesirable that Boards of Guardians should have the power of fixing the remuneration, and he said rate collectors were paid nothing for the work now. But then, when they proposed to collect the rates in certain parishes, they were well aware of the duty that would devolve upon them in connection with Revision Sessions; and therefore, in making their estimate for what they would do the collection, they took into consideration the duty of preparing the Electoral Roll. He said the Board of Guardians did not wish for the power; but he would ask the hon. Member, was there any Petition from any Board of Guardians asking the House not to impose this duty upon them? Was there any Resolution expressive of the wish that the Local Government Board should take this power from them? He (Mr. Callan) stated, with all the authority that attached to the Representative of a large county, that the Boards of Guardians did not wish to have the power of fixing the remuneration; but he would ask the hon. Member to state in the House, could he point to a single vote of any Board of Guardians in Ireland expressing directly, indirectly, or by implication, any such wish? He knew the hon. Member had been entrusted with a number of letters from officials of the Poor Law Board; but he had yet to learn that the hon. Member had representations from Boards of Guardians, in Tyrone or elsewhere, suggesting that any Board wished to have this power taken from them. If so, then perhaps the hon. Member would avail himself the opportunity, and give the name of any Board of Guardians, to substantiate his assertion he had ventured to make in opposition to the Amendment.

MR. T. A. DICKSON said, from his own knowledge he was certain that Boards of Guardians did not wish this work cast upon them.

MR. CALLAN said, he accepted that explanation. The hon. Member's expression was "Boards of Guardians did not wish it." But to turn to the objections of the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis). First, he must say the clause contained that to which Irish Members for years had objected—the levying of taxation without representation. One of the great objections to the

Grand Jury Laws was that they gave the power of levying rates without the representation of the ratepayers; and so this Bill would withhold representation from the ratepayers, while imposing taxation. Some two years since, there was a Bill before the House, and referred to a Select Committee on which he (Mr. Callan) sat, a Bill in reference to the superannuation of Poor Law officers; and what substantially killed that Bill in Committee so effectually that the Government did not bring forward the question now was the demand by Mr. Robinson, Chief Commissioner and representative of the Local Government Board, that the Board should have the power of fixing the retiring allowances of Poor Law officers, overriding the authority of the elected Guardians, and now there was the attempt made by the Government, under cover of this Bill, to take away from the Poor Law Guardians the power of fixing the remuneration of those officers. The hon. Member for Londonderry said the Amendment was an attempt to give power to Boards of Guardians such as they had never had; but the hon. Member, though representing an Irish constituency, could not have read the Irish Poor Law Act, or he would know that under the existing law power of fixing salaries was given to the Poor Law Guardians. Every item of expense, however, was audited by the Government auditor, and unless this official sanctioned the expenditure, he surcharged the unfortunate Guardians who signed the cheque. Nothing could be paid that was not approved by the Government auditor. He (Mr. Callan) certainly strongly supported the Amendment for many reasons, and was surprised that it was resisted by the President of the Local Government Board, who he believed had never attended a Board meeting on a single occasion; or if he had done so, he (Mr. Callan) would be glad to be corrected. On the other hand, let the right hon. Gentleman bring forward any single instance of neglect by Boards of Guardians of the duty that fell upon officials under the existing Registration Act. If such could be shown, there might be some reason for introducing this clause into the Bill. Until a sufficient reason was shown, he certainly thought Irish Members were bound to support the hon. Member for Waterford. The Local Government Board of Ireland—in fact, the Irish Executive—knew that in the near future there would be some extension of local self-government, and so they wished to absorb and gather to themselves all the power they possibly could, so as to leave County Boards, when appointed, as little as possible to control. He was most anxious that Poor Law collectors and clerks of Unions should be properly remunerated for the work imposed upon them; and unless a case could be made out showing the incapacity or disinclination of Boards of Guardians to fix the scale, he should support the Amendment of the hon. Member for Waterford.

MR. CHARLES RUSSELL said, he rose to offer a suggestion. He was in favour of the principle that those responsible for raising the rates should have the ordering of their distribution; and, certainly, he was not in favour of putting all control over the remuneration in the hands of the Local Government Board; but he thought there were certain possible difficulties that, in dealing with particular work of this kind, might create some inconvenience. It was desirable there should be remuneration provided for these officers for work done, and it should also be provided that there should be some uniformity of payment, some system, so that one set of Guardians should not proceed on one principle, and others upon a principle totally different. It seemed to him the power of the Local Government Board, in reference to the appointment of officers, suggested an analogy which might be followed in the present case. The clerks and collectors were appointed by the Guardians, but in each case subject to the approval of the Local Government Board; and he would suggest that, in the present case—of course, the language of the clause would require alteration—the action of the Guardians should be subject to the approval of the Local Government Board. That would bring matters into exact analogy with the power of the Local Government Board at present, and would effect something like an uniformity of payment all over the country. An hon. Friend near him said the Board of Guardians gave no remuneration; but that point was answered by the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan). Undoubtedly, the collectors knew of the

conditions when they accepted office; they knew the character of the work expected from them. So much for the general question; but he took the opportunity of asking the Chief Secretary for Ireland a question upon another point. This clause provided for the remuneration of a new set of officers under new circumstances; but he did not know whether representations had been made to the right hon. Gentleman, as they had been to himself and other hon. Members, in relation to the case of those who had performed corresponding work, or a great part of it, in relation to boroughs now disfranchised—whether these officers had a fair claim for compensation? He knew that in some instances the remuneration of clerks and county officials had been fixed in consideration of work done in connection with revision when they accepted office. He did not know that this was strictly germane to the present discussion; but he desired to mention it.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, as to the last question of the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Charles Russell), he did not think it arose under this clause; but, as a matter of fact, representations had been made by town clerks of boroughs about to be merged, but he could not say the claim could be allowed—they must follow the fate of their brethren elsewhere; he was almost sure it never had been done. As to the new proposal of his hon. and learned Friend, as he said before, he was very much in the hands of the Committee. He preferred himself the Bill as it stood. He could assure hon. Members—though, perhaps, they would not accept that assurance as worth much—that the Local Government Board were not so gluttonous of authority that they desired to assume a duty of this sort; but the Government thought they were an independent body, to whom might be entrusted the interests that had to be considered. Next to that, to provide for the payment of clerks of Unions by the Boards of Guardians, subject to the approval and control of the Local Government Board, would, perhaps, be better than leaving them absolutely at the mercy of the Guardians, who were often—he did not wish to say anything against them, but in matters of this sort, touching politics, were apt to be swayed by political Party feelings. If he found a strong expression of opinion in favour of the compromise, he should not be disposed to stand out against it; but still he would prefer to leave the clause as it was.

MR. GIBSON said, he did not understand the tone of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman opposite. A Minister of the Crown came there, and threw his discretion on the floor of the House for any Member to pick up, abandoning that reasonable independence he was bound to assume as Minister of the Crown. ["Oh, oh!"] He (Mr. Gibson) expressed his opinion as it presented itself to his mind on this as on other questions; but he passed to the suggestion of the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk (Mr. Charles Russell), which, of course, was ingenious, as would be expected. But did it hold water? Would it not be open to this broad objection of a substantial kind—that the Local Government Board, as the Bill stood, was the central body to lay down the rule for the whole of the Boards of Guardians in Ireland?—that was clear and authoritative, speaking from a neutral standpoint, and laying down a rule for the guidance of all Ireland. But supposing the suggestion of the hon. and learned Member adopted, then Boards of Guardians—it might be several sets of them in the same county—would have very different standpoints. One Board would have a very different standard from another Board; and the Local Government Board, instead of laying down one scale, might have to consider and adjust from 40 to 80 scales for the whole of Ireland. Suppose from the North of Ireland—he did not know whether they were more liberal there than in the South—but suppose the Local Government Board found that in the North or the West, or elsewhere, there was one scale laid down for the payment of clerks and collectors of Unions—a high scale, which, with modification, the Local Government Board approved—and then suppose from another part of Ireland an entirely different scale was presented for exactly the same work, what would the Local Government Board do? Were they to drop the rate agreed on to the lower scale, or were they to raise the lower scale to the figure agreed upon? They

must level up or level down, and if that was the way the Amendment would work, would it not be doing the very same thing the Bill would do as it stood? What would be gained by the proposed alteration? As he understood the right hon. Gentleman, he declared to stand by the clauses of the Bill.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, what he stated was that there were two ways of providing payment—by the Local Government Board and by the Guardians. He pointed out the *pros* and *cons*, and, of the two, thought the method proposed in the Bill was the best.

MR. GIBSON said, he understood, however, that the right hon. Gentleman, in his original speech, stated he was then prepared to remain of the opinion of those who approved of the Bill, and to stand by the clauses as drawn; and he rather reprobated the statement from the Opposition Benches, that the way in which he presented his views was weak-kneed. It was rather surprising, then, just now, to find the right hon. hon. Gentleman had lapsed into a moral position that beggared all description. He was unaware what course would be taken now by the right hon. Gentleman; he had left the Committee in that atmosphere of doubt hon. Gentlemen were so familiar with in relation to greater questions than an Irish Registration Bill. If there was a division, he should certainly support the wisdom that suggested the original draft of the Bill; and he awaited with curiosity and painful suspense to know what would be the ultimate action of the Irish Executive.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; Committee counted, and 40 Members being found present,

COLONEL NOLAN said, that when a Minister went out of his way, as the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant had done, to say that he would pay some little attention to the opinions of private Members, he was doing a rather good thing in departing from the usual fashion of Ministers, and ought to be encouraged. The point at issue was who should settle how much should be paid to those clerks and collectors; and it seemed to him that both sides had proved their case. One side said the Poor Law Guardians should settle it, and the other that the Local Government Board should do so. But one party proved that the Local Government Board was a very bad authority, and the other that the Guardians were a bad authority; and, so far as he was concerned, he thought both parties were right. The Guardians were a bad authority because they might be on one side or the other in politics, and, therefore, there would be no uniformity over the country. The fact was that the question was not local, but Imperial; and it was a bad thing to leave it to local bodies to settle how much should be paid for what really was an Imperial work. The Guardians might say—"We do not care how the list of voters is cut down; they can cut it down to nothing at all if they like." Then the people who argued that the Local Government Board was an equally bad authority were quite right, because it was unreasonable that, the Guardians having to pay the money, the Local Government Board should settle the amount. Speaking generally, he thought it was a very wrong thing to extract this money from the Guardians at all. It was making the localities pay for Imperial purposes; and so strongly did he object to the proposal, that, on a future occasion, he should have to move an Amendment on the point. Whether the Boards of Guardians settled the salaries or the Local Government Board, both systems, it had been proved, would give rise to great inconvenience. The money should be taken from the Imperial taxes. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dundalk (Mr. Charles Russell) had proposed a compromise about as good as they could adopt, to the effect that the Guardians should settle the money in the first place, and that the Local Government Board should have some power of revision. That was a practical way to carry out the scheme—an excellent compromise for getting out of the difficulty. Very often the Boards of Guardians would be anxious to over-pay the collectors and clerks, or, at any rate, to increase their salaries unduly, and then the Local Government Board would come in and say that too much was being paid, and cut down the salaries. He knew cases in which the Guardians fixed salaries at much too high a figure, and where the Local Government Board had to cut them down. The

Guardians had to give reasons for fixing salaries so high; but, as he had said, the real difficulty was as to who should pay this money. No matter who fixed the salary, the sting of the thing would remain; the payment was the real sting. If they went to a division, he should support the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. R. Power), more because the hon. Member had moved the Amendment than anything else. As a matter of fact, he did not think his constituents cared one halfpenny about the whole matter.

MR. CHARLES RUSSELL said, he rose for the purpose of saying a word which he thought should be said by someone. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, in dealing with the Amendment, in the first instance, had pointed out what must be obvious to everyone who considered the matter at all—namely, that it involved no very grave principle on which the fate of a Government might depend, and that it was not a matter which should excite any very great heat in the breast of hon. Members. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary objected to have it said that he had a preference personally for a particular course; he would be quite willing to defer to the general view of hon. Members representing Ireland who were interested in the clause. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) thereupon thought himself justified, forsooth, in getting up and condemning what he called the weak-kneed, and what the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) called the flabby, expressions of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. He (Mr. Charles Russell), however, thought the Irish Members ought to be extremely grateful to the Chief Secretary for doing that which it was the obvious duty of every Minister to do, whatever Department he represented, in consulting, as far as he could, those who were especially interested in the question. The question was asked—What would be the result of this Amendment if carried? Why, the result of it would be this. One Board of Guardians might fix one scale of remuneration, while another Board of Guardians might fix another, although practically the amount of work to be done by the officers of the Boards would be almost the same. The Local Government Board would have, and ought to have, regard to the local expression of opinion of those who had to raise the money, but that they should not be absolutely bound by that expression of opinion in case they found it taking the form of giving extravagant remuneration for a small amount of work. The practical result would be that a uniform scale would be arrived at, as would be the case under the Bill as it stood, with this difference, that the influence of the local bodies would practically prevail. As the clause stood, it would appear that hereafter the Local Government Board would have no influence in the subject, whereas in the other case effect would be given to local opinion.

MR. CALLAN said, that there were different scales of payment in Ireland at present, and that in such counties as Galway and Mayo larger sums were paid than in such rich districts as Meath and Louth. If the Amendment of the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. R. Power) were accepted, the remuneration might be made commensurate with the duties performed. For instance, in Mayo and Galway, where a large amount of work was to be done, the salaries might be made higher than in Meath and Louth, where there was comparatively little work to do. In the rich districts the expense would be less than in the wilds of Connaught, where, perhaps, ten times as many people as were on the voters' list at present would have to be included. The hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. R. Power) proposed to substitute the Boards of Guardians for the Local Government Board; and if that hon. Member was not present, he (Mr. Callan) thought he might accept for him the arrangement proposed by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dundalk (Mr. Charles Russell). In that case the Amendment would read—

"The Board of Guardians may from time to time, subject to the approval of the Local Government Board, fix the scale upon which the clerks of Unions and poor rate collectors shall be remunerated."

That would meet the only objection raised. The hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. R. Power) had told him that he should be quite prepared to accept that modification of his Amendment; and he (Mr. Callan) hoped that, for the

sake of making everything satisfactory, that proposal would be accepted by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland.

MR. CHARLES RUSSELL said, that before the Solicitor General for Ireland rose he would make a suggestion as to the wording of the clause. He thought it would be more convenient in this form—

"The several Boards of Guardians in Ireland, subject to the control of the Local Government Board," &c.

MR. CALLAN said, he would suggest that the word "approval" should be used instead of "control," because it was in a measure subjecting the action of the Poor Law Guardians to the Local Government Board.

MR. CHARLES RUSSELL said, he had made his suggestion because the Boards of Guardians might not give remuneration where it ought to be given, and the Local Government Board should have power to say that they should.

MR. PARNELL said, he thought the discussion as to what authority should fix the rates of remuneration of the collectors and clerks of Unions was carried on under some disadvantage, seeing that they had not yet decided out of what source that remuneration was to be paid. Until they had decided that question it was rather putting the cart before the horse to decide what authority should control the fixing of the remuneration. The Government proposed by this Bill that the remuneration should be paid out of the local rates, and they also proposed that a Governmental authority in Ireland—namely, the Local Government Board—should direct what the scale of remuneration should be. He (Mr. Parnell) certainly thought that a very objectionable principle to proceed upon, and one which they were bound to oppose. At the same time, if the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. R. Power) were in the House, he should suggest to him whether it would not be as well to withdraw the Amendment for the present, in order that they might come to a decision upon the Amendment of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) lower down as to the source out of which the expense should be paid. He referred to the Amendment to Clause 6, page 3, after line 17, insert—

"All expenses so incurred shall be defrayed out of the Consolidated Fund."

THE CHAIRMAN: I think I may save time if I point out to the hon. Member that the Amendment of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), to which he refers, will not be in Order.

COLONEL NOLAN said, that upon the point of Order he would remind hon. Members that the arrangement he proposed would practically come to the same thing. His proposal was to leave out from "Guardians" to the end of the clause. The effect of that would be to strike out that part of the section which provided that the Guardians should pay the money. There would then be nothing in the Bill to settle who was to pay the money, and the Government would have to put in words to the effect that it should be paid out of the Consolidated Fund.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have not arrived at that point yet, and I think we are rather complicating matters by referring to it. What I say now is merely to save hon. Members the trouble of going into this matter. The proposal would involve a charge upon the Consolidated Fund, and it is not competent for a private Member to make such a proposal. It could not be put in the Committee.

MR. SEXTON: Will you, Sir, rule out of Order the Amendment in the name of the Chief Secretary?

COLONEL NOLAN: No; the right hon. Gentleman is a Privy Councillor, and is privileged.

THE CHAIRMAN: The same remark would apply to the Amendment of the Chief Secretary. Until permission to bring forward such a question be obtained it would not be in Order for the right hon. Gentleman to move it, and I understand that he has not taken the necessary preliminary steps yet.

MR. PARNELL said, that, at any rate, he could raise the same question on the Amendment of the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan). The Committee would be in an unfortunate position if it were not allowed to settle this matter before it came to the discussion of the question raised by the Amendment of the hon. Member for the City of Waterford (Mr. R. Power). Until they knew out of what source the remuneration was to be paid, it would be impossible for them fairly to decide the authority which they should appoint for the purpose of fixing

the rate or scale of remuneration; and he would submit to the Committee whether they should not raise that point on the Amendment of the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan), which proposed, in Clause 6, page 3, line 18, to leave out from "Guardians" to end of clause. If that Amendment were carried the Government would undoubtedly be compelled on Report, unless they reversed the decision, to introduce a clause, the assent of the House having been obtained in the meantime to pay the charges out of the Consolidated Fund. They would be placed in a better position to discuss the merits of the question raised by the hon. Member for Waterford's (Mr. R. Power's) Amendment if they had first decided the question as to the source out of which the remuneration was to be paid. He would also suggest to his hon. Friend, with regard to the special merits of his Amendment, that it was of the utmost importance to the success of the lists in Ireland that the collectors of rates, who had to make out the initial lists, should know as soon as possible what they were going to get. If it were left, according to the proposal in the Bill, to the Local Government Board to announce hereafter, in all probability when the work had been all done, and the time had elapsed for performing it, what the collectors and other officials interested in the work were to get, the motive of self-interest would be naturally wanting, and the work would be imperfectly and unsatisfactorily performed. The Amendment of his hon. Friend would leave the matter to the Board of Guardians, and there was a great deal to be said in favour of that. It would certainly be a better principle from every point of view, and an improvement upon the proposal of the Government, because in all probability the authorities would meet almost immediately and decide what they were going to give to the poor rate collectors and the other officials. He (Mr. Parnell) had placed a new clause on the Paper; but he proposed to move to leave out Clause 6, or so much of it as it might be necessary to leave out for the purpose, in order to substitute for it the clause of which he had given Notice. His proposal was to put in the Bill itself what the poor rate collectors should receive. Those collectors were really important officials in the matter, and he (Mr. Parnell) followed the precedent set by the Jurors' Act with regard to the rate of remuneration given to the rate collectors in reference to the placing of names on jury lists. He would make it compulsory on Boards of Guardians in Ireland, free from the action of the Local Government Board, to give so much per head according to the scale for the number of voters returned. The Guardians, however, would have it within their competence to fix the rate of remuneration to the clerks of the Unions also without the Local Government Board having anything to do with it. The question would be divided into two halves. The rate collectors would be collected according to the scales in the Act, and their compensation would be compulsory, and the Boards of Guardians would have discretionary power as to how much they should give the clerks of Unions. He thought, as regarded the action of the rate collectors, that it was of the utmost importance that they should set to work as soon as possible. He was credibly informed that up to the present they had done next to nothing, and had made no preparations to meet the trouble and work which would be thrown upon them. He doubted whether it would be possible to get them to take the enormous trouble which would be involved in making out correct lists unless they were told how much they were to get, and unless the principle of paying them by results were adopted. He thought that, on the whole, his hon. Friend (Mr. R. Power) might fairly withdraw his present Amendment, and allow them to discuss the proposal of the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan), for after they had decided the source out of which the remuneration should be taken they would be in a better position to decide as to the body to control the payment.

MR. WARTON said, he wished to ask a question which was almost a question of Order. It seemed to him that if they looked at the Amendment of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) at the top of page 635 they would see that, owing to the curious way in which it had been printed, it was in the shape of a new clause, though differing from all the other new clauses, because it said "leave out Clause 6 and

insert the following Clause." He (Mr. Warton) apprehended that it would not be possible for the hon. Member to make that proposal if Clause 6 were passed unamended; and he would submit, therefore, that the new clause of the hon. Member was really an Amendment, and not a new clause in the correct sense at all. It was really an Amendment to the clause they were now on; and he, therefore, submitted to the hon. Member that unless the Amendment they were now discussing were withdrawn he would not be able to move his clause.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) would be entitled to move his Amendment as a new clause. I am not at all prepared to say that he would be out of Order in the course he proposes. The Amendment before the Committee at the present moment is that of the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. R. Power). I do not know whether it is withdrawn.

MR. CALLAN said, the difficulty the Committee were in would be met by dividing on the proposal of the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. R. Power), and then afterwards those who were in favour of the proposed new clause could vote against the adoption of the clause itself. That would enable them, in the first instance, to obtain a fixing of the rate of remuneration by the Boards of Guardians, subject to the approval of the Local Government Board. Afterwards they could divide upon the clause itself.

THE CHAIRMAN: At the present moment the Amendment before the Committee is that upon the Paper. I have listened very attentively to what has taken place. I have heard a great deal about the Amendment the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk (Mr. Charles Russell) intends to move, and Amendments to that Amendment. What, however, is before the Committee is the Amendment on the Paper. I understand that the hon. Member for the City of Cork suggested that that Amendment should be withdrawn, in order that the Committee might consider the proposal of the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan).

MR. CHARLES RUSSELL said, he would point out that the Amendment suggested by the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) seemed to proceed upon a false assumption, because the hon. Member proposed to leave out Clause 6, and to substitute the clause which stood at the top of page 635. The hon. Member's ground for that was, as he (Mr. Russell) understood it, that they had not yet fixed the fund out of which the remuneration was to be paid. But if the hon. Member would look at his own clause he would see that, so far from saying that the payment should be made out of the Consolidated Fund, which was the object of the Amendment of the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan), the hon. Member (Mr. Parnell) proposed to pay it out of the rates. The proposed new clause of the hon. Member said—

"The guardians of the poor of each union shall, by order, make an annual allowance out of the rates to the poor rate collectors, as compensation for the duty by the Registration Acts imposed upon them, in accordance with the following scale:—Two pounds ten shillings per annum to each collector for any number of names up to twenty-five, and two pounds for every additional hundred names up to five hundred, and one pound for every succeeding hundred: Provided, That no collector shall receive a greater sum than fifty pounds in any one year. The said guardians shall allow clerks of unions under the said Acts such sums as they think reasonable."

MR. PARNELL said, that what he suggested was that they should at first decide the question as to the source out of which this remuneration should be paid—whether it should come from the Imperial Exchequer or local rates. That apparently could only be done under the Rules of the House by taking a division on the Amendment of the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan). That having been decided, and the words of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) having been added to the Bill, he (Mr. Parnell) should not move his subsequent Amendment.

MR. LEWIS said, that if the Amendments before the Committee were not withdrawn the Amendment of the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan) could not be put, as it would make the clause absurd. It would make it read—

"The Board of Guardians may, from time to time, by order, fix the scale or scales according to which the poor rate collectors and clerks of unions should be remunerated for their services."

He understood that the Amendment of the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. R.

Power) was not withdrawn. If it were not withdrawn and was incorporated in the Bill it would lead to utter confusion.

THE CHAIRMAN: There seems to be a question whether the Amendment of the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. R. Power), as it stands on the Paper, is in Order. The hon. Member merely proposes to substitute for the "Local Government Board" the words "Board of Guardians."

MR. GIBSON: The Amendment says "Board of Guardians;" but there are a great many Boards of Guardians in Ireland—over 100 I should think.

MR. LEWIS: Yes; the clause would be nonsense.

MR. GORST: But the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. R. Power) may add something after his Amendment is accepted which would make it sense.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is the hon. Member for Waterford present?

Several Irish MEMBERS: No.

THE CHAIRMAN: If he is not we cannot put it.

MR. R. POWER said, he intended to withdraw his Amendment, although he must say he thought it would be much better to accept it, though verbally wrong; before they settled where the money was to come from. Some of his hon. Friends, however, thought differently; and he would, therefore, withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

COLONEL NOLAN said, he would now move his Amendment to leave out from the "Boards of Guardians" to end of clause.

MR. CHARLES RUSSELL said, he wished to move an Amendment earlier in the clause than that, and it was in page 3, line 12, before the word "the" to insert—

"Several Boards of Guardians, subject to the control of the Local Government Board of Ireland, may from time to time," &c.

He wished to move this and certain verbal consequential Amendments—for instance, the omission of the words "by order," and the omission of the words "by the Local Government Board" in lines 19 and 20. He did not propose to add anything to what he had already said on this subject.

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 12, to insert, after the word "The," the words "Several Boards of Guardians, subject to the control of."—(*Mr. Charles Russell.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. SEXTON said, the reason why he thought it would be desirable that the source from which the money was to come should be settled before they decided upon the relative measures of authority to be vested in the Local Government Board and the Boards of Guardians was this—that if the money was to come from the Imperial Treasury it might then be deemed to be reasonable that the Central Board in Dublin, representing the Government, should have some control over the money, or guidance over the expenditure of the money so provided; but if it was to come out of the local rates, then he and his hon. Friends thought his hon. Friends around him would be disposed to resist any proposal to give control or even guidance to the Local Government Board in regard to the expenditure of the money, because they thought that if the Guardians contributed the money out of their local rates they were entitled to control it. He thought that at the present moment they were putting the cart before the horse, and that it would be better that they should at first say from what source the money should come before they proceeded to consider as to whether the responsibility for the expenditure should be vested in the Local Government Board or the elected Boards of Guardians in Ireland. The objection he had to any reference to the Local Government Board was the grave objection of delay. In this matter time was of the utmost importance. Every day was now of great value; and if the Local Government Board were to have this function under the Bill of fixing the remuneration, nothing would be done until the measure was passed into law. If the Local Government Board saw that it was proposed to confer the function upon them, they would not move a finger until the Bill was passed; and his contention then was, that it would be too late to do the work properly. On the other hand, if they indicated to the Guardians by a Motion in that House that they were to have the authority vested in them, then he presumed those Bodies would immediately act on the in-

dication contained in the Bill, and would proceed next week, or in the course of a few days, to fix the rates of remuneration. At present, the whole thing in Ireland was in a state of chaos. The Guardians did not know whether they were to pay the money, and the collectors did not know what they were to receive. Not long ago the Sligo Board of Guardians asked their clerk whether it was the duty of the collectors to make out these lists, and he answered in the negative. The collector had said that he would not proceed with the work until he knew what remuneration he was to receive. The Guardians asked him if he would not go on with the work for a fortnight; to which he replied that he should not like to do so unless he knew what remuneration he was to receive, pointing out that the work would be extremely heavy. A Guardian then said—"Won't you trust our honour for a fortnight?" And the reply was that the collectors could hardly do that after the manner in which they had been treated by the Guardians under the Seeds Supply Act. One of the Guardians then suggested to the collector that he should go on with the work behind the backs of the Guardians—that the Guardians should know nothing about it—and the clerk then exclaimed—"Say you will pay the collectors if the Government do not." To that a decided negative was given. The collector stated that if the Board would give him £40, he would at once proceed with the work; but the Guardians could not promise to do that. That was what had taken place in Sligo, and the same thing was going on all over Ireland every day. The important work of making out the lists was therefore delayed, and every moment was of the utmost importance in connection with such an important matter. The Guardians did not know what they were to do; and until the matter was settled in a definite manner, no satisfactory Return would be made. He agreed that the first step which ought to be taken should be to decide from what source the money was to come. He thought it would be inadvisable to leave the Local Government Board any power in the matter, because of the tendency in connection with that Office to bring about delay—because in all probability several weeks would elapse before anything was done, and the present chaotic state of things would continue.

MR. CALLAN said, he was sorry the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk (Mr. Charles Russell) had not acceded to the proposal of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), to which suggestion the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. R. Power) had at once given way. The hon. and learned Member for Dundalk, after a conference with the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland, had taken up this matter. [MR. CHARLES RUSSELL: No, no!] Well, after an apparent conference with the Solicitor General for Ireland, the hon. and learned Gentleman had moved a modification of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. R. Power), which involved almost all the objectionable portions of that hon. Member's proposal. He (Mr. Callan) begged to move, on the proposed Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk, that the word "control" be left out, and the word "approval" be inserted. He made that proposal on the ground of precedent, because he found that in the Act of 1850, and in the 13 & 14 *Vict.* c. 69, intituled "An Act to amend the Laws which regulate the qualification and registration of Parliamentary Voters in Ireland," that altered the law for rating in certain boroughs, the language used was such as he proposed. He did not know why the Government should pretend to think that the wording of an Act of Parliament which had existed 35 years was unsatisfactory. The 73rd section of the Act stated—

"Be it enacted, that the guardians of the poor of each union shall, by an order, make such annual allowances out of the rates to the clerks of the unions"—

the very words used in the Amendment of the hon. Member for Cork—

"as compensation for the duties imposed upon them as the said guardians shall think proper . . . . but no payment shall be made thereunder unless the same shall be approved of by the Poor Law Commissioners"—

that was to say, by the Local Government Board. Why should they change the wording of that Act? Why not make the proposed Amendment read so that the payment should not be subject to the control of the Local Government Board, but subject to their approval? He begged to move that the word

"control" be left out for the purpose of inserting in place of it the word "approval."

Amendment proposed, to the said proposed Amendment, to leave out the word "control," and insert the word "approval."—(*Mr. Callan.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'control' stand part of the said proposed Amendment."

MR. LEWIS said, he had understood the reference of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) to the proceedings which had taken place before the Sligo Board of Guardians in a very different manner to the hon. Member himself. The hon. Member seemed to think that what he had said showed the necessity of having some independent body to stand between the Guardians and the collectors. It seemed to him (Mr. Lewis), however, that the very last body to whom the collectors were inclined to give their confidence were the Guardians. The collectors appeared to distrust the Guardians altogether.

An hon. MEMBER: The Guardians cannot make terms with them.

MR. LEWIS said, that if this alteration were not made the power given to the Boards of Guardians would be beside the question entirely. Many of them remembered what was the result of giving the Boards of Guardians power to increase the remuneration of the teachers under the Education Act. They knew what a great difficulty there had been in obtaining additional remuneration for teachers in spite of that provision; and it seemed to him that that was rather a warning why the present matter should come under the specific form of the proposal in the Bill, or why in some way or other control should be kept over those payments. The discussion which had been going on for the last two hours and a-half was entirely owing to the indisposition of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant to show any inclination to stand by his own clause.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, that as between the two words "approval" and "control" he did not think there was much to choose, though personally he should prefer the word "approval." He found "approval" used in almost every case of the kind. In the Bill on the subject of registration, two years ago, which measure was sent up to the House of Lords, a proposal was made on this very subject that the Guardians should fix the remuneration, subject to the approval of the Local Government Board. That was an additional reason why he was inclined to think that the Committee should accept the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dundalk (Mr. Charles Russell). He (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) had enjoyed the benefit of a frightful wigging from the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gibson); but, after all, he certainly did not think there was anything very unreasonable in his desiring to arrive at what was the general feeling of hon. Gentlemen from Ireland on this subject. He had explained what the object of the Government on the whole matter was; and he thought, on the whole, that the object might be sufficiently met—that was to say, that of the interests of the persons affected would be sufficiently secured, together with uniformity, by the adoption of the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman, even with the word "approval." He should be very glad to give the Local Authorities any additional power it was thought they ought to exercise.

MR. CHARLES RUSSELL said, he did not care in the least to defend any particular words in his proposal, and if the right hon. Gentleman desired to have the word "approval" in place of "control," he should not defend his own word. He would point out that if the Amendment of the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan) were adopted, there would be a consequential Amendment necessary—that was to say, that the word "may" would have to be substituted for the word "shall."

MR. DEASY said, he had frequently heard the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Charles Russell) speak strongly against the control of such a Board as the Local Government Board in Ireland. On a question of this kind the hon. and learned Gentleman came in and made a proposal which would have the effect of giving the Local Government Board the control over an enormous annual sum of money which was paid by the unfortunate ratepayers of Ireland. There was a very strong feeling on this point in

the South of Ireland from the district he (Mr. Deasy) came from. He had had frequent conversations with collectors on the subject in one of the largest Poor Law Unions in Ireland. The tendency of the Local Government Board, for some years, had been to get as much control as they could in their own hands in regard to the administration of local affairs in that country. Seven or eight years ago the Secretary to the Poor Law Board had given evidence in that House in favour of allowing the Boards of Guardians to fix the amount of superannuation of Poor Law officers; but last year a change came over that gentleman, and he gave evidence of a different character. He was now in favour of giving the control of everything of this kind to the Local Government Board, and of taking it out of the hands of the representatives of the ratepayers. He (Mr. Deasy) considered that evidence extremely vexatious. It had very much annoyed the people of Ireland. Certainly, the Local Government Board deserved no consideration whatever at the hands of the Irish Members; and no one in the habit of attending that House Session after Session could fail to observe that on every occasion on which the Irish Members had obtained the opportunity they had brought forward and substantiated charges of incompetency against that Board—charges of gross favouritism in the carrying out of the laws. He hoped the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan) would withdraw his Amendment, and that the Government would not show any favour to the Amendment proposed by the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Charles Russell). He trusted that they would carry out the principle they had always been advocating—that was to say, to place the control over the expenditure of the rates, wherever they could properly do it, in the hands of the representatives of the ratepayers. He had never known in any Union in the South of Ireland any Poor Law officer inadequately paid by the Guardians; and as for the likelihood of their paying salaries unduly large, there could not be much fear of that when they took into consideration the large number of *ex officio* members on all the Boards. He could not understand why it was that this proposal had been made, or the course which had been taken by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. He hoped the hon. and learned Gentleman would withdraw the Amendment, for the reason that the hon. Member for the City of Waterford (Mr. R. Power) had withdrawn his Amendment, on the understanding that a vote would be taken for or against the clause. The hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Charles Russell) had evidently been a party to that understanding; and why he should have jumped up to propose the Amendment now before the Committee, he (Mr. Deasy) could not understand.

MR. CHARLES RUSSELL said, that after he had proposed the Amendment, which he considered a fair compromise, he was assured by the hon. Member for the City of Waterford (Mr. R. Power) that he was ready to accept it. The hon. Member subsequently left the Committee, and he (Mr. Charles Russell) had understood from the hon. Gentleman the Member for Louth (Mr. Callan) that he had been asked by the hon. Member for Waterford to state that he was prepared to accept the Amendment.

MR. CALLAN: I did not say anything about accepting it; but I said I believed the hon. Member would accept it. To save discussion, I will withdraw my Amendment.

Amendment to proposed Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Amendment again put.

MR. CALLAN said, he now begged to move, as an Amendment, to leave out the words "Local Government Board of Ireland."

THE CHAIRMAN: That is not appropriate to the present Amendment. The Amendment still stands to insert "several Boards of Guardians, subject to the control of," &c.

MR. CALLAN: Then I beg to leave out the words "subject to the control of."

THE CHAIRMAN: I am afraid that would not make sense, for the clause would then read—

"Several Boards of Guardians. . . . . the Local Government Board may from time to time," &c.

MR. CALLAN said, his desire was to leave out the words "Local Government Board of Ireland," and to provide simply that the "several Boards of Guardians may from time to time," &c.

THE CHAIRMAN: The proper way to do that would be to negative the present Amendment, and then to propose, instead of those words, "the several Boards of Guardians."

MR. CALLAN said, that for the purpose of saving time, he would move at once the omission of the words "subject to the control of," his object being to leave the Guardians uncontrolled in this matter by the Local Government Board. He had a precedent for that, and he was in Order, seeing that it was his declared intention that he intended later on to move a consequential Amendment to leave out other words.

MR. HEALY said, that on the point of Order, he wished to remind the Committee that it had been distinctly ruled by the Speaker that Amendments might be moved, having the effect of leaving the Question before the House merely the word "That." Of course, "that" was not sense in itself; but it was possible to move to add words to it which would make sense. They had the famous case where the word "That" once remained on the Journal of the House.

THE CHAIRMAN: If the question of Order is to be disposed of first, it is true that the word "That" has been left the Question before the House, because "that" can be added to. It is always possible to add to "that" to make sense. In the present case, however, two Amendments would be necessary to make sense.

MR. CALLAN said, he had a right to move his Amendment according to his discretion, and he contended that if the Amendment he proposed were carefully read it would be seen that there would be no difficulty in making sense of it.

MR. PARNELL said, the Amendment, as he understood it to have been moved by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dundalk (Mr. Charles Russell), was as follows:—

"That the several Boards of Guardians in Ireland may, subject to the control of"——

MR. CHARLES RUSSELL: The word "may" does not occur.

MR. PARNELL said, "subject to the control of" occurred. There appeared to be little sense in that if it stood by itself; but, taking it in connection with what followed, it would read—

"The several Boards of Guardians in Ireland, subject to the control of the Local Government Board in Ireland," &c.

He wished to ask the Chairman if that statement of the premises were a correct one? It was their desire that the several Boards of Guardians in Ireland should not be subject to the control of any authority—either of the Local Government Board or any other Central Board. They were, however, willing to adopt the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dundalk, for the sake of peace and quietness, and for the purpose of raising a question they desired to raise subsequently; but only so far as this—namely, "several Boards of Guardians in Ireland." Then they would not be shut out from raising the subsequent question of the control which was not made. No doubt, there must be a control of some kind. If they agreed to the proposal of the hon. and learned Gentleman, the Committee would have decided on some control; and Irish Members objected to any control being agreed to at present.

THE CHAIRMAN: There is no doubt that "subject to the control of" is consistent with what follows for the purpose of making sense. The Amendment of the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan) is to strike out words without which the Motion would not make sense. The object aimed at would be perfectly accomplished by rejecting this Amendment, and then moving, subsequently, to omit the words "Local Government Board of Ireland," and to insert instead, "the several Boards of Guardians of Ireland." That, I take it, is the object of the hon. Member for Louth, which the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) desires to support. We must first, however, dispose of the Amendment before the Committee.

MR. PARNELL suggested that, as the two questions were involved, it would be advisable for the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk (Mr. Charles Russell) to withdraw his Amendment and move it in a more simple form.

MR. LEWIS said, the proposition now made had been already suggested, and had been discussed for two hours, after which the Amendment had been withdrawn.

MR. PARNELL said, he would ask the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk whether he would withdraw his Amendment in order to move one to the following effect — to which the Irish

Members, generally, would be prepared to assent—that the words "several Boards of Guardians in Ireland" should be inserted?

MR. CHARLES RUSSELL said, he could not properly do that, as it would be inconsistent with the view he had taken and had submitted to the Committee.

MR. CALLAN pointed out, that if the hon. and learned Gentleman accepted that proposition there would be no difficulty in the case, as the words would read—

"The several Boards of Guardians in Ireland, subject to the control of the Local Government Board in Ireland."

He put it to the Chairman—having had some experience in the House—that it was not necessary to consider any future portions of the Bill. It was proposed by an hon. Member to strike out certain words, and it would be in the discretion of the Committee afterwards to say what words should be added. He (Mr. Callan) would like a distinct ruling on the matter, so that they might have a record of what had taken place hereafter. The Amendment, "The several Boards of Guardians subject to the control of," had been proposed, and he (Mr. Callan) had moved an Amendment to leave out "the control of," with the intention, subsequently, of inserting "the Local Government Board for Ireland." That would make sense of the Motion. He thought he would be within his right in moving that. At any rate, before he was satisfied he would ask to have it distinctly ruled that he was not entitled to move to leave out the words "subject to the control of." If the Amendment made nonsense of that which preceded it, then, no doubt, it would not be competent to move it. But here he wished to leave out certain words, in order, subsequently, to make another proposal which would make sense. He wished to know whether an hon. Member could be deprived of his right of moving an Amendment to an Amendment sprung on them, and not on the Paper?

MR. GORST said, that with great respect to the Chairman, he wished to say that he had always understood the Rule of the House to be this—that no hon. Member could move an Amendment which would make nonsense of that which the Committee had already determined should stand part of a clause. But the Amendment the hon. Member had moved would not necessarily make nonsense of the Bill, because the Committee had not yet determined what should follow the words proposed by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dundalk. The Committee was entirely at liberty to make sense of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Louth by the determination they might arrive at on the subsequent words. He (Mr. Gorst) thought he was right in saying that Amendments to clauses which did not in themselves make sense, but which required consequential Amendments to make sense of them, were constantly admitted.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Amendment proposed could, no doubt, be made to make sense by a subsequent Amendment. The hon. Member for Louth, indeed, has suggested words which he could afterwards move, which would make the clause intelligible; but it is unfortunate that this method of proceeding involves the consideration of two Amendments together. If it is the sense of the Committee that we should take that course, I will put the Amendment.

MR. HEALY said, this question had been raised by the Poor Law Superannuation Bill. They had wrangled over it for some days; and the Government, owing to the strong objection to the system originally proposed, decided that the matter was within the competence of the Guardians. The Government now proposed to throw the whole thing over again on the Local Government Board, and they had accepted an Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dundalk (Mr. Charles Russell) which was really worse than nothing, because it was simple hypocrisy. The consent of the Local Government Board meant this—that the Local Government Board were in full charge, and could upset any Union Guardians they did not like. It would be more respectful to the Boards of Guardians if this species of control were not given to them at all. Whatever they might do, they knew that the Local Government Board might, or might not, agree to it. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) professed to be most anxious to place increased responsibility on the local bodies. Very well, Irish Members made a proposal to

intrust local affairs to the Local Boards, of which the landlords generally formed three-fourths; and yet the right hon. Gentleman mistrusted those bodies. The landlords, as *ex officio* members, formed half of the Boards of Guardians; and then, by reason of the proxy or multiple vote, they generally managed to get a fourth of the elected Guardians. Notwithstanding that, the Government declined to intrust them with so small a matter as the payment of their collectors. This was really a matter upon which nothing could be fairer than to except the Boards of Guardians, and for the very reason that upon those Boards the Tories and the Nationalists were represented; the landlord Party would see, by means of the *ex officio* members of the Boards and the gentlemen they elected by the multiple vote, that the collector did his duty to the Conservative section of the people. The Nationalist Party, by means of the elected Guardians, would see that the collector did his duty fairly by the popular Party; and therefore he considered that the Boards of Guardians were ideal bodies for this purpose. He was far from saying that Boards of Guardians generally were ideal bodies; but for this purpose they were exactly the bodies competent to deal with this question. He and his hon. Friends objected to the principle of leaving this matter to the Local Government Board for another reason. When a Bill similar to this was before the House in 1883, he moved an Amendment leaving out a clause similar to this, and he induced the right hon. Gentleman the present Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) to accept a clause dealing with the remuneration on the basis given under the 9th section of the Juries Procedure Act of 1877. What was the remuneration? It was a capitation allowance, and the Conservative Party supported him on that occasion. The hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the county of Dublin (Colonel King Harman) cordially supported his Amendment, because, as they all knew, those officials in Ireland, as a general rule, belonged to the Tory Party. The Government had allowed capitation allowance in the case of jurors; and it was equally the view of the Irish Members that there should be some distinct incentive to the clerks of the Unions and rate collectors to put voters upon the list. He thought that a higher pay ought to be given to the rate collectors—he did not care much about the clerks of the Union, because their work was less important. If a collector received a capitation grant he would see that a full complement of voters were put upon the list. That was the principle Parliament had adopted in the case of the jury list, and why not adopt it in this? He would leave the clerks of the Unions to the Guardians, but he strongly objected to the amounts allowed to the rate collectors being curtailed; unless the collectors got so much per head they would not be stimulated to as active energies as they otherwise might be. Seeing that the Government considered that a sound principle in the case of juries, he could not understand how they could object to apply it in this instance. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) could not take a different stand to that he did three years ago. The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) might say that the same principle could not be applied in this case as in the case of the jury lists, because the numbers were so very disproportionate. He (Mr. Healy) would suggest to meet that by proposing only a proportion of the amount given under the Juries Act. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had a series of Amendments on this point; but if they were to get at that principle at all, it would be necessary that this proposal about the Local Government Board should be completely abandoned. He did not see why the Government should see fit to depart from what it agreed to in 1883, especially that now there was far more necessity for care on the part of the rate collectors, seeing that there were such large numbers of voters to bring in.

Mr. PARNELL said, he had hoped that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) would have stated what the views of the Government were with regard to the remuneration, and the way in which the collectors of rates and other Poor Law officials were to be remunerated in connection with their duties under this proposal. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that he would get through this Bill more easily by shrouding himself in perpetual silence,

and by leaving to such Members as the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk (Mr. Charles Russell) the duty of representing the Government on this occasion. He (Mr. Parnell) did not think that the interposition of the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk had been advantageous or useful to the Government, or calculated to help the Committee in its proceedings, or calculated to save or economize the time of the Committee. The hon. and learned Member for Dundalk had not put down a single Amendment to this Bill, so far as the Committee knew; and, if they were to believe the announcements in the public Press, the hon. and learned Member did not intend to stand at the approaching General Election for an Irish constituency; it would, therefore, appear that the hon. and learned Gentleman's interest in the Irish Franchise Bill was not even one of a very remote or limited description; in fact, that it amounted to nothing at all. He (Mr. Parnell), therefore, thought that the hon. Gentleman's action in taking advantage of the course adopted by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Waterford (Mr. R. Power), who withdrew his Amendment on the understanding that the question, as to the source from whence these expenses were to be derived, should be discussed first—the action of the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Charles Russell) in taking advantage of the withdrawal of an Amendment upon such conditions to take up the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. R. Power) immediately afterwards, and move it as his own, was not creditable to the hon. and learned Gentleman. It was, however, not altogether an unprecedented action on the part of the hon. and learned Gentleman, because the Committee would remember that on a certain celebrated occasion he tried to appropriate a clause in the Land Act which went by the name of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy). The subsequent course of the hon. and learned Member in refusing to allow the Committee to discuss the principal portion of his Amendment was not at all a convenient course. For his (Mr. Parnell's) part, he had endeavoured, during the progress of this Bill, to facilitate its course as much as he could; but if they were landed very often in such entanglements, and placed at such disadvantage as they were placed in by the action of the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk (Mr. Charles Russell), he did not see how they were to make any progress at all. The hon. and learned Member had evidently not studied the Bill—he had not placed a single Amendment on the Paper. He (Mr. Parnell) and his hon. Friends had studied the Bill, and they had placed on the Paper Amendments calculated to carry out their views; and he thought they should have been entitled to place their views with regard to the remuneration of collectors, and the source from whence that remuneration should be taken, before the Committee, instead of being pounced upon by the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk, and cut off from all discussion, and all opportunity of expressing their opinions upon those points, by his action. He (Mr. Parnell) was bound to say he did not think the course chosen by the hon. and learned Member would be found one convenient to the Irish Members, or to the hon. and learned Member himself, or to the Committee in general. But now with regard to the immediate question of the authority of the Local Government Board over the doings of the Poor Law Guardians. He thought the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk should do one thing or the other—he should either trust the Poor Law Guardians or the Local Government Board. He (Mr. Parnell) did not see in what way the registration of voters was likely to be benefited by this mixing up of authority. As he had said before in the discussion on the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Waterford (Mr. R. Power), speed was of great importance in this matter. There were very large numbers of men to be added to the voters' list, amounting, according to the calculations of those best qualified to judge, to something like 600,000. There was a very limited number of officials to do the work, and it was of importance that those officials should know, on as early a date as possible, what remuneration they were to receive. They would not go to work with any appetite for the work, or any desire to complete it thoroughly and effectually, until they knew what they were to get. What did the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Charles Russell) propose? The hon. and learned Member proposed that after the Board

of Guardians had got over their natural sluggishness, and after they had fixed the rate of remuneration, a further delay should take place until the approval of the Local Government Board was obtained as to the rate of remuneration. He (Mr. Parnell) would have liked to see the remuneration of the collectors fixed by the Act, so that the officials, who ought to be now at work in order that there should be any hope of their completing their task, should get to work, even before the Act was passed, with the knowledge of what they were to receive. The hon. and learned Member proposed as the first delay that the Boards of Guardians would have to wait until the Act was passed before they could hold a meeting. Now, that meeting might not take place for a fortnight, or, in some cases, for a month after the passing of the Act; indeed, it might not take place at all, as there was nothing in the Act to compel the Guardians to fix any rate of remuneration. In some of the most critical counties in Ireland, in counties where it was absolutely necessary that the officials should go to work at once, the time might elapse within which the work was to be done before the officials interested would have any opportunity of knowing how much they were to get for their work. After the Boards of Guardians had taken action, supposing they did take action, would come the further delay occasioned by the necessity of the rate of remuneration fixed receiving the approval of the Local Government Board. Suppose the Local Government Board disapproved of the rate of remuneration, then another meeting of the Boards of Guardians would have to be held. The meeting would have to be summoned by notice, and, therefore, a further delay would have to take place. Perhaps the Board of Guardians would get into a long correspondence with the Local Government Board with regard to the merits of the case, and the question of the rate of remuneration might not be settled until the time allowed had elapsed. Those were serious considerations; they were considerations which would have occurred to the mind of the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk (Mr. Charles Russell) if he had taken the trouble to look into the matter. Unfortunately, he had not taken that trouble. He (Mr. Parnell) asked the Government whether, if this was a case in which they were interested, they would not provide efficient machinery for the purpose? What did they do under the Juries Act. They fixed the rate of remuneration by Act of Parliament; they gave power to the Lord Lieutenant, in Council, to make his Order, and they settled that that Order should be of such a practical nature that the rate collector would have an interest in returning a full list of men fit to serve on juries. If it was a question such as that connected with juries, where the Government might easily hang, or imprison, or send some unfortunate peasant into penal servitude, the Government would set their wits to work and produce a complete Bill; they would not be drawn aside by such catchpenny Amendments as that of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dundalk (Mr. Charles Russell). He also objected to the proposal on other grounds than that of delay. If they were going to trust the Boards of Guardians, why not trust them altogether, why give to the Local Government Board power of which they had got too much already? He entirely objected to this trammelling by the Local Government Board. Parliament had a right to trammel local bodies; Parliament had undoubtedly a right to fix the rate to be paid to the collectors. But what was this Local Government Board in Ireland? It was a Board which was composed of the nominees of Earl Spencer, men who were perfectly notorious for their hatred of Irish national life; for their desire, first of all, to starve the people of the country into submission and then to banish them out of the country altogether. Such was the Local Government Board to whom it was proposed to hand over this important duty connected with the registration of voters. The Committee knew what the result had been of the action of the nominees of Earl Spencer in the case of the Irish boundaries. He (Mr. Parnell) objected to follow the precedent set in that case. He objected to handing over the counties in Ireland to be again manipulated by the nominees of Earl Spencer, especially where Parties were equally divided, and where it would be of importance to obstruct and delay the preparation of the register of voters. He objected to the interference of the Local Government Board in this matter,

because they would adopt methods of procedure which would have the effect of rendering it impossible for the peasantry of Ireland to be placed on the voters' lists. The sooner those initial proceedings were taken the better. A great deal too much time had been lost already by the dilatory proceedings of the Government. Why did not the Government follow the precedent set by the Registration Bill of 1883, which the right hon. Gentleman the present Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) agreed to? In that Registration Bill Parliament decided that so much per head of the persons placed on the list should be given to the rate collectors. What had happened in the meantime to induce the Government to change their mind? Surely, if such a provision was good in 1883, it was good now? The Committee had heard no argument whatever from the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman), or the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan), or the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) against the merits of that provision. Why, if it was good then, was it not left open to the Committee at least to move the introduction of a similar provision on the present occasion; why was this Bill framed upon entirely different principles with regard to the remuneration of rate collectors to the Bill of 1883? The Government knew very well that if they did agree to the addition of a beneficial provision in the Registration Bill of 1883, they might rely on the House of Lords throwing the whole Bill out. They were not quite so certain of the co-operation of the House of Lords on the present occasion. It might be that the House of Lords would refuse some of the provisions, but it was certain they could not throw the Bill out in its entirety. He protested against the conduct of the Government upon the present occasion. It was not fair to the people of Ireland that the Government should take advantage of every side-wind to prevent the peasantry of Ireland obtaining their just electoral rights.

MR. TREVELYAN said, that if the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) seriously believed that the object of the Government, and his (Mr. Trevelyan's) object in coming down that night, was to do their best so as to diminish the number of Irishmen who were to give votes at the next General Election, he was quite welcome to his belief. He (Mr. Trevelyan) certainly never heard a speech which went so little home to his conscience as that which the hon. Member for the City of Cork had just delivered. His (Mr. Trevelyan's) only object on the Representation of the People Bill, on the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill, and on the Registrations Bills which he had the honour of bringing forward in that House, or in supporting in the House, and in the support he was now giving to this Registration Bill, which he hoped might soon become an Act, was that the greatest number of Irishmen who were entitled to votes should enjoy the vote. Why was it that the Government were supporting the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk (Mr. Charles Russell)? It was because it was in the form which had commended itself to previous Governments, which had worked well in Ireland, and which, in the opinion of the present Government, was the form which would work the best. The Registration Act of 1864 contained a provision of this exact nature—namely, that the Guardians of the poor of each Union might, by an order, make some annual allowance out of the rates to the clerks of such Unions respectively as the Guardians might think proper, but that such order should not be acted upon, or any payment made, until the same was approved by the Poor Law Commissioners, and payment sanctioned by them. He was not aware that any complaint had been made against the operation of that Act. The hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) had quoted the Bill of 1883. Now that Bill, as brought in, provided that the Guardians of the poor of each Union, might, by order, make such annual allowance out of the rates to the poor rate collectors as the said Guardians might think right, but no such order might be acted upon, or payment made thereunder, until the same should be approved of by the Local Government Board for Ireland. Pressure was put upon the Government, and the fixed scale of payment was agreed upon. That, however, was not the original proposal of the Government; but the hon. and learned Member for

Monaghan (Mr. Healy) and the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) must remember that the constituencies to which that provision was applied were extremely different constituencies to which this Biil applied. To what extent would the county constituencies of Ireland be increased? The hon. Member for the City of Cork himself had said that the Franchise Act would cause an addition of 600,000 men to the Register.

MR. PARNELL: I do not think they will add half that number under the registration proposals of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. TREVELYAN said, that according to the statement of the hon. Gentleman, 600,000, or some large number of men, would have to be dealt with under this Act. Now, that was a different thing from the miserably and scandalously small number of county electors who would have to be dealt with under the Bill which he (Mr. Trevelyan) had the honour to introduce to the House in 1883. He thought it was extremely important that there should be some Supervising Body who could remove from the minds of rival politicians in Ireland the suspicion that the overseers and rate collectors could in any way be influenced by the politics of the Boards of Guardians. He did not think the Local Government Board would find it very necessary to interfere. He felt certain that the interference would not cause the inconvenience or the delay which had suggested itself to hon. Members opposite. He did not think that the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk (Mr. Charles Russell) deserved the hard words bestowed upon it by the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell); his own belief was that the Committee would take a quieter view and a more practical view of the question and support the Amendment.

MR. CHARLES RUSSELL said, he hoped the Committee would not consider it improper that he should again ask its attention for a moment or two, especially after the observations which the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had thought proper to address to the Committee. So far as the observations of the hon. Member related to his (Mr. Charles Russell's) conduct, apart from the present Amendment, he should certainly not notice them. He did not think that the hon. Member for the City of Cork would, when the heat of the moment had passed away, look back with entire satisfaction to what he had said in relation to him (Mr. Charles Russell); indeed, he doubted whether the hon. Member, even at that moment, was quite satisfied that his observations were just. He did not think it would be becoming that he should occupy the attention of the Committee with personal matters which had nothing to do with the present discussion; but in relation to his conduct as to the matter now before the Committee, he must take leave to correct the hon. Member for the City of Cork. It was not true that he had taken no interest in this Bill. It was true that he had been here during the entire discussion, which had now lasted for a considerable time; and it was equally true that the hon. Member for the City of Cork had not been present during the whole discussion. If the hon. Member for the City of Cork had been present when the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Waterford (Mr. R. Power) was before the Committee, it would have been within the competence and right of the hon. Member for the City of Cork to have pointed out that there might be certain inconveniences in the course which was being pursued. If the hon. Member for the City of Cork had been here, he would have known that it was stated to him (Mr. Charles Russell) in the House by the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan)—although, as the hon. Member now said, and, of course, he (Mr. Charles Russell) must accept the statement, not by the direction of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Waterford (Mr. R. Power)—he (Mr. R. Power) was prepared to assent to the withdrawal of the Amendment.

MR. CALLAN said, he had made no communication to the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Charles Russell), except across the floor of the House.

MR. CHARLES RUSSELL thanked the hon. Member for reminding the Committee that that was his (Mr. Charles Russell's) only mode of communication with the hon. Member. He asked to be allowed to remind the Committee of the course which this discussion had taken. When the discussion was initiated, some hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House, prominently his hon.

Friend the Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson), was insisting upon the Government proposal being adopted; because, he said—and therein he was corroborated by the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland—that representations had reached hon. and right hon. Members from clerks of Unions and rate collectors that the Boards of Guardians were making no arrangements for compensating them for the extra labour that would be put upon them. He believed that it would be necessary that there should be some controlling power, not only for the purpose of requiring that remuneration should be fixed, but also to decide what the scale of remuneration should be. Accordingly, on the Amendment of the hon. Member for the City of Waterford (Mr. R. Power), he had suggested the Amendment standing in his own name in opposition to the Government proposal embodied in the clause. He had said that the principle he was in favour of was that the Boards of Guardians, who raised the money, should have the control of that money, and he said that that was the principle he should like to see carried out. But inasmuch as it had been suggested that in this case the matters to be dealt with were somewhat of a delicate nature, and that complicated considerations might arise which would lead to a want of uniformity of payment—that was to say, a larger payment in some cases than in others, and, in some cases, no provision for payment at all—he said that, while it was necessary that remuneration should be given, there should also be some machinery which would insure uniformity of payment in proportion to the work done; and he had said, in justification, that by that contrivance Parliament would secure uniformity of payment, and also secure the practical control of the Boards of Guardians, who raised the funds, and that, if there were control by the Local Government Board, it would be exercised in the face of the country, and in view of the elected Guardians on the spot. Those considerations, he might add, seemed to have some weight with hon. Members on the other side of the House. But there was one more word which he desired to say. What right had the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) to address to him the language which he had made use of in reference to this question? The hon. Member for the City of Waterford rose in his place and proposed to withdraw his Amendment; and the hon. Member for the City of Cork taunted him (Mr. Charles Russell) as if he were a party to the Amendment being withdrawn on the understanding that his (Mr. Charles Russell's) Amendment should be withdrawn. He denied that. The hon. Member for the City of Cork charged him in effect with having been a party to an arrangement from which he had dishonestly withdrawn, and that baseless insinuation of the hon. Member he repelled with contempt and scorn.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, having listened to the discussion on this question, there appeared to him to be great force in the view taken by the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) that the Committee should settle the basis on which these expenses of the clerks of Unions and poor rate collectors should be charged before they settled by whom they were to be regulated. The hon. Member for the City of Cork had more than once insisted on that proposition being admitted; and on that account the hon. Member for the City of Waterford (Mr. R. Power) had been induced to withdraw the Amendment he had moved to the clause. As the Bill now stood he (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) could very well understand that Her Majesty's Government should feel some difficulty in adhering to it, for it provided that the expenses in question should be paid by the Boards of Guardians, and that the Guardians should have no voice whatever in deciding what the amount of those expenses should be. It had been suggested that the Local Government Board should be the controlling authority in this matter over the Boards of Guardians. Now, the control must either be real or not—if unreal, it would be of no use; and if it were real, it certainly involved interference with local government, which was an objectionable principle, and one which he thought the Committee ought, if possible, to avoid. He must not be understood to say that some control might not be necessary in this case; but he said it was an unsatisfactory way of settling this question, and he would rather like a settlement to be found in the alteration of the incidence of the charge—that was to say, by placing it upon the Treasury rather than upon local rates. If the expense

of registration had been for some time past imposed on the localities, he could not conceive that anyone would propose that it should be so imposed now. These charges related to matters which concerned the nation at large as well as the local ratepayers; and it might be said that they were not a local but a national charge. Therefore, it appeared to him that there was force in the suggestion of the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) that there should be some scale established for the remuneration of the officials in question, and that they should be paid according to that scale by the Treasury. Of course, if that change were to be made in respect of Ireland, it should also be made in respect of England and Scotland; and he could see no reason whatever for continuing the incidence of these expenses upon the rates. He hoped that the incidence might be so altered as that it should be placed on the Treasury.

MR. T. A. DICKSON said, he had stated that he preferred the clause in the Bill, but that he would support the Amendment of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Dundalk (Mr. Charles Russell). He was prepared to do that if the clause were withdrawn and a Schedule brought in fixing the scale of remuneration not only for poor rate collectors, but also for clerks of Unions and Clerks of the Peace, so that the remuneration of all those officials might be fixed. His object was to secure independence of action on the part of those persons. Let the Committee suppose that the poor rate collector or clerk of any particular Union had incurred the displeasure of the Board of Guardians, and that the latter refused them any, or scarcely any, remuneration. Therefore, he said, make the rate collectors and clerks of Unions independent of the Board of Guardians in this respect, so that they might be in a position fearlessly to discharge their duties. Let them be placed in a position of independence with regard to any political Party. He would certainly prefer very much that a scale of remuneration should be fixed in the Bill to which poor rate collectors and clerks of Unions could appeal.

MR. HEALY said, the position they were now in was the result of the Government never accepting the suggestion of anyone, however well acquainted he might be with the subject under consideration. He need not say that hon. Members from Ireland knew more about this question which related to Ireland than any other Members of the House; but, notwithstanding that, they had to come down to the House and hammer away at the Government for hours on a simple question, and then the right hon. Baronet the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) and the Government supporter, the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson), came in and supported the proposal of hon. Members on those Benches. What excuse did the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) give for not accepting their suggestion? The proposal of the Government amounted to this—that the Local Government Board had more intelligence than the House of Commons. It was proposed that they should abdicate their functions in favour of Messrs. Brown, Jones, and Robinson. There were 30 or 40 Members on those Benches in favour of a certain proposal; it had received the support of several hon. Gentlemen representing the Whigs, and the support also of the right hon. Baronet on the Front Opposition Bench (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach); and surely, under those circumstances, their proposal was entitled to acceptance by the Government. But the Government said —"No, we will not accept your suggestion." The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster gave it as one reason why the Government could not accept their proposal that they did not know how many voters would come on the list. But he would ask, if the Government did not know, how was the Local Government Board—how was Mr. Robinson—to know how many voters would come on the list? If the clause remained in its present form, there would always be uncertainty; whereas if their proposal were embodied in the Bill, all the Government scruples would be removed, and all difficulty about the matter would be at an end. With reference to the clerks of Unions, he did not agree with the hon. Member for Tyrone in thinking that they ought to take the same trouble over the matter of their remuneration as they did in the cases of the poor rate collectors. His opinion was that Her Majesty's Government should withdraw this clause entirely, and consent to bring up another

clause on the Report stage of the Bill, embodying the capitation principle.

MR. LEWIS said, that after the many suggestions made in the course of this discussion, the proposal was now made that the clause should be withdrawn, and a clause based on the capitation principle brought up on Report. Now, he objected altogether to the principle of capitation payment being applied in this case. He thought it would furnish an inducement to overseers to put unqualified persons on the list. [MR. HEALY: They will not be paid.] He did not know that; they would be paid according to the list made up. The list of voters would be very different from the jury list, which was only for the purpose of getting the names of a comparatively small number of persons qualified to serve on juries. This was a totally different case, and, as he said before, he believed the introduction of a capitation grant would lead to a number of unqualified persons being put on the list. The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) proposed that the remuneration should be at the rate of £2 10*s.* per annum to each collector for any number of names up to 25, £2 for every additional 100 names up to £500, and £1 for every succeeding 100; provided that no collector should receive a greater sum than £50 in any one year. It seemed to him that a very fine thing might be made out of that; the collectors might sweep into the list any number of persons for which they would be paid so much a head, and the county would have to be satisfied with it. He hoped that the suggestion to withdraw the clause arrived at after four or five hours' discussion would not be assented to, and that Her Majesty's Government would adhere to the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk (Mr. Charles Russell).

MR. GORST said, that the course taken within the last few minutes seemed to have brought the Committee into a state of unanimity on one point. They had agreed to sink objections and come down upon the Consolidated Fund for the cost of registration. But there was one Member of the Committee who had not spoken, and whose opinion on this matter was entitled to some consideration. He would like to hear what were the views of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the subject, because if the expenses of registration, as was now proposed, were to fall upon Imperial and not upon local funds, they must first get the right hon. Gentleman to open the bank for them. His own opinion was that it was not competent to any hon. Member to move such an Amendment; and he supposed that the Members of the Government who had charge of Irish affairs could not assent to it until they had obtained leave of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He should like to know whether that right hon. Gentleman would hold out any hope that the Consolidated Fund would bear the cost of registration of voters in Ireland? If they were informed by the right hon. Gentleman that that would be the case, the Committee could proceed on the line that had been debated; but, if not, he would suggest that the time of the Committee was being thrown away, and that they must look for some other alternative.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he had never been more surprised than when the right hon. Baronet the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) sprung upon the Government the proposal he had made. The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) himself had an Amendment on the Paper to leave out Clause 6, and to substitute for it a clause calling on the Guardians of the poor to make certain payments in connection with the registration of Irish voters out of the rates—that was to say, £2 10*s.* per annum to each collector for any number of names up to 25; £2 for every additional names up to 500, and £1 for every succeeding 100. No one could, after this, have guessed that there was any serious intention to remove these charges from the rates, But the right hon. Baronet suddenly came down and proposed, not only with respect to the incidence of the charge in Ireland, but also with respect to its incidence in the other parts of the Kingdom, that the whole of the registration expenses should fall upon the Consolidated Fund. The right hon. Baronet made that proposal without any Notice whatever, his Friends having made a proposal with respect to County Court Judges in principle similar to that of the arrangement now existing. The Government were suddenly asked with

respect to the whole Kingdom, in the course of the discussion on an Irish Registration Bill, to establish a principle throwing a very large charge on the Consolidated Fund. In reply, therefore, to the appeal very properly made to him by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), he at once said that he certainly could not consent to make such a change as was proposed in the Bill, the effect of which would be to cast a very heavy additional charge on the Consolidated Fund at once, and probably a much heavier charge hereafter. He had felt it his duty to make these observations to the Committee, and the question having been put to him by the hon. and learned Member opposite as to whether it would be competent to move an Amendment to that effect, he answered it by saying that no such proposal could be made without the consent of the responsible Minister.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he had never heard a more technical answer given on a large subject. He regretted that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not been able to argue the question on those broader grounds on which he (Mr. Stanhope) considered it ought to be argued. His right hon. Friend (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) had raised this question—Were the expenses of registration a matter of local interest, or were they a matter of Imperial interest? And he might point out to the Committee that that question was not a new one. It had been argued in that House on former occasions, and the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer knew that it would come forward in connection with the Bill; at any rate, if the right hon. Gentleman did not know it, he would know it before the English Registration Bill left the House. Hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on that side felt that the charges in question were matters of Imperial interest. They believed that it was a gross injustice to charge the enormously increased expenditure that would be incurred under the Representation of the People Act upon the local rates, and that somehow or other they must find a remedy for the evil.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he would ask the Committee to carry their minds back to the year 1868, when greatly increased charges were thrown upon the boroughs of England. At that time Parliament enfranchised a large number of new voters, and the boroughs had to pay in consequence greatly increased registration charges; but not one word was said then about throwing those charges upon Imperial funds. The hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope) and the right hon. Baronet the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) had nothing to say then in favour of relieving the small towns of the increased burden of registration charges which the Act of that year threw upon them; they were not a matter of Imperial interest then, and the localities were left to bear the charges themselves. But now—17 years afterwards—when Parliament was doing for the counties what in 1868 it did for the boroughs, the county Members came forward, and said—"You must not do for the counties what you did for the boroughs." They were now giving the counties increased representation; and did hon. Gentlemen opposite think it fair or right, in Committee on a Registration Bill, to raise this broad question, and to introduce the novelty of making Imperial taxation pay for the increased representation of the localities? How could they in justice make the boroughs pay their own registration expenses as they had hitherto done, and then say that they should not only pay for themselves, but for the registration expenses of the county?—for that was, practically, what the proposal amounted to. ["No, no!"] Imperial taxation, he contended, did pay for the expenses of representation; but until a week ago there had never been a suggestion that the expenses of registration should be defrayed from any other source than that of local taxation. ["No, no!"] If he was wrong in saying that, why, he asked, was not the same practical view taken by hon. Gentlemen opposite when the boroughs were saddled with increased registration charges? Having allowed the boroughs to pay those charges in 1868, why was it that the county Members now asked that an opposite course should be followed? The proposal was not only novel, but there was a practical objection to the course proposed.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. COURTNEY) said, he must point out the double irre-

gularity that was being committed. The Question before the Committee was whether the Local Government Board or the Boards of Guardians should fix the rate of remuneration to officials for carrying out the registration of voters under the Representation of the People Act. The question under consideration was not as to the source from which that remuneration should come. That was the first irregularity. The second irregularity was the discussion as to whether the registration charges should be thrown on the Consolidated Fund, with regard to which he would point out that the question could not be discussed on this Bill without the consent of a Committee previously set up.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he asked pardon for having transgressed the Rule of the Committee. He was answering the speech of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope).

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, the position taken up by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney Gentleman appeared to be this. Being a borough Member, the hon. and learned Gentleman argued that, because the borough Representatives neglected their duty in 1868——

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. COURTNEY): Order, order!

MR. GLADSTONE: We hear now, Sir, of 1868——

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. COURTNEY): Order, order!

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he rose for the purpose of appealing to the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk (Mr. Charles Russell) to withdraw his Amendment, in order that the Committee might proceed to discuss the more important question raised in the second paragraph of the clause. He believed it would be very much for the convenience of the Committee if he would take that course.

COLONEL NOLAN said, the Bill had been wrongly drawn. The draftsman had first made them spend a lot of money, but had never said until afterwards where the money was to come from. All that confusion arose from the way in which the Bill had been drafted. He saw the Chief Secretary laughing; perhaps the draftsman had drawn it wrongly on purpose. He hoped the Amendment would be withdrawn, and then they could get to the main question as to where the money was to come from.

MR. CHARLES RUSSELL said, that if it was the general wish of the Committee, he should be most happy to withdraw the Amendment; but he must first have it made clear to his mind that that was the general wish of the Committee; and he was by no means clear upon that point at present.

MR. GIBSON said, the matter stood thus. The hon. and learned Member for Dundalk (Mr. Charles Russell) proposed the Amendment as a compromise to the suggestion that the matter should be dealt with by the Boards of Guardians, and not by the Local Government Board. When that suggestion was made, his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Charles Russell came forward and proposed as a compromise that it should be in the hands of the Boards of Guardians, subject to the control of the Local Government Board. He (Mr. Gibson) assumed that, having regard to the discussion which was going to be raised on the 2nd paragraph, the Boards of Guardians would not be mentioned again at this stage; and therefore he would suggest that the Amendment should be withdrawn, and the whole of the 1st paragraph should remain as it was. They would then be able to make such observations as might occur to them on the 2nd paragraph.

MR. CALLAN said, that if the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk was willing to withdraw his Amendment, he (Mr. Callan) was ready to facilitate that operation by withdrawing his proposal to amend the Amendment.

Amendment (*Mr. Callan*), by leave, *withdrawn*.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. COURTNEY): Is it your pleasure that the original Amendment be withdrawn?

MR. LEWIS: No, no.

MR. CALLAN: Then, if the original Amendment is not to be withdrawn, I beg to move that my Amendment to it be restored, and that we leave out the words "subject to the control of."

MR. HEALY said, that as the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan) had withdrawn his Amendment to the Amendment on the understanding that the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk (Mr. Charles Russell) would with-

draw his proposal, surely the Government would not now place the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk in the position of not allowing him to withdraw it. If the Government or any Member of the House intended to take that course, the proper thing to do would have been to have objected to the withdrawal of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Louth.

MR. PARNELL said, he did not see that they could proceed profitably with a discussion upon the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk, because after they had arrived at a decision upon it they would really only be at the beginning of the clause, and they would have to discuss further Amendments subsequently, which would undoubtedly come from different sides of the Committee and from different points of view, all of which would take up a great deal of time. He, therefore, thought there were only two courses open to the Committee, if they were to proceed with any hope of making progress—either that the clause should be withdrawn, to give an opportunity to the Irish Executive to consider the question, with the view of bringing up a fresh clause upon the Report; or else the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis), who had objected to the withdrawal of the Amendment, should take into account the fact that he would be able to raise this particular question in the subsequent discussion on a new clause which would undoubtedly have to be moved, and that he would not debar himself from adopting the principles he wished to adopt with regard to the control of the Local Government Board, or whatever other principles he might be desirous of inserting, and should, therefore, consent to allow the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk to be withdrawn. There was, undoubtedly, a very general wish on both sides of the Committee that they should proceed to the settlement of the question involved in the Amendment of the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan), and thus utilize the favourable opportunity which had now presented itself. If the hon. Member for Londonderry did not persist in his refusal to allow the Amendment to be withdrawn, the hon. Gentleman would not debar himself from the assertion of the principle which he wished to assert, because it could be asserted in the discussion of the new clause which would have to be moved.

MR. LEWIS wished to say why he had objected to the withdrawal of the Amendment. During the earlier part of the evening, when there were probably not above 10 or 12 persons in the House, and after they had discussed for two hours and a-half the Amendment proposed by the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. R. Power), that Amendment was allowed to be withdrawn. But 10 minutes afterwards, it was proposed to be moved again, and when he (Mr. Lewis) raised some question on the point, the Chairman told him that he could not object because the previous Amendment had been withdrawn and not rejected. That was why he had wished to draw attention to the matter, and to point out that the withdrawal of Amendments, when followed by re-proposing them directly afterwards, was most inconvenient. However, he had no desire to press his objection any further.

Amendment (*Mr. Charles Russell*), by leave, *withdrawn.*

COLONEL NOLAN moved an Amendment to Clause 6, page 3, line 17, to leave out all the words after the word "defrayed" to the end of the clause. He said, he did not intend to go minutely into the merits of this question, for the reason that a large number of hon. Members had already made up their minds, and several had already spoken upon it, although on a different Amendment. Hon. Members' minds were, therefore, full of the subject. But he would just explain one point. He had proposed no charge upon the Consolidated Fund, because he knew that that would be out of Order; but what he did propose was to leave out the charge upon the local rates; and if that were agreed to, it would then be the duty of the Government to propose some other way of paying the people who did that work. He thought the Amendment ought to be carried, both upon its merits and according to the strength of Parties in the House. That was not a question of asking that a local rate should be paid out of Imperial resources, but of refusing to pay an Imperial tax out of local rates. They were asked to pay out of every poor Union in Ireland

£200 or £300 to return Members to Parliament. Why should the ratepayers have to pay that? They might as well have to pay the Members. If the payment of Members had to be proposed at any time it would have to be proposed out of Imperial taxes, and not out of local rates. The expense of registration should properly be a rate on the whole country at large. He did not see why barristers and rich merchants, who lived in fine houses, and who were rated to a very small extent on those houses, should not take their share of the burden; and why this charge should not be paid out of Income Tax instead of out of the poor rates of the miserably poor. The Committee ought to be strong enough to carry this Amendment. He did not see why Irish Members on the Ministerial side of the House should not unite with Irish Members on the Opposition side to vote on behalf of the Guardians of the Poor, and probably some of the English county Members would support them. If he could only get the Irish Members on the Ministerial side, or even one-half of them, to vote with him, and if they would stick up for the Guardians, they ought to be able to carry the Amendment, even in a full House. He would now leave the Amendment to the Committee. It was perfectly plain what it meant. Under it, the charges would not have to be defrayed out of the local rates, and the Government would be left to propose some alternative afterwards.

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 17, to leave out all the words after the word "defrayed," to the end of the Clause.—(*Colonel Nolan.*)

Question proposed,

"That the words 'the boards of guardians of the several Poor Law Unions are hereby required to pay out of union funds the amounts so fixed by the Local Government Board:

This section shall apply to the Collector General of Rates in Dublin,' stand part of the Clause."

MR. GLADSTONE: The hon. and gallant Gentleman, if I understand him rightly, says that if the Committee negatives the imposition of this charge upon the local rates it will be the duty of the Government to find some other source. It is my duty in some degree to consider what is the duty of the Government, and I differ entirely from the hon. and gallant Gentleman. I give the hon. and gallant Gentleman clearly to understand that he must not reckon upon me to discharge the duty which he seeks to throw upon me. I am not prepared to say that it is the duty of a Government, in considering a Registration Bill, to enter upon the question of the incidence of a particular charge, hitherto paid out of local funds, upon the Consolidated Fund, and I claim for myself entire liberty to decline that responsibility, and to throw upon the hon. and gallant Gentleman—and upon all who may support him, the consequences, as regards this Bill, and any portion of the settlement to which it is directed, that may flow from the vote he intends to give. I will have nothing to do with giving it any countenance, so far as I am personally concerned. [Colonel NOLAN: Hear, hear!] Yes, "Hear, hear." I am glad to see that the hon. and gallant Gentleman understands me. I will give no countenance to the principle that upon a question of this kind, with regard to the incidental consequences of an enlargement of the franchise, with respect to a charge always imposed upon the local rates, that *à propos* of this clause, the question can be legitimately raised of imposing this charge upon the Consolidated Fund. Therefore, the hon. and gallant Gentleman will clearly understand that I decline to undertake the duty which, by the vote he proposed to give, he desires to impose upon me.

DR. LYONS said, he wished to represent the claims of an important body of public officers. He had had very strong representations from the City of Dublin——

MR. GORST rose to Order. The hon. Member was addressing himself to the 3rd sub-section of the clause. The Question was whether the 2nd sub-section should stand part of the clause.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. COURTNEY): The Question before the Committee is to omit both the 2nd and the 3rd sub-sections.

DR. LYONS said, that his attention had been drawn to this matter by a very important body of public officers, who had asked him to represent their claims to that House. No provision whatever was made for the payment of the collectors and the Collector General for Dublin; and yet special provision was made that this section should apply to

the Collector General of Rates in Dublin. They were advised—and they had taken care to obtain first-class advice upon the matter—that their position would be indeterminate if the Bill passed as it was now worded; and, therefore, he desired to point out this blot in justice to this body of very responsible public officers, upon whom the collection of the rates would fall.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): I should like, if I may, to call the attention of the Committee to what it is that is now proposed. The franchise has been lowered, from time to time, and the localities which have profited by the widened constituency have hitherto borne the burden of the increased expense of registration. While the franchise was being gradually extended in the boroughs, the county Members have never once advised that the localities should be relieved from this increased cost of registration. I would respectfully ask the attention of the right hon. Baronet the Member for East Gloucestershire who has already spoken (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) to this point—that wherever there has been an increase of the franchise given to localities, up to the present moment, those localities have been allowed to bear the increased expense of registration. If he will give an instance to the contrary, I shall be glad to hear it; but, from time to time, when the franchise has been increased, the localities have borne the increased expenditure. There has not been an instance in which there was any suggestion to the contrary. In 1867 we threw upon the boroughs an increased expenditure amounting to a sum of very nearly £1,000,000. Was one word said then about the increased expenditure being borne by Imperial taxation? I must ask the right hon. Baronet and the hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope), who are now representing the counties, to reflect whether there is not a little want of generosity in their proposal? They allowed the boroughs to bear the increased expense. No suggestion came then that there should be aid from Imperial taxation; and, without grudging, the boroughs had borne the cost of the advantage which they had obtained, without a whisper that there should be any aid from Imperial taxation. Now, Sir, progress has been made, and the counties are going to obtain the same benefit this year which the boroughs obtained in 1868; and now the county Members, represented by the right hon. Baronet and the hon. Gentleman, who allowed the boroughs to bear the increased expenditure because it was a local benefit to the boroughs, and not an Imperial benefit, which was then obtained, and who allowed this to go on for 17 years past, come forward and refuse to pay the money. They refused to be placed on an equal position with the boroughs. They say that that which was only local when applied to the boroughs in 1868 is not a local benefit when given with equal hand to the counties, but has become an Imperial matter.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I rise to Order. I wish to call attention to the fact that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General is repeating over and over again the same arguments, in almost the same words; and I wish to ask you, Sir, whether he does not thereby make himself obnoxious to the Rule against tedious and irrelevant repetition?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): I am speaking to a different Amendment.

MR. HEALY: Against time. Obstruction.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): I am speaking to a different Amendment. The Amendment proposed by the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan) was that this expenditure should be borne by Imperial taxation. [Colonel NOLAN: No.] Well, at all events, that it should not be borne by the local rates. The Members for the counties allowed the boroughs to bear it in 1868, and for 17 years they have borne it; but directly it is put on the counties the right hon. Baronet the Member for East Gloucestershire and the hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lincolnshire say—"You shall hear more of this if you do not relieve the counties from bearing the expense of their own registration." Well, Sir, may I not ask that there should be equal justice dealt out to the counties and to the boroughs? The Members for the counties, having cast upon the boroughs of England the expenses of this registration, now come

down to this House and—I will not use the word I was going to use—I will not say what I mean—but why should they not bear the same burden which they willingly cast upon the boroughs in 1868? Are they not as well able to bear it? Have they not the same generosity—the same sense of justice? Why should they cast on the boroughs in 1868 this expenditure, and seek to evade it for the counties now, in 1885? May I point out to the Committee the great danger that they run if once they make one body bear the task of spending money and another body the task of paying for it? The suggestion of the hon. and gallant Member opposite is to allow local bodies to incur this expenditure; and it will be extremely difficult to check them. You will have to deal with Revising Barristers and others, and you will allow all this to be paid for out of the Imperial Exchequer. Thus there will be two elements; one body will have to spend the money, with very little controlling power over it, and another body will have to bear the expense; so that you may produce a reckless amount of expenditure on the one hand, and on the other a burden cast upon those who do not derive immediate benefit from that expenditure. I do not know that anything I can say will shake the present combination between Irish Members and English county Members; but it will be found that the principle is not one which ought to receive the support of any of those who reflect calmly and with justice on the subject.

MR. CHARLES RUSSELL said, he did not profess any tender regard for the Consolidated Fund, and he did not see anything objectionable in principle in a charge of this nature, which unquestionably might be said to be a charge of an Imperial character, being met from Imperial sources. But the practical question on which he would like to be informed before he gave his vote was this—supposing this Amendment were carried adversely to the view of the Government, what course would the Government take with reference to the Bill itself? He wanted to be informed on that point, because whatever suggestions might be made in the hurry of the moment about his want of interest in Irish affairs he certainly did take a deep interest in them. The Government were entitled to take this credit to themselves—that on a previous clause which had already been disposed of, and by which it was sought by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite to disfranchise a large body of the people who would otherwise be entitled to the franchise, the Government loyally stood to their guns. He (Mr. Russell) was anxious that the Irish people should have more and more effect given to their vote. He had little doubt about the purpose of the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Nolan) in moving this Amendment; but he was certain that that hon. and gallant Member would be unwilling to take this course if he believed it would risk the chance of the Bill being passed, and speedily, into law. He therefore thought the Committee were entitled to know what would be the position of the Bill in case the Amendment should be carried against the Government?

MR. THOROLD ROGERS (who, on rising, was greeted with interruptions from Irish Members) said, he did not understand the meaning of that outrage. His hon. and gallant Friend had suggested that Imperial taxation should be applied for the purpose of meeting the obligations of the local rates; and he was bound to say that it was absolutely irregular that the Committee should be called upon suddenly, without any notice of any provision of the kind, to decide whether it would made a fundamental change in the machinery by which local government and local representation were carried on, and have put before it the issue that there should be a charge put upon Imperial taxation for the purpose of meeting this local obligation. He had entered into an arrangement by which he had paired for the night; but though he should be unable to vote, he would move that Progress be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Thorold Rogers.*)

MR. GLADSTONE: I am sorry to find that a very serious question has been raised of a nature calculated to interfere in the gravest manner with the purposes of the Government. As so stated, as the purposes of the Government, they have very little special claim upon the Committee; but they are purposes connected with a great extension of the

franchise in Ireland—a great enlargement of the legitimate Constitutional power of the Irish people. To the whole of the arrangements connected with these purposes we attach a very great value and importance; and it would be to us a matter of extreme regret if any vote given by the Committee——

MR. ONSLOW: I rise to Order. The Motion before the Committee is that you, Sir, do report Progress. The right hon. Gentleman is not addressing himself to that Motion, but to the Main Question.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. COURTNEY): The right hon. Gentleman, as far as I have heard, is in Order.

MR. GLADSTONE: I would be the last person, Sir, to disobey the ruling of the Chair, and I hope that the moment you perceive that I am travelling beyond the Question you will call me to Order; and I hope, by my obedience to your call, without raising any question upon it as has now become almost a settled rule, that I shall set an example which I think it my duty to set. But I understood that the hon. Member for Southwark moved to report Progress in order to get rid of a discussion which he deemed to be illegitimate. My desire would be to discuss the matter at no great length, but briefly, either upon this question or upon the Motion when it comes on. If there is any doubt as to whether I should be in Order in objecting to the proposal made on the question now raised, in the present circumstances I would far rather postpone any observations which I should otherwise make.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Before you reply, Sir, to the appeal of the right hon. Gentleman, I would ask leave to draw your attention to Rule 10 of the Standing Orders, which requires that when a Motion is moved for the adjournment of the debate or of the House during any debate, or when a Motion is moved that the Chairman of the Committee do report Progress, the debate thereupon shall be confined to the matter of such Motion.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. COURTNEY): I was quite aware of the Rule to which the right hon. Baronet has called my attention. The right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government opened his argument; but I did not see what the scope of that argument would be. As far as it was opened, it was strictly relevant to the Question before the Committee. If the right hon. Gentleman ha diverged from the Question before the Committee to report Progress to discuss another question, I should have done what I have done already this evening—I should have called him to Order.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Question again proposed,

"That the words 'The Boards of Guardians of the several Poor Law Unions are hereby required to pay out of Union funds the amounts so fixed by the Local Government Board:

"'This section shall apply to the Collector General of Rates in Dublin,' stand part of the Clause."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I must again apologize to the Committee for intervening in this discussion. I must ask the Committee to pause before they agree to this proposal, coming as it does upon us in an unexpected manner. The right hon. Baronet the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) stated that the effect of this Motion would be, in his opinion, to charge upon the Consolidated Fund the whole of the registration expenses of England, Scotland, and Ireland. I repeat, that the Committee should pause before it adopts that proposal, which certainly no one expected would be put forward. I want the Committee to consider what would be the effect of agreeing to this Motion. If the Motion were agreed to, the Committee would then have expressed the opinion that at the present time, when the Government found great difficulty in providing for the increased expenditure of the country, it was right, as the right hon. Baronet proposes, to add to that expenditure something like £120,000 or £130,000 a-year. Now, I ask the Committee to pause before it makes that addition to the charge upon the Consolidated Fund. As I have said before, it is a serious matter at the present time to propose to increase the charge of £100,000 by the additional sum of £120,000 or £130,000. I ask whether on such short notice, on the proposal sprung upon us by the right hon. Baronet opposite, the Committee is to determine, in view of the great difficulties I have alluded to, to increase the expenses of the taxpayer by that sum?

MR. GLADSTONE said, he did not intend to deliver on that occasion any fixed opinion on the question as to whether the burden of the registration expenses should be borne by local funds or should be a charge on the Consolidated Fund. He did not intend to give any final opinion on the question. He thought it was open to discussion. He was not much moved by the observation that the charge was an Imperial matter, because there was hardly any charge to which that expression was not applicable; but he said that that was not the proper occasion for the consideration of the question, whether the burden of registration expenses should be borne by local funds or should be a charge upon the Consolidated Fund. As regarded the Amendment, he protested that it was not the function of the House of Commons to be the originator of a public charge. But there was one thing worse than that. If the House was to be the originator of public charge at all, let it be the originator of public charge openly, and let the country know that this or that charge, which was formerly on the ratepayers, had been transferred to the Consolidated Fund, supported as it was in great part by the labour of the country. Let the country know that that had been done by their own Representatives in the House of Commons on their own responsibility. If the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Nolan) was prepared to propose that change in the Constitution, and if the Guardians of that Constitution, who sat opposite, were prepared to support it, it might be that they could overcome any resistance he could offer. They would have a fair discussion; but at present the principle of the Constitution was that the Governmentwere to be the originators of charge, and were to be responsible for placing burdens on the taxpayers of the country. He told the hon. and gallant Gentleman fairly that he did not accept his instruction; he would not work under his instruction, and he reserved to himself and his Colleagues absolute discretion as to what their course with respect to this proposal should be. The Government could not consent to any such proposal on a Registration Bill, because it was not their duty to accept the responsibility, and because it involved a total revolution with respect to the mode of providing for the expenses of registration, which had been established by a long and undisputed series of precedents, and which had never been the subject of complaint until they came to the sacred question of counties as compared with the boroughs of the country, which former, it would appear, were not to be subject to the same taxation as the latter. He answered his hon. and gallant Friend with the fullest acknowledgment of the fairness and excellent temper with which his proposal had been put, that those who chose to introduce a change of this kind, in the opinion of the Government, illegitimate in principle, and not bearing on the present discussion, into the Bill, must be responsible for the progress of the Bill itself, and that the Government must claim for themselves perfect freedom in regard to the course which they might consider it their duty to pursue in respect to the Constitutional principle involved.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:* — Ayes 56; Noes 62: Majority 6. — (Div. List, No. 127.)

MR. GLADSTONE: As the division which has just taken place will make it necessary, in conformity with the distinct intimation previously given to the Committee, for the Government to consider at large the course they should pursue in respect of the further prosecution of this Bill, in order to give us an opportunity for that further consideration, I move, Sir, that you do now report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

MR. PARNELL said, he thought that before the Motion was agreed to, which, of course, he regarded as a natural one under the circumstances, the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister might give the Committee some intimation as to what course he proposed to adopt with regard to the English and Scotch Registration Bills. Did the right hon. Gentleman propose to agree to similar Amendments in the case of those Bills?

MR. GLADSTONE: I propose to go forward with the English and Scotch Bills, and to see whether the House of

Commons will give similar votes on those Bills.

Motion *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Resolutions [23rd April] *reported.*

First Resolution read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

MR. BIGGAR said, that this Resolution related to a Vote to which Irish Members had taken objection, because the people of Ireland had to pay a very substantial proportion of it without getting anything in return. They thought that if those grants were made for the maintenance of roads in England and Scotland, the same contribution ought to be made towards the maintenance of roads in Ireland; and because that principle was not applied, they considered that a great injustice was done to the people of Ireland which ought to be redressed. They had heard over and over again the argument that this charge was only temporary, and that the matter would be considered when the Local Government Bills for England and Ireland were passed; but they thought that in the meantime, seeing that those Bills had been promised so long, and that there was very little prospect of getting them passed into law, the Government should bring in a Supplementary Estimate during the present Session which would afford the redress claimed by Members for Ireland. If the Government would undertake to do that, they would be well satisfied. They did not, of course, want the large amount now being voted for English roads, but an amount proportioned to the taxation as between the three countries. The rates raised in Ireland for the repair of roads were called county cess levied by the Grand Juries. If a grant were given to Ireland and divided amongst the different counties, the counties would be thus indirectly benefited. For those reasons he opposed the present Vote.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 61; Noes 21: Majority 40.—(Div. List, No. 128.)

Subsequent Resolutions *agreed to.*

Mr. Gladstone

MOTIONS.

INDUSTRIES (IRELAND).

NOMINATION OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Select Committee on Industries (Ireland) do consist of Twenty-four Members."—(*Sir Eardley Wilmot.*)

MR. PARNELL said, he was sorry that the Government had adopted such an extraordinary course in reference to the nomination of this Committee as that which they had adopted. It was towards the end of last Session that the Government agreed to the appointment of such a Committee upon the Motion of the hon. Baronet (Sir Eardley Wilmot), who had now moved its nomination; and upon one pretext or another they had delayed, since the commencement of the Session, the nomination of the Committee, and refused the just claim of the Members with whom he (Mr. Parnell) was associated for representation upon the Committee. He and his hon. Friends considered that a Committee embracing such a very wide field of investigation as that connected with the industrial resources of Ireland should have upon it a sufficiently strong force of Members belonging to the Irish Nationalist Party as to have enabled them to take a leading share in its deliberations. He admitted to the fullest extent that if the Committee were suitably constituted, and if it had time to pursue its investigations thoroughly, they would be of enormous value, and would result in the obtaining of very much valuable information as regarded the industrial resources of Ireland. But he should look upon an incomplete investigation as a great disaster. In the first place, if the Committee reported that Session, and he had no doubt it would report, if nominated, because if it had not completed its investigation by the close of the Session, it could not claim, from an expiring Parliament, its reappointment the following Session—if the Committee were to make a Report by the close of the Session, it could not be anything but a very incomplete and imperfect Report.

MR. MONK rose to Order. The House had already decided, on the Motion of the hon. Baronet (Sir Eardley Wilmot), that this Committee should be

appointed. The Question now put to the House was that the Select Committee do consist of 24 Members. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) seemed to be going a little beyond the Question.

MR. SPEAKER: I have not put the first name of the hon. Members who it is proposed should form the Select Committee; and therefore the wider question is still before the House on the Question that the Select Committee do consist of such and such Members.

MR. PARNELL said, he should endeavour to confine his remarks as much as he possibly could to the immediate Question before the House. Of course, he did not desire to detain the House unnecessarily at that time of the night (12.45). Apart from the question of the probable incomplete nature of the Committee's Report, owing to the fact that so little time of the Session still remained to investigate such a wide subject, he wished to say that he certainly should not like to undertake the responsibility of being a Member of the Committee with only four Colleagues to assist him in overcoming the opposition of 19 English Members, which would almost certainly be exhibited against any proposal of theirs tending to make the operation of the Committee an effective one. If the Irish Party had such a number of Members on the Committee as would be likely to give them their suitable share in directing the issues to which the Committee might come the case would be different. But it was only proposed that the Committee should consist of 24 Members. Of that number the Irish Party were only to be given five. The Committee was, he understood, to consist of 10 Liberal Members, nine Conservative Members, and five Members belonging to the Irish Party. That would leave only five Members of the Irish Party against 19 other Members of the House; and his experience of the working of other Select Committees was that it would be exceedingly difficult for the five, under the circumstances, hampered as the Committee would be by the short period of the Session still remaining, to obtain from the majority of the Committee such a full discussion of the subject, and such a full examination of the subject, as would be satisfactory, or as would render the proceedings of the Committee of any importance or value whatever towards the promotion of the industrial resources of Ireland. He said that, having some knowledge himself of the difficulties which Irish Members had to contend against in Committees of this kind. The difficulties were very much enhanced when there were only a few Irish Members endeavouring to press their views and ideas upon a large number of Members belonging to the two English Parties. The work then became insuperable, and he doubted very much whether, at that period of the Session, the trouble which would be entailed upon the Committee would be justified at all by the results which would attend its labours. He, for his own part, should feel obliged to decline the honour of nomination to the Committee, because he felt he could not be of any real use with regard to the very important object with which the Committee would meet. He therefore asked the hon. Baronet (Sir Eardley Wilmot) to consider whether he was really likely to advance the cause of the industrial resources of Ireland by persevering with a Committee from which no good could come? He had always recognized the desire of the hon. Baronet to promote the industries of Ireland. The hon. Baronet's name was distinguished in connection with that matter, and he (Mr. Parnell) was quite ready to acknowledge that the hon. Gentleman was anxious that some of the misery which prevailed in Ireland should cease. Undoubtedly, if the hon. Gentleman could obtain the appointment of the Committee at an earlier period of the Session, and if it were suitably composed, the Committee might do a very considerable amount of good towards disseminating information with regard to important branches of Irish industries. Under the circumstances, he (Mr. Parnell) thought it would hardly be possible for the hon. Baronet, by this Committee, to do much good that Session. They had been treated very unfairly by the Government in this matter. Originally the Government offered them four Members, and, after considerable hesitation, they offered them five. The original claim of the Irish Representatives was that they should have six Members upon the Committee—a very fair claim indeed, and one which he should have thought the Government would have had no difficulty in agreeing

to, if they really desired to promote the success of the Committee. Even if they could now obtain six Representatives on the Committee, he doubted whether the appointment of the Committee would be of much value, seeing that such a very short period must elapse before the Session would come to an end. It was obvious that once the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill and the Registration Bills had passed, the Session would come to a speedy conclusion. He thought that, as business men, they were entitled to consider whether they ought to proceed with a hasty and limited inquiry from which no good result could come. He therefore begged to move the adjournment of the debate.

MR. MOLLOY seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Parnell.*)

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he thought it was necessary he should say a word or two with respect to the position of the Government in this matter. He was surprised to hear the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) say that it was proposed to appoint upon this Committee 19 English Members.

MR. PARNELL: Nineteen Members of the two English Parties.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: English Parties! There were 12 Irish Members out of the 24, besides the Chairman of the Committee. Now, what was this Committee? It was a Committee to inquire into the industrial resources of Ireland; and would the hon. Member for the City of Cork exclude from the Committee every Irish Member returned by an Irish constituency who did not belong to his Party? Did the hon. Member mean to say that upon a Committee of Inquiry into the Industrial Resources of Ireland the hon. Members for Belfast, for instance, were not to be nominated, but were to be treated as English Members? Really, the whole argument of the hon. Gentleman was to deny the right of any Member elected by an Irish constituency to be regarded as an Irish Member unless he belonged to his (Mr. Parnell's) Party. ["Oh, oh!"] What else, then, was the hon. Member's argument? Why, then, did he complain if there were 12 Members, who belonged to different Parties, and who sat in different parts of the House, but all of whom were elected by Irish constituencies, to sit upon a Committee of this description? It seemed to him (Sir William Harcourt) that the argument of the hon. Member was one which could not be sustained. If what he had stated was not the hon. Gentleman's argument, what was it? The hon. Member had said that the 19 Members belonged to the two English Parties, and he said that there were only five Members of the Committee who could be recognized as Irish Members. Did he repudiate the Members for Belfast and the Members for Dublin—Members who certainly had something to say on such a subject? That was all it seemed to him (Sir William Harcourt) necessary to say in vindication of the fairness with which this Committee had been constituted. The Irish Members of the Committee and the Chairman of the Committee constituted together the majority, and therefore the assertion that the Committee had been unfairly constituted could not be sustained. The hon. Member had stated that the Session was so far advanced that it was not likely that the Committee would answer any useful purpose. That, of course, was an argument which stood on a very different footing. It was an argument which the hon. Gentleman must settle with the hon. Baronet (Sir Eardley Wilmot) who moved the Committee. He (Sir William Harcourt) only rose to repudiate, on the part of the Government, the assertion that the Committee had been unfairly selected. He thought that anybody who looked at the names of the Committee would see at once that the various sections of the Irish Members were very fairly represented.

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT said, he begged to thank the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) for the kind manner in which he had alluded to himself. He (Sir Eardley Wilmot) could only say that he had only one object in endeavouring to get this Committee before the House—the same object which had induced him, at a late period of his life, to undergo the toil and labour of Parliamentary work. He had found for a long period that Ireland was part of the United Kingdom to which adequate justice had not been done; and, therefore, with that feeling he had sought a seat in that House, and,

as the hon. Member had said, he had on many occasions shown his anxiety to serve the interests of that country. Entertaining those feelings, in the month of August last he had put a Question to the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government, asking him whether he would consent to the appointment of a Royal Commission for the purpose of inquiring into the industrial resources of Ireland? The right hon. Gentleman, in his reply, had stated that he had conferred on this matter with the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and that they were both of opinion that the object he (Sir Eardley Wilmot) wished to attain would be better arrived at through the medium of a Select Committee than that of a Royal Commission. Upon that he (Sir Eardley Wilmot) had immediately given Notice of his intention to move for a Select Committee to inquire into the industrial resources of Ireland. That, as he had said, was in August last. He had brought the matter forward at such a period that no opportunity presented itself for bringing the question to a conclusion. In the Autumn Session, having given Notice on the 21st of November last, he brought the question before the House, and asked for a Select Committee. The right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government was present and had listened to his speech, and at his side was the then Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, the present Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan). After they had heard what he (Sir Eardley Wilmot) had to say, and had heard the arguments put to the House by the hon. Member for Clonmel (Mr. Moore) and many Gentlemen on the Opposition side of the House below the Gangway—indeed, from hon. Members on both sides of the House—the present Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster rose to inform him (Sir Eardley Wilmot) that at that period of the Session it was useless to suppose the matter could be thoroughly gone into; but that if at the beginning of the present Session he would renew his question the matter would be favourably considered. Accordingly, on the 10th of March, having given due Notice through the hon. Member for Dublin (Dr. Lyons), he himself having been out of England, the matter came on. On that evening he (Sir Eardley Wilmot) had an interview with the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, who had not only always treated him, but the subject that he had in hand, with the greatest courtesy and consideration, and the right hon. Gentleman had told him that the Government had consented to the appointment of a Committee. The Committee was assented to on that evening, and he had set about preparing a list of names for the consideration of the Government. He did not hesitate to say that he had included in that list a greater number of Members of the National Party than were now to be found upon it. He had thought that, upon the whole, that Party represented, as he considered it did, the great majority of the people of Ireland, and the feeling and sentiments and wishes of the people of Ireland ought to be considered, and that the number of seven—the Committee at that time consisting of 21 Members—would not be too large for the representation of that Party. He wished to return, on this the first opportunity, his best thanks to the noble Lord the Member for Flintshire (Lord Richard Grosvenor) for the uniform kindness and courtesy with which he had on every occasion assisted him and conferred with him with regard to the appointment of the Committee, the names of the proposed Members of which were now before the House. There had been great difficulties for the noble Lord to overcome no doubt—difficulties which hon. Gentlemen sitting on both sides of the House could well understand; but ultimately, only a short time ago, the noble Lord had told him that the names had been agreed upon. They were those now on the Paper, with the exception of three, who had only been added to the list within the last few days. Two of those names were such as would do honour to any Committee, he did not care how important it might be. He referred to the names of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith)—a Cabinet Minister and an ex-Cabinet Minister headed the list of this important Committee. In addition to those, the name of the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. A. O'Connor) was added to the list. He must say he quite dissented from what had been said by the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), that this was a Committee that

would not do justice to Ireland. As the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary (Sir William Harcourt) had said, the number of Irishmen——

MR. SPEAKER: I must remind the hon. Baronet that the Question before the House is the adjournment of the debate.

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT said, he found it rather difficult to confine himself to the Question of adjournment when the whole matter had been so thoroughly dealt with by the hon. Member for the City of Cork, who had gone into the whole history of the question, and thus he had found it difficult to abstain from general remarks. But he respectfully bowed to the decision of Mr. Speaker, and he would confine himself entirely to the reasons why the debate should not be adjourned. They had before them now three good hard-working months, up to the end of July; and he must say that he had received from every part of Ireland a universal expression of a desire that they should commence the inquiry. He quite agreed with the hon. Member for the City of Cork that they could not exhaust such a vast question as this that Session; but, at any rate, let them commence the inquiry. There were Gentlemen in the House who were ready to devote all their time and labour to the prosecution of an inquiry for the purpose of benefiting the Sister Kingdom; and he really was surprised at the observations which had fallen from the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork, that owing to want of time and to the near approach of the end of the Parliament that the inquiry would be altogether useless. He could tell the hon. Member that if the House granted the inquiry, Ireland would never allow so distinguished a Member of the House and so distinguished an Irishman to stay away from it. Looking at the magnitude and importance of the inquiry, Irishmen would not consent to the hon. Member holding aloof from it, so well knowing, as they did, that his opinions, his feelings, and his influence with his fellow-countrymen would be of so vast an amount of assistance to the Committee, and would do so much good. Therefore, if the Committee were granted, he (Sir Eardley Wilmot) did not feel any apprehension in his own mind that either the hon. Member for the City of Cork, or those hon. Gentlemen of the Nationalist Party whom he proposed to nominate with him, would abstain from taking any part in the inquiry. He respectfully asked the House not to agree to this adjournment, after all the labour and anxiety he and his Friends had had in endeavouring to put the Committee on foot; he asked the House to give him an opportunity of going to work at once. He saw the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) in his place, and knew how glad he always was to embark in any Parliamentary work when his opinion and service might be beneficial to his country. He (Sir Eardley Wilmot) might disagree with the right hon. Gentleman as to the fundamental principles on which his (Sir Charles W. Dilke's) labours were founded; but he cordially paid a tribute of admiration and respect to the energy, and zeal, and great talent which the right hon. Gentleman had displayed in piloting the Bill for the redistribution of seats through the House. As a private Member, he (Sir Eardley Wilmot) was in a similar, though lesser degree, anxious to devote what strength and power he had to a work which he firmly believed would benefit the country of hon. Gentlemen who sat on his right. Let him have the opportunity he sought, and he thought he would be able to prosecute the undertaking in such a manner that neither the House nor the country would have reason to regret it.

MR. ONSLOW wished to say a word on this subject, for the reason that on Wednesday last he had prevented the nomination of the Committee. Everything, he thought, which had fallen from the hon. Baronet the Member for South Warwickshire (Sir Eardley Wilmot) that night only confirmed him in the action he had taken on Wednesday. The hon. Member (Mr. Parnell), in suggesting the adjournment of the debate, said he did not think a Committee would be of any use, or that its labours could be brought to a termination that Session. He (Mr. Onslow) knew very well the great importance of the Committee, and it was for that reason that he should support the hon. Member for the City of Cork if he went to a division. He (Mr. Onslow) had had great experience in connection with those large Committees, and he knew the larger the

Committee was the more time would it require to go into all the matters brought before it. It appeared to him to be an absolute farce on the part of the House to appoint a Committee of that kind at that period of the Session, when the interest of every Member was concentrated upon the next Election. There was another objection he had to raise against the appointment of the Committee. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary (Sir William Harcourt) was rather in favour of the appointment of the Committee; but he would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, during his whole experience, he had ever known a Committee appointed with only nine of one Party upon it and 15 of another. That was a mode of procedure which, at any rate so far as he was concerned, he had never known before. The right hon. Gentleman had alluded to it, and though he did not wish to be out of Order——

MR. SPEAKER: I must remind the hon. Member that he is not speaking to the Question of the adjournment of the debate.

MR. ONSLOW said, he was merely replying to the observation of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary. The right hon. Gentleman said he did not see why the Committee should not be appointed, because everyone knew who the Chairman was to be. Well, it was the first time he (Mr. Onslow) had ever known the Chairman mentioned before the Committee met. If anyone was to be appointed by the Government, or by the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, before the Committee met, he was afraid they would be forming a very bad precedent. He thought this would be a wholly useless Committee, so far as the present Session was concerned. The subject was a vast one, and a Committee to properly consider it would have to sit at least two years. It was, therefore, an idle thing to agree to its appointment at that period. The hon. Baronet (Sir Eardley Wilmot) had said there were two Members on the Committee he was proud of. Undoubtedly. The names were "Mr. Trevelyan" and "Mr. W. H. Smith." It was only within the last few days that those Gentlemen had consented to serve on the Committee; and it seemed to him (Mr. Onslow) that they had only consented to serve in order to give a colour to this matter. Pressure had been brought to bear upon them to grant the use of their names, and he did not think that was the sort of thing that ought to take place in that House. He deprecated the nomination of the Committee at the present time, and should accordingly support the Motion of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell).

DR. LYONS said, the House, he hoped, would support the action of the hon. Baronet (Sir Eardley Wilmot) in nominating this Committee without delay. He (Dr. Lyons) could testify there was great anxiety throughout the length and breadth of Ireland for the appointment of the Committee, and that there would be great disappointment if it were postponed any longer. He might be allowed to mention, as a reason for not postponing it, that a very considerable number of persons had been communicated with with a view of receiving their evidence—gentlemen eminent in science and practical arts in Ireland. Although the Committee had not yet been appointed, an expectation had existed which had been operating in Ireland for the last six or eight months; and gentlemen of the greatest experience had been preparing evidence, and making inquiries, and taking notes, with a view of giving the Committee the benefit of their knowledge on the subject. Special inquiries had been prosecuted during the whole of the winter; and not only had the hon. Baronet (Sir Eardley Wilmot) been in active correspondence with gentlemen connected with manufactures, with science, and with art in Ireland, but he (Dr. Lyons) himself had been in constant communication with all those gentlemen in Ireland. Therefore, the work of the Committee was prepared, and if it were now appointed it would be able at once, without further delay, to take valuable evidence. As he had already said, immense disappointment would undoubtedly result from further delay. He regretted that the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had chosen to take his present action, because he believed that the hon. Member and his Friends could, if they liked, lend very important assistance to the Committee. The House would be able to judge from the number and character of those who were prepared to give evidence rather

than from the constitution of the Committee, that he did not underrate the importance of the inquiry, and the necessity of its being a representative Committee. An endeavour had been made to make it as widely representative as possible, and he thought the nomination in the proposal before the House was a fair one. He believed for all those reasons the House would support the Motion of the hon. Baronet (Sir Eardley Wilmot).

MR. R. POWER said, he agreed with the hon. Member who had just sat down (Dr. Lyons) that the Irish Members and the Irish people ought to be indebted to the hon. Baronet (Sir Eardley Wilmot) for the interest he had taken in this subject. Not only ought they to feel indebted to him, but they did feel indebted to him; but, at the same time, he believed at that period of the Session it was too late to commence the inquiry, particularly in view of the statement of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, that so many important witnesses would have to be examined. It had been said, and no doubt with truth, that the inquiry would be of such an important and exhaustive nature that it would occupy fully two years, possibly three. Then, when they looked at the list of Members to be nominated on the Committee, they could not but remember that a General Election was very likely to take place before the end of next Session, and that some of those hon. Members, whose names were down, were not likely to be again returned to the House of Commons. Of course, he did not refer to the hon. Gentleman who had last spoken (Dr. Lyons); but still it would be very inconvenient if Members who had sat upon the Committee and had listened to the evidence, and were familiar with the inquiry from the commencement, were to be replaced by others who would come upon the inquiry in the middle of the evidence. In that way it might be necessary to go over the whole ground again. He really thought that taking into consideration the late period of the Session, and the importance of the subject, and the number of witnesses that would have to be examined, that it would be better to wait until next Session and the new Parliament was elected, and they knew what Members were likely to serve upon the Committee from beginning to end before they made the appointment. Under all those circumstances, he felt bound to support the Motion of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell).

MR. SEXTON said, there could be but one opinion as to the public spirit and energy displayed in this matter by the hon. Baronet (Sir Eardley Wilmot); but if anything was required to complete the argument of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), it was supplied by the hon. Gentleman opposite (Dr. Lyons). That hon. Member, it appeared, had taken time by the forelock, and before the Committee was appointed had written to important personages in Ireland with a view of securing them as witnesses. The hon. Member had secured them for the inquiry, although he himself was not yet connected with it, and, as a matter of fact, was never likely to be connected with it. Even if the Committee were appointed, and the hon. Member were to bring over those witnesses, a considerable number of them would have to remain unexamined until next Session. It must be remembered that they had now reached the month of April, and that the Session was not likely to last as long as ordinary Sessions. The appointment of the Committee should be put off until next Session, as it was necessary that there should be continuity of action with regard to it. If it were not put off the inquiry would be finished by a *personnel* different to that which commenced it; and, to his mind, it seemed desirable that they should have the same Members upon it throughout. By next Session the proposition of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary (Sir William Harcourt) would have received ample response. The right hon. Gentleman did not know who was "the Party representing Ireland" in the House; next Session he was likely to have as much proof as he could desire on that point. He was in favour of the postponement proposed by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), because he believed that if the Committee were appointed now it would go into action doomed to failure. At any rate, if it were proceeded with he should respectfully desire to withdraw his name from it.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Debate *adjourned* till *Monday* next.

WATER PROVISIONAL ORDERS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. HOLMS, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade, under "The Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870," relating to Barton-upon-Humber and District Water, Chiltern Hills Spring Water, Great Berkhampstead Water, Herts and Essex Water, and Holyhead Water, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. HOLMS and Mr. CHAMBERLAIN.

SUNDAY CLOSING (WALES) ACT (1881) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. MORGAN LLOYD, Bill to amend the Sunday Closing (Wales) Act, 1881, and the Licensings Acts 1872-1874, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. MORGAN LLOYD, Mr. ROBERTS, and Mr. RICHARD.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 141.]

ADJOURNMENT.

EGYPT—SEIZURE OF THE "BOSPHORE EGYPTIEN"—RECALL OF THE FRENCH CONSUL.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."

MR. MONTAGU SCOTT: Before the House adjourns I wish to put a Question to the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary. There is a very general impression throughout the House and the country that there might be an addition made to the information conveyed to the House by the Prime Minister this evening. I wish to ask whether any further information has been received beyond that which the Prime Minister laid before the House, that the *Chargé d'Affaires* of France at Cairo had left?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have nothing further to add.

MR. MONTAGU SCOTT: May I take it that the information was correct, and that the whole telegram was conveyed to the House from the Foreign Office this afternoon?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I do not quite catch the hon. Member's observation. We have no knowledge—at least I have none—which would induce us to modify in any respect the statement made by the Prime Minister.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY: Has the French *Chargé d'Affaires* left Cairo?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: My reply must be that I have nothing to say to modify what the Prime Minister said earlier in the evening.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY: Has no other Member of the Government any information to give to the House? The statement was that the French *Chargé d'Affaires* had left Cairo; is that correct?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have no further answer to give.

MR. MONTAGU SCOTT: May I ask whether the telegram received by the Foreign Office this afternoon was not to the effect that the *Chargé d'Affaires* had left a note with the Khedive or Nubar Pasha stating that France retired from the Convention?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I must entirely decline to state the contents of a telegram which I have not in my hands. In matters of this importance it is the duty of everybody to be extremely careful in stating facts, and I must decline to make any further answer.

MR. ONSLOW: Can the right hon. Gentleman state whether there was not a mistake made when the Prime Minister read the telegram about half-past 5 o'clock to-day?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I think not.

MR. ONSLOW: The Prime Minister distinctly stated then that Sir Evelyn Baring had sent a telegram stating that the *Chargé d'Affaires* had left Cairo. Of course, the right hon. Gentleman has not the telegram in his pocket; but can he say whether there was any mistake?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I believe there was no mistake at all in what the Prime Minister said. At all events, I have nothing to add or to modify.

Motion *agreed to.*

House adjourned at half after One o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 27th April, 1885.

MINUTES]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Lunacy * (88).

Second Reading — Lunacy Acts Amendment (60).

Select Committee—Report — Water Companies (Regulation of Powers) * [No. 86].

Committee — Report — Honorary Freedom of Boroughs * (61).

Report — Water Companies (Regulation of Powers) * (21-87).

DOMINION OF CANADA—INSURRECTION IN THE NORTH-WEST TERRITORY.—QUESTION.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: I should like to ask the noble Earl opposite whether he is in a position to give the House any reliable information with regard to the insurrection in Canada? Various accounts have been published, some better, some worse; but, for my own part, I hope matters are not so bad as described, but we shall be glad to hear the real state of things.

THE EARL OF DERBY: I am glad that the noble Earl has put this Question, and I need hardly say that I shall be quite ready to give him all such information on the subject as I possess. I have none very recent. The latest information from official sources is contained in a telegram received yesterday to the following effect:—

"Part of Middleton's force attacked yesterday, the 24th instant, on East Bank, South Saskatchewan. Attack repulsed. Our loss three killed, 34 wounded. General Middleton's force is to continue advance on the 25th. Battleford relieved by Colonel Otter's force. A third force, under Strange, advancing to Edmonton. No opposition expected in that quarter. These forces are considered sufficient to restore order. Police who left Fort Pitt reached Battleford safely."

That is the statement which I have received from Lord Lansdowne. I have seen a statement in the newspapers of a second battle having been fought, and of the defeat of the insurgents. I have endeavoured to ascertain what truth there is in it; but I am not able either to confirm or to deny the report. Nothing is known of it at the Colonial Office. I have telegraphed to Lord Lansdowne for information, but have not yet had time to receive a reply. I dare say I shall receive one by to-morrow.

LUNACY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

(NO. 60.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª." —(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN, in supporting the Bill, expressed his great regret at the absence of the noble Earl (the Earl of Shaftesbury), who had devoted so much of a long and honoured life to the consideration of this question, and to the alleviation of the hard lot of those unhappy beings who were, beyond all controversy, the most afflicted of God's creatures; and he hoped that at a later stage of the Bill the noble Earl would be able to give the House the benefit of his presence and advice. He also wished, at the outset, to return his thanks to the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack for the very ample manner in which he had fulfilled the promise he made last Session, on the strength of which he (the Earl of Milltown) had withdrawn his Motion of Censure on the existing state of the Lunacy Laws. The Bill before the House was a most able and important one, though it was perhaps capable of some amendment, and he trusted it would effect a lasting settlement of the question. He thought it was to be regretted that the Government had not seen their way to vesting compulsorily private-licensed houses in some public body, and so to get rid of that most objectionable element—profit. As long as the profitable system was allowed to continue he feared the public would never be altogether satisfied. At any rate, he hoped this Bill would eventually and speedily lead to the total suppression of the system. Again, there was an absence of any provision that the proprietors of these houses should be properly-qualified and fit persons. That was a point which was well looked after in other countries, and he thought it ought to be provided for in the Bill. Then, again, the Bill contained no provision that the medical officers should be independent persons; and that was a deficiency which, he thought, ought to be supplied. Great complaints were now made that neither the friends nor even the solicitor of a patient were allowed to see him during his confinement. He could not see why that should not be allowed under proper restrictions, and he thought that some provision should be inserted to meet the case. Again, as the law now stood, neither a patient nor his friends were allowed to see the order of incarceration, nor even to know the grounds upon which it was made, and he thought that was a point which ought to be dealt with in the Bill. At present, too, the mode of capture was unfettered by any restrictions whatever. The order of incarceration was a sufficient answer

to anything; any kind of brutality might take place and the police could not interfere. Such a state of affairs should not be allowed to continue. He could not find any proposal in the Bill to increase the number of the Commissioners, who certainly had too much work on their hands. At present all houses in the Metropolitan district were directly under the Commissioners, and they had to visit each house four times in the year together, and twice singly. In the Metropolitan district there were about 8,000 patients; but the Commissioners had also to visit twice a-year all borough and county asylums containing some 70,000 patients, which would show that the work supposed to be done by the Commissioners was absolutely overwhelming. He could not understand why the Bill did not extend to Ireland. The Lunacy Laws of Scotland differed materially from those of England, and therefore he could understand why the Bill should not extend to Scotland; but there was very little difference between the law in England and Ireland, and therefore he thought it would be very desirable to extend the Bill to Ireland. As to the clauses of the Bill, Clause 2 provided that the order for admission, which at the present time could be signed by anyone, must be signed either by a County Court Judge, a stipendiary magistrate, or a justice of the peace. He thought that was a most admirable provision, and he doubted whether anything short of it would have satisfied the public. At the same time he thought it would have been safer to require the signature of two justices. The provisions of the Bill with regard to urgency orders were such that it would be quite possible for a sane person to be incarcerated as insane for seven days. The certificate in these cases was extremely vague, and need only be signed by one medical practitioner, and the order might be given by anyone. Dipsomaniacs were often treated as if they were insane, and yet nothing could be worse for them. If an inebriate were incarcerated as insane for seven days, as he might be under this Bill, the chances were a thousand to one that he would not emerge from his confinement a sane man. Jealous husbands and wives had been known to abuse the powers conferred by the present law in order to obtain the incarceration of the object of their jealousy, and the law as altered by the present Bill would be also liable to great abuse in the same direction. The measure would confer by another clause an extraordinary power on magistrates, who would be able to lock a man up as a lunatic for seven days, and upon a rumour reaching their ears to the effect that he was insane. There was no proper provision in the Bill for the recovery of penalties. He held that a patient on his discharge ought to be able to sue for penalties himself. Another point requiring attention was as to the examination of patients. Where a person should satisfy two justices that a case was a proper one for examination the patient ought forthwith to be examined. The right which in certain circumstances the Bill would give to relatives to take lunatics out of public asylums and to burden the public rates with the cost of their maintenance at home would be liable to great abuse. He objected also to the proposal to give the Secretary of State power to override, in certain cases, the decisions of county or borough justices. In conclusion he begged to thank the House for the kindness with which they had heard him, and to express a hope that the Bill would tend to the improvement of the law, and would add to the already great reputation of the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, in the first place, he had to acknowledge the courteous manner in which the noble Earl (the Earl of Milltown) had spoken of him. He heartily sympathized with the noble Earl's expression of regret that his noble Friend (the Earl of Shaftesbury) should not be present at that time. There was one circumstance connected with the Bill which would prevent him from feeling that satisfaction he would otherwise experience, however successful the Bill might be. A difference of opinion on a very important part of the Bill had made his noble Friend think that after 50 years of invaluable service rendered to the country as Chairman of the Lunacy Commissioners he had better relinquish that office. If it had not been thought necessary to introduce the authority of a magistrate his Lordship might have been still willing, notwithstanding other reasons which might well justify him in declining the labour, to render the same

invaluable services he had hitherto done. He had such admiration for the noble Earl that he could not but regard his resignation of his office as a very serious public loss. During the noble Earl's administration the Law of Lunacy had been completely transformed. The shocking abuses of former times had disappeared, and a system had been substituted which, if not perfect, and if requiring, as he thought undoubtedly it did, amendment in various points, would bear favourable comparison with the Lunacy Law and administration of any other country in the world. At the same time, he and those whom he had consulted thought it was not possible to resist the general opinion of the public, supported by high judicial authority, that the time had come when some intervention of a magistrate was necessary for the satisfactory working of the Law of Lunacy, so as to prevent, as far as practicable, the risk of abuse in treating persons as proper subjects for confinement who might not be so. He did not believe—he had stated it before, and he repeated it now—that such abuses were common; but he did believe that no satisfactory answer had been given to the public sentiment, which required that Parliament should make them as impossible as human regulation could without sacrificing the proper and effective treatment of those who were insane, and especially of those who by early treatment could be cured of their disease. He would now advert to some of the points which the noble Earl had mentioned. With regard to licensed houses, his noble Friend had referred to the opinion which Lord Shaftesbury had frequently expressed as to the vice of the principle on which houses of that kind were conducted for private profit. But he thought he could quote Lord Shaftesbury in favour of the mode proposed in the Bill for dealing with this subject. In 1860 Lord Shaftesbury spoke very strongly against that class of houses. But 17 years later, in 1877, he qualified that opinion to a great extent—he said he adhered to the general opinion which he had formerly expressed; but he was far from thinking that any sudden or violent attempt to suppress those houses would be proper or expedient or for the advantage of the unfortunate class of persons who were to be considered in the matter. Lord Shaftesbury spoke very highly of the best licensed houses, and thought it desirable that they should remain. He thought that measures should be adopted, the tendency of which should be by degrees to get rid of the necessity for that class of houses, and of which the effect would, at all events, be to eliminate the inferior and worse-conducted houses. The Bill before the House had been framed upon that principle; and when the provisions under that head came to be considered he thought they would recommend themselves generally to their Lordships. The reasons for not including Ireland were tolerably obvious. The whole lunacy administration of that country was separate from the lunacy administration of England, and was conducted under its own Acts of Parliament. But when Parliament had approved of amendments in the law of England it would be easy to amend the law for Ireland. At present it would not be convenient to include Ireland in the Bill. With regard to making an order as to the security of the person of a lunatic, the noble Earl had suggested that, as in other cases where authority was given to a stipendiary magistrate, the alternative should be two justices. There seemed to be serious objections to that proposal, one of which was that it might prolong the proceedings in a manner exceedingly undesirable; and another, that if the two justices differed, the whole matter would have to be begun, before other justices, over again. He thought, however, that the Bill might perhaps be improved, by providing that at Quarter Sessions and borough sessions special justices should be appointed to exercise jurisdiction in these matters. He proposed to put an Amendment upon the Paper to that effect unless those of their Lordships who had considered the subject were prepared to point out objections to it which did not at present occur to his mind. He would, when the Bill reached Committee, deal with the other points raised by the noble Earl. Their Lordships would see by the preliminary statement affixed to the Bill that it was proposed to introduce for purposes of reference a Bill consolidating the existing enactments dealing with this matter. That Bill would save their Lordships the trouble of constant reference backwards and forwards to all the Acts of Parliament.

The Lord Chancellor

The next stage of the measure now under consideration would be fixed for this day fortnight, and in the meantime he would have the Consolidation Bill printed, so that their Lordships could see exactly what the present law was.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY wished to support the recommendations of the noble Earl who spoke first (the Earl of Milltown) as to the probationary detention of supposed lunatics in hospitals before sending them to asylums. If that were done, friends would have less hesitation in sending cases in time; and much stress had been laid on the necessity of early medical attention in such cases, and the patients themselves would not feel the same reluctance when going to a hospital as when going to an asylum. Moreover, the bias and tendency of the medical men in hospitals was to effect a cure and discharge the patients, whilst the bias of the medical men of an asylum was to retain the patient.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK said, that while he was entirely in accord with the principle of the Bill, he hoped that it would be placed on the Statute Book in such a form as to remedy, so far as possible, what he believed to be the great defect of the present system—namely, the perfunctory manner in which those who were primarily responsible in cases of lunacy performed their duties.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Monday* the 11*th of May* next.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—AGENTS IN PETTY SESSIONS COURTS.

QUESTION.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE asked Her Majesty's Government, Whether the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, or any other authority, save the magistrates of the district, have power to make regulations for procedure in petty sessions courts in Ireland; and, if so, under what Acts; if so, have any Rules of Procedure been issued and circulated; whether any of those rules prevented any one, save complainant or defendant or a solicitor, from appearing for complainant or defendant; if so, considering that frequently no solicitors live within a long distance of petty sessions courts, and consequently their fees are large, whether Her Majesty's Government do not consider that this is in many cases a harsh and injurious rule that should not be enforced?

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL) said, that under one of the Acts dealing with summary jurisdiction the Lord Lieutenant had the power to make general rules to carry into effect the provisions of the Act. He could not find that any rules had been made on this subject. The fact appeared to be that the matter did not depend upon rules, but upon Statute Law. The restriction of the right of any absent party to appear by others seemed to depend upon Statute Law. The Petty Sessions Act of 1851 provided that parties might have witnesses examined and cross-examined by counsel, or by attorney on their behalf. The Act also provided that a party might appear in person or by agent. An Act of 1882 provided that "agent" should include father, son, husband, wife, or brother, if the permission of the Court had been obtained. Beyond this he did not find that it was open to other than professional advocates to appear; and if the doors were opened wider there would be a danger of a class of persons springing up who might abuse the privilege, and whose conduct in the end might be injurious to the poor clients by whom they were employed.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE was understood to say that formerly it had been within the discretion of the magistrate to hear anyone appearing for a complainant or defendant; and without this privilege of being represented by a friend the poor people might as well be deprived of petty sessions for the hearing of petty cases.

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL) said, the magistrates were always ready to adjourn cases to allow further evidence to be given rather than do injustice to anyone; but as to the meaning of the word "agent," he could not add anything to the definition of the Statute Law.

ARMY (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT)—FORTY-POUNDER GUNS.

QUESTION.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS asked the Under Secretary of State for War, (1.) The number of forty-pounder guns, dis-

tinguishing between breech and muzzle loading, now in use or store; (2.) the number of carriages in store suited to these guns; (3.) the number of carriages capable of conversion for the use of these guns; within what time such conversion could be effected, and its cost; (4.) the charge of powder, initial velocity, and the range of the 40-pounder guns; the present position of the armament of the Volunteer Force; and what was the charge and initial velocity of the latest pattern of field gun? The noble Lord said that the Questions arose out of a discussion which was going on at the United Service Institution with regard to the arming of the Volunteer Corps; and he asked for the information for the guidance of those taking part in that discussion.

THE EARL OF MORLEY said, he should be exceedingly glad to furnish any information he could that might be useful to the gentlemen taking part in the discussion at the United Service Institution; but he thought his noble Friend would admit that it was not expedient to give details of special ordnance stores in possession of the Government. That was a precaution always to be borne in mind; and certainly at the present time, and under existing circumstances, he must decline to give an answer as to the number of carriages and guns of a certain character now in store at the Arsenal. But with regard to the guns in the hands of the Volunteers, he should be happy to give all the information in his power. He believed there were at present 106 40-pounder breech-loading guns with their travelling carriages complete in the hands of Volunteers, distributed over the whole country among between 40 and 50 different Volunteer Corps. This was all the information he should be justified in giving, and in the circumstances it was quite as much as he could be expected to give. With regard to muzzle velocity, the 40-pounder was not a new gun; the charge was 5 lbs. of powder, and the muzzle velocity 1,180 feet. The newest of all the field guns was the 12-pounder breech-loading gun. This gun had not yet been issued to the batteries. The charge was 4 lbs. of powder, and the muzzle velocity was 1,715 feet. In the case of the 13-pounder, the muzzle velocity was 1,560 feet.

The Earl of Wemyss

CENTRAL ASIA — RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—DIPLOMATIC NEGOTIATIONS.

QUESTION.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I am sorry that the noble Earl the Leader of the House has not waited till now. I wish to ask whether it is true, as reported to us, that all decision upon the question at issue between us and the Government of Russia is to be hung up until a gentleman who has got a map and who has left Sir Peter Lumsden arrives in England? That is the rumour which comes to us. Of course, rumours are sometimes strangely altered in coming to us through the Central Chamber. But that is what comes to us from the House of Commons. It is stated that this is what Mr. Gladstone has just announced. Is there anything within the knowledge of the noble Earl to justify that statement?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I really cannot answer the Question without Notice. With regard to the question being hung up, I am not aware that there is anything hung up any more than before. It is in precisely the same position as it was yesterday. I think there must be some misunderstanding. I do not wish to be thought mysterious; but the inquiry refers to a statement made in the other House, and I cannot answer it without Notice.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: It would have been very improper if I had asked this Question of the noble Earl. But I thought that if such large issues were depending upon a map coming from the Frontier of Afghanistan, the noble Earl might perhaps have heard something about it.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: The noble Marquess refers to some statement that has been made in the other House. I do not know what that statement is. That is my reason for not giving an answer to the noble Marquess.

LUNACY BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to consolidate the enactments respecting Lunatics—Was *presented* by The LORD CHANCELLOR; read 1ª. (No. 88.)

House adjourned at a quarter before Six o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 27th April, 1885.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEE — *Report*—Westminster Hall Restoration [No. 166].

SUPPLY—*considered in Committee*—£11,000,000, NAVAL AND MILITARY OPERATIONS, 1885-6 (VOTE OF CREDIT); CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS; Votes 1, 2, and 3.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Resolutions in Committee*—Registration of Voters (Ireland) [Payment of Additional Revising Barristers]; Public Offices Sites [Purchase of Land and Expenses].

Second Reading — Tramways (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1 * [131]; Submarine Telegraph Cables * [136]; Industrial Schools (Ireland) * [96].

Considered as amended—Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 6) * [118]; Local Authorities (Expenses of Conferences) * [88-129].

Third Reading—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) * [120]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 5) * [117]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 7) * [119], and *passed*.

QUESTIONS.

PUBLIC DEPARTMENTS—THE PAYMASTER GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT.

MR. JOHN REDMOND asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Government have come to any decision as to the abolition of the Paymaster General's office; and, whether he has considered the necessity of having four chiefs of Departments, involving an expenditure of about £3,500 per annum, in so small an office?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): A Committee is inquiring into the business of the Paymaster General's Department, but has not yet made its Report. I hope soon to receive it, and in due course the subject must come before Parliament.

ARMY (COMMISSARIAT)—TINNED MEAT.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL asked the Surveyor General of Ordnance, In what respect the tins in which "the bulk of the Australian tinned meat comes to this Country" is unsuited for field service; whether, in the event of the Colonial tins being as suitable as the American, the price not greater and the quality equal, preference is given to supplies raised on British territory; what was the relative amount of American and Colonial tinned meat used in the Army during 1882, 1883, and 1884; and, whether tenders have been invited from Australasian and other British Colonies?

MR. BRAND: Australian meat usually comes in large tins of cylindrical form, whereas for close packing the tins should be four-sided and tapering. Preference would be given, under the conditions the hon. Member names, to supplies raised on British territory, provided the Colonial meat is at the time in England. The relative amount of American and Colonial tinned meat used in the Army was, in round numbers, in 1882, 475,000 lbs. American, and no Colonial; in 1883, 150,000 lbs. American, and 120,000 lbs. Colonial; in 1884, 3,465,000 lbs. American, and 648,000 lbs. Colonial. Tenders have been called for from the agents in this country of producers in the Colonies.

SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND BILL.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, When the Secretary for Scotland Bill is to be introduced in one or other House of Parliament; and, if he will try so to arrange that the administrative part of the Bill (regarding which there is a pretty general agreement) shall not be endangered by the difference of opinion on the education question, but that the latter shall be decided on its merits one way or other, and the Bill proceeded with?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I hope in a few days to introduce the Bill.

TRAMWAYS AND PUBLIC COMPANIES (IRELAND) ACT, 1883—THE MIGRATION CLAUSES.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, To what extent the provisions of the Migration Clause of the Tramways (Ireland) Act have been carried into operation; what Companies have obtained money from the Treasury for the purposes of migration; and how many tenants and cultivators of the soil have benefited by migration and by extension of their holdings; whether it is proposed

to introduce legislation to enable migration to be carried on to a larger extent, especially from the congested districts of the south-west, west, and north-west; whether he has seen that Professor Baldwin considers that migration operations could be conducted successfully without the intervention of Companies of directors and shareholders; and, whether Government is disposed to supply funds for the purpose to trustworthy persons, such as parish clergymen and others, on terms equally favourable with those granted to Companies?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I believe the Migration Clauses of the Tramways Act have so far not been put into operation at all. I have not seen Professor Baldwin's opinion; but the Government are not disposed to extend the Act in that direction to supply funds for the purpose to trustworthy persons, such as parish clergymen and others, on terms equally favourable with those granted to Companies.

POOR LAW (IRELAND) — NEWPORT AND WESTPORT UNIONS—COMPENSATION.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the intention of the Local Government Board for Ireland, on the amalgamation of the Newport Union with that of Westport, to deprive the officers of their situations, without compensation or superannuation, some of them having as many as eighteen years' service; whether such treatment would not be most unjust, and inflict great hardships on the officials who have for many years discharged their respective duties satisfactorily; and, if he will state what the Government purpose doing with reference to these officials?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have nothing to add to the answer which I gave to a Question of the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) on this subject on the 14th instant.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS—SKIBBEREEN UNION.

MR. DEASY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the Local Government Board have received a communication from a guardian of the Skibbereen Union, objecting to the recent elections of chairman, vice-chairman, and deputy vice-chairman, respectively, on the ground that the elections were irregularly carried out; and, whether the Local Government Board will order new elections for the above officers?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It appears that the voting at the first election was equal, and that, by unanimous consent, the election was postponed to a later date, when the three Chairmen were chosen. Two Guardians have since complained of the course pursued; but the Local Government Board see no reason whatever to interfere.

EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART—ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY—CELTIC MANUSCRIPTS.

MR. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What works have been printed by the Royal Academy since 1880 by means of the money received from Parliament under the annual votes "for the researches in connection with Celtic MSS.;" and, what Irish-English MSS. and translations have been published since 1880 by the Royal Academy under the annual grants made to it "for the publication of Celtic MSS.?"

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Secretary of the Academy informs me that since 1880 the grant for researches in connection with Celtic manuscripts has been devoted to the preparation of materials for an Irish-English dictionary, which it will take several years to complete. The Academy have not published any Celtic manuscript since 1880, in which year *The Book of Leinster* was issued; but very considerable progress has been made with *The Book of Ballymote*, a very large manuscript which is in course of publication with Dr. Atkinson as editor.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS—COOTEHILL UNION.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that the clerk of Cootehill Union made the following statement in his letter to the Local Government Board, No. 14,583 — 84, in answer to the allegations made against him by Mr. Owen M'Cabe, candidate, and Rev. F. M'Kenna, P.P. his nominator, paragraph 11:—

"This property" (Carmeen) "is held in trust by the persons named" (Most Rev. Dr. Donnelly, &c.) "who lodged separate statements of claim on a valuation of £119, on which I allowed four votes, &c.;"

if it is a fact that the clerk confirmed the above statement, with 25 others, by solemn oath at the subsequent inquiry, July 8th, 1884, before Mr. Armstrong, Local Government Board inspector; if it is a fact that the clerk did not allow any property votes on the said property of Carmeen, for which the Rev. F. M'Kenna, P.P. Latton, was proxy, and at whose residence the voting paper was left, inasmuch as the clerk alleged, at the counting of votes, that the property voting papers of the townland of Latton were missing, and could not be produced; that the clerk swore at the inquiry, 8th July, he could not find the property voting papers of the townland of Latton at the counting of votes, and of course did not allow them; that the fact that the clerk did not allow any property votes for Carmeen is notorious, having occurred in the board room in the presence of all interested, and sworn to at a public inquiry, and is in the knowledge of the Local Government Board; and, if it is a fact that Mr. Owen M'Cabe and Rev. F. M'Kenna, P.P., have again and again directed in a special manner the attention of the Local Government Board to the contradictory swearing of the clerk in this matter?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Perhaps the hon. Member will kindly postpone this Question till Thursday next. It has been necessary to communicate with the clerk, and his explanation has not yet reached me.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS—KILLESHANDRA.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is he aware that James Grenan, of Aughavasin, Killeshandra, states that Mr. Wm. Hamilton, J.P. is the person who signed or procured to be signed a voting paper at last election of Poor Law guardians for Killeshandra electoral in the name of Captain Beresford, although it was impossible for that gentleman to have signed it; and, whether, if on inquiry he finds the facts as stated, he will take any proceedings against Mr. Hamilton; and, if so, what action?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am not aware of any such state of facts. James Grenan, senior, and James Grenan, junior, both deny that they made any such statement as that imputed, and Mr. William Hamilton, J.P., states that he did not take away the papers, and did not sign them.

FISHERIES (IRELAND)—SALMON WEIR ON THE LENNON, RAMELTON.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, on the River Lennon, near Ramelton, there is a weir over which salmon cannot pass (except in high floods, which are rare in the fishing season) and below this weir a pool about 500 yards in length, in which the owner of the fishery, Sir Augustus Stewart, keeps a boat and net, and whether his employés have for a long time past been in the habit of fishing the pool illegally at night; whether Reports on this subject have been made, without result, to the inspector of the district; and, whether Sir Augustus Stewart is a D.L. of the county Donegal?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The facts are as stated in the Question, except as regards the legality of the course pursued. Sir Augustus Stewart claims to be possessed of a several fishery at the place in question, and that the right has been exercised for the last 50 years, and during time immemorial. There are special exemptions in the Act for cases of this kind, both with respect to fishing within 200 yards of a dam and to fishing at night, which are otherwise illegal.

EXPLOSIVES ACT—ENFORCEMENT OF ACT IN IRELAND.

MR. P. J. POWER asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in view of the fact that the salaries paid to inspectors under the Explosives Act (Ireland) are a heavy and unjust burden on local rates, and that magistrates in Ireland have generally declined to avail of the services of the constabulary for the purposes of this Act, he will recommend that measures be taken to have the duties of inspectors under said Act discharged by members of the constabulary?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: A Circular was issued in October last to

local authorities in Ireland — who are not in all cases the magistrates at Petty Sessions—informing them that they may appoint members of the Constabulary to act as Inspectors under the Explosives Act. I am not aware what number of constables have been so far appointed; and in the opinion of the Irish Government a sufficient time has not yet elapsed to enable a correct idea to be formed of the extent to which local authorities will avail themselves of the concession.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ATHY BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

MR. LEWIS asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, at a recent meeting of the Athy Board of Guardians, the majority of that body appointed as persons to make out the lists of voters for the parishes in the union seven persons, the Secretary of the National League Branches in each parish; whether the Board has not, at a subsequent meeting, agreed to remunerate them; whether such appointment was made in spite of the statement of the clerk that the usual course was to appoint the rate collectors for the purpose, but that the preference was given to the Secretaries of the National League as such; whether the appointment was made without notice, and notwithstanding the suggestion that a fortnight's notice of the intention to appoint the Secretaries of the League; and, whether the Local Government Board in Ireland will take steps to recall such appointment and to secure the appointment of proper parties?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I understand the Athy Board of Guardians have selected persons who are not the rate collectors to assist the clerks of the Union in the preparation of the voters lists, and the Local Government Board have communicated with them, pointing out the irregularity of the proceedings.

LAND REGISTRY OFFICE—RETURNS.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD asked the Secretary to the Treasury, What is the number of estates placed on the register on first registration in the Office of Land Registry during the half-year to 30th June, 1884, and the half-year to 31st December, 1884?

MR. HIBBERT: The number of estates placed on the register in the first six months of 1884 was 215, of which two only were on first registration; in the second six months the figures were 230 and four.

NAVY—ARMAMENT FOR SHIPS COMPLETING FOR SEA.

MR. W. H. SMITH asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If he is assured that a complete equipment of guns and their mountings or carriages, and torpedoes, will be ready in ample time for the fourteen new ships of war in addition to the *Conqueror* and *Colossus*, which are to be completed for sea before the end of the present financial year?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: It is fully expected that the guns, gun mountings, torpedoes, and torpedo carriages will be ready in time for the whole of these ships.

NAVY (SHIPS)—COST OF SHIPS BUILDING.

SIR EDWARD J. REED asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether he has examined the recent amended Return which sets forth the cost of Her Majesty's Ships laid down since March 1880; and, if so, whether he is able to confirm the statement made by the Civil Lord of the Admiralty to the House, on Monday last, to the effect that "the Return had been very carefully drawn up, and might be accepted by the House as correct," or whether the alleged cost was, in every case, below the actual cost of the completed ship?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: The figures have been examined and found to give correctly the cost of hulls and engines, with fittings. Masts, yards, rigging, and stores, and the incidental and establishment charges are not included. The Return is similar to those formerly given on the Motion of the late Mr. Laird.

MR. CARBUTT: I wish to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether there is any truth in the report which appeared in *The Observer* of yesterday, that the Government have bought an iron-clad from the Italian Government; and, if so, will he state what are the armaments of that iron-clad?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: I cannot reply to the Question of the hon. Member without Notice.

MR. CARBUTT: I beg to give Notice, as the Secretary to the Admiralty does

not know whether an iron-clad has been bought, that I shall repeat the Question to-morrow.

CIVIL SERVICE (PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATURE) — MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON, INSPECTOR OF FISHERIES.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the statement in *The Belfast News Letter* that Mr. William Johnston, one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Fisheries in Ireland, had written to the Orange Grand Master, "expressing his readiness, if called upon, to contest one of the divisions of Belfast at the General Election," and that an uncontradicted statement has also been published, announcing that Mr. Johnston has been selected as the Tory candidate for one of the divisions of Down; is this the same official from whom a former Irish Secretary stated he had obtained a written pledge that he would abstain from politics while in office; had Mr. Johnston previously been several times cautioned by the Irish Executive for inflammatory speeches; is the Lord Lieutenant aware of the existence of the Treasury Minute of 12th November last, wherein the First Lord, referring to those civil servants who "announce themselves publicly as candidates for seats in the House," states it to be the usage of the Department that a civil servant should resign "as soon as he issues his address to the electors, or in any other manner announces himself as a candidate," and that this regulation has now been made an Order in Council; has Mr. William Johnston resigned office as fishery inspector; is it the fact that, although several weeks have elapsed since the announcement of his candidature, no steps have been taken by Earl Spencer to enforce the Order in Council; and, what is the explanation of the Irish Government?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Mr. Johnston states that he has not announced himself publicly as a candidate for a seat in the House of Commons, nor has he issued any address, nor, as he believes, in any way infringed the Order in Council. He also states that he has not been selected as a candidate for one of the divisions of Down. The case will be dealt with by the Irish Government in strict accordance with the Order in Council should the occasion arise.

MR. HEALY: Has the right hon. Gentleman seen a letter from Mr. Johnston in *The Belfast Evening News*, in which the following passage occurs:—

"The 12th of July is approaching, and all over Ulster, in view of the approaching election, it will have a national importance. On that occasion I hope to take my place amongst my Orange brethren, and I hope hereafter to gave emphasis to my views when Member for South Belfast."

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have not heard of it, and I can only say it is somewhat inconsistent with the letters I have received from Mr. Johnston. I have said that as soon as it appears that Mr. Johnston is taking such a position as a candidate for Parliament as to bring him within the Order of Council the Government will act upon it.

MR. SEXTON asked whether Mr. Johnston had recently broken the pledges which he formerly gave, and had made political speeches?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have not seen anything of the kind.

MR. HEALY asked whether one of the terms of the Order in Council was not to the effect—"As soon as any civil servant issues his address to the electors, or in any other way announces himself as a candidate;" and whether Mr. Johnston had not fulfilled that condition when he stated that he hoped to be the Member for South Belfast?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Mr. Johnston, in his letter, says expressly that he has not announced himself publicly as a candidate for a seat in the House of Commons, nor issued any address, nor in any way infringed the Order in Council.

MR. HEALY gave Notice that he would call attention to the matter.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—REVISED CODE, 1885—EDUCATION IN THE HIGHLANDS.

MR. MUNRO-FERGUSON asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether it is proposed, under the Code for 1885, to make any special provision for bettering the state of education in the Highlands, and to lighten the burden of the school rates in those districts?

MR. MUNDELLA: Yes; Sir. We have prepared a Minute, which we shall lay on the Table in a day or two, together with a Memorandum explaining its operation, which will have the effect of promoting education and lightening the burden of school rates in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—EDUCATION LOANS.

MR. ISAAC WILSON asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether he has received any remonstrance in reference to the Treasury Minute of the 26th of February relative to Education loans; and, whether he will urge upon the Treasury the importance of some extension of the term of repayment from thirty-five to fifty years?

MR. MUNDELLA: I believe one School Board has remonstrated against the recent Treasury Minute; but I am assured by the Treasury that they are unable, without public loss, to extend the terms of the loans or reduce the rate of interest. Loans can now be made for a term of 35 years at 3½ per cent, and for 50 years at 4 per cent. This is a reduction of ½ per cent on the first, and ¼ per cent on the second term.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REGISTRATION OF VOTERS) (IRELAND)—DONEGAL UNION.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with regard to the refusal of the clerk of the Donegal Union to perform the duty of serving notices cast upon him by the Franchise Act, Whether the Irish Local Government Board have sent an inspector to Donegal to secure that persons entitled to the Parliamentary Franchise are not excluded from the register by reason of the default of the clerk, and if an inspector has been despatched, what report has been received from him?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: There is no necessity to send an Inspector to make inquiries into this matter. The clerk is proceeding to discharge his duties under the Act.

MR. SEXTON asked whether the Local Government Board would issue a Circular to the Boards of Guardians pointing out the consequences that would ensue from delay?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, the Government had issued a Circular.

MR. SEXTON asked whether the right hon. Gentleman had seen the statement that the clerk of the Sligo Union had refused to proceed unless they paid him first £40.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No; Sir. I have not.

EGYPT (THE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE)—THE CAMEL CORPS.

COLONEL MILNE-HOME asked the Secretary of State for War, If, now that warlike operations in the Soudan are suspended, the Cavalry portions of the "Camel Corps" will be permitted immediately to rejoin their regiments, or be sent for service elsewhere as Cavalry?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: From communications I have had with Lord Wolseley, I infer that the consideration of this question can only take place after the concentration of the troops towards the North has made a certain degree of progress.

ARMY—HEALTH OF THE ARMY—PHTHISIS.

SIR HENRY FLETCHER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been called to an article, which appeared recently in *The United Service Gazette*, on the subject of Phthisis in the Army; and, whether the statistics quoted in that article, of the serious losses to the Army every year caused by that disease are correct; and, if so, what steps have been taken to test the value of the alleged discovery of a successful scientific treatment of this most fatal disease?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Assuming that the article referred to is one which appeared in *The United Service Gazette* of the 28th of February last, I have to say that the figures quoted are individually accurate. The measure, however, of the annual loss from phthisis is the deaths *plus* the discharges from that disease; whereas the writer has added the invaliding home, which is, in effect, taking the invalided soldiers twice over. Regrettable as is the loss to the Army from phthisis, there is no proof given that the loss of life would be materially less among a body

of equal strength of men in other employment, drawn from the same class, and at the same ages. The ages for military employment are those at which consumption is ordinarily the most fatal. The Army Medical Staff are only too glad to adopt every measure of proved efficacy in combating this terrible disease; but the nature of the remedy referred to in the newspaper article under consideration is not stated specifically enough to enable the authorities to say whether it has been tried, or should be tried.

NAVY—SCARLATINA IN THE "BRITANNIA" TRAINING SHIP.

MR. TOTTENHAM asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If he can state the result of the inquiry into the causes of the late outbreak of scarlatina among the cadets on board the *Britannia* at Dartmouth; if it is the case that there was, and still is, only one untrained female nurse in the cottage hospital, notoriously ignorant of the proper mode of treating persons suffering from serious illness, inattentive to her duty, negligent of those under her care, and disapproved of by the medical officers; if it is true that this woman was heard to desire a cadet suffering from scarlatina, and who was seized with a violent attack of croup, to stop coughing, as he was doing it on purpose, and whether at this time she had as many as ten cadets under her sole care; if it is the case that there was in the cadet hospital only one trained and competent nurse to attend to twenty cadets, all suffering from scarlatina; whether, during the outbreak, there was any system of daily medical inspection to ascertain whether any further cadets had developed suspicious symptoms, or whether it is true that in many cases those boys who were sickening did not go into the sick bay till the symptoms were fully developed, and till compelled to do so by their comrades; if it is the case that there is only a screen between the sick bay where the suspected cases were located and the parts of the ship to which the ship's crew and other cadets had access, and whether the whole of the cadets were compelled to go into a cold bath each morning, without previously ascertaining whether they were in a fit state for such treatment, and in some cases took the cold bath the very day of being sent to hospital with scarlatina; if it is the case that two boys were sent on shore to hospital at 9 p.m. in an open boat, without any additional covering or clothing, with their temperature at 104 and 102, and with the rash fully developed, while another was kept on board till he was so ill that he fell down when walking up from the boat, and had to be carried into hospital; and, in the case of the last of the thirty cadets who were attacked, whether he was kept under supervision all day, and not sent to hospital till the evening, in consequence of the absence of the medical officer; and, if he will cause a searching inquiry to be instituted into these allegations?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: The hon. Member will scarcely look for a categorical answer to the numerous Questions which he has put on the Paper with reference to the recent outbreak of scarlatina in the *Britannia*. I shall be glad to lay a full Report on the Table. It cannot but be a source of satisfaction to know that, out of 33 cases, none proved fatal.

EGYPT AND FRANCE—SEIZURE OF THE "BOSPHORE EGYPTIEN"—RUPTURE OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Ministers have now received information to the effect that the French Chargé d'Affaires has, on behalf of the French Republic, threatened to break off diplomatic relations with Egypt, and to withdraw from the financial agreement and guarantee now before Parliament?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I am happy to state, in answer to the Question of the hon. Member, that Her Majesty's Government are on the point of coming to an arrangement on this question satisfactory to France, Egypt, and themselves. The negotiations between the French Ambassador and Lord Granville have been conducted on conciliatory and courteous terms, without any intimation being given of a character which might have raised serious obstacles on our part.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Will the noble Lord give no further information on the subject?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I have already stated that we are about on the point of arriving at a settlement.

MR. O'KELLY: Does that include reparation to France?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I have said that I cannot give details.

EGYPT (AFFAIRS OF THE SOUDAN)—THE KASSALA GARRISON.

MR. MONTAGU SCOTT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government have received any information from Kassala; and, if any measures will be taken to rescue the besieged garrison?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir Evelyn Baring has reported that the garrisons of Amadib, Senhit, and Galabat have been successfully relieved, but that up to the 22nd instant there was no further news of Kassala. I have already stated that the relief of Kassala does not come within the sphere of the projected military operations.

FISHERIES (IRELAND)—BOARD OF CONSERVATORS, COLERAINE DISTRICT.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that the working licensed fishermen of Lough Neagh, upwards of three hundred in number, complain that they have power to elect only four out of twenty-four members of the Board of Conservators of the Coleraine district; whether the total number of licences of all kinds issued annually in that district is not more than about four hundred; what proportion of the funds administered by the Board of Conservators is derived from the licence duty paid by the working fishermen; whether the fishermen represent that some of the Conservators, being themselves the owners of salmon fisheries on the Bann, between Lough Neagh and the sea, are hostile to the industry of the working men who fish the lake, and have caused the institution of regulations which impede and harass the working men to such an extent as to deprive them of the means of subsistence; whether the fishermen claim that Lough Neagh should be constituted a separate district; whether, the voting for elections of members of the present Board being open, the water bailiffs are in the habit of using intimidation to induce the working fishermen to give their votes for certain candidates; whether the fishermen declare that the loss of the lives of four of their body in the Lough, on the 26th November last, was caused by the want of a suitable landing place; and, whether the Inspectors of Irish Fisheries will hold a public inquiry into, and make a report upon, the several complaints in question.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No complaints on any of these matters have reached the Government or the Inspectors of Fisheries within recent years. The proper course would be for the parties who consider themselves aggrieved to address a Memorial to the Lord Lieutenant, setting out the particulars of their complaint, and a decision would then be come to as to whether cause is shown for a public inquiry.

COLLIERIES—EVICTION OF MINERS AT DENABY COLLIERY.

MR. BROADHURST (for MR. BURT) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to the eviction of a large number of miners and their families from their houses at Denaby Main Colliery; whether he is aware that when a workman obtains employment at the colliery named he is compelled to live in a house belonging to the Company, provided the Company have a house unoccupied, even though the workman may be able to obtain a better and cheaper house elsewhere; whether he is aware that the workmen are forced to sign an agreement to allow the rent to be deducted from their wages; and, whether, if the facts be as stated, he is prepared to deal with the subject by fresh legislation, so as to prevent an infringement of the spirit, if not the letter, of the Truck Act?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, he had received a Report from the Inspector of the district in which this colliery was situated, and it was to the effect that no pressure had been brought to bear upon the colliers to induce them to occupy the houses belonging to the Colliery Company. It seemed to be a condition that if the men occupied those houses the rent would be deducted from their wages. Under these circumstances, it appeared to him (Sir William Harcourt) that there was no infringement of the Truck Act.

NAVY—STATE OF THE NAVY—NOTICE OF MOTION (SIR EDWARD J. REED).

SIR EDWARD J. REED asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will name a day upon which he will enable me to move my proposed Resolution expressive of the anxiety of this House respecting the state of the Navy?

MR. GLADSTONE: I think that my hon. Friend, notwithstanding that he has put this Question on the Paper, will not be surprised if I tell him that I have no such power. At the present time it is entirely beyond my power to name a day for such a purpose in the present state of the engagements of the House. The Navy is largely involved in the debates we have had for two nights, and is also largely involved in the important proposal which will come before the House to-night. After that proposal is disposed of, if my hon. Friend should still think it important, when we come to make our arrangements with regard to the Business of the Session—and the time for that, I hope, is very close at hand—it will be quite open to him to renew the Question.

SIR EDWARD J. REED gave Notice that he would renew his Question after the Vote of Credit.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—DIPLOMATIC NEGOTIATIONS—REFERENCE TO ARBITRATION.

MR. GOURLEY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in the event of Her Majesty's Government being unable to adjust their existing difficulties with His Imperial Majesty the Emperor and Government of Russia, he will endeavour to bring about a reference of all questions in dispute to the President and Government of the United States?

MR. GLADSTONE: This Question is substantially a renewal of Questions which have been put by hon. Members, and I can only answer in the same general terms. I must ask hon. Members who have put these Questions to be content for the present with that answer, and with the assurance that we are quite sensible of the heavy responsibility under which we lie to maintain the honour and good faith of the country, and, on the other hand, to use every means consistent with that object.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—SIR PETER LUMSDEN'S TELEGRAM.

MR. ONSLOW asked the First Lord of the Treasury, With reference to paragraph 6 of General Lumsden's telegram—

"General Komaroff states 'Afghan audacity and arrogance increased by degrees.' Reply: It may have been so, but, if so, it was entirely caused by Russian action, as the Afghans did all they could to avoid collision, and it was solely owing to their patience and forbearance, during two months of incessant irritation, that peace has been preserved so long;"

and, whether the Government had any intimation from Sir Peter Lumsden, or from any other source, of this "incessant irritation;" and, if so, what action Her Majesty's Government took on receipt of this information?

MR. GLADSTONE: My answer is that from inquiry I find that there has been a statement of a somewhat vague and general character of this kind from Sir Peter Lumsden. It is very vague and general, and it has been duly referred to Sir Peter Lumsden for explanation.

MR. ONSLOW: Has there been any answer from St. Petersburg to the representations of Her Majesty's Government?

MR. GLADSTONE: Anything material and intelligible we have endeavoured to make known to the House; but I doubt whether we could go further until the time comes—if it should come—when it would be proper that the House should see the whole mixed matter of these telegrams altogether, and have the entire question before it.

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH (IRELAND) THE ARCHBISHOPRIC OF DUBLIN—MR. ERRINGTON'S MISSION.

MR. SEXTON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If it is true, as positively asserted by the Rome correspondent of *The Standard*, that the British Government have caused representations to be made by Mr. George Errington, M.P. to the Sovereign Pontiff, with the object of preventing the appointment by His Holiness of the Very Reverend Dr. Walsh, Vicar Capitular of the Catholic See of Dublin, to be the Archbishop of that See?

MR. GLADSTONE: In answer to this Question I have to say that the Cabinet

have never, so far as I am aware, had any cognizance of any communication between Mr. Errington and His Holiness the Pope, and certainly not upon the occasion to which the Question refers. If I am asked whether any individual Member of the Government has used any such representations, as distinct from the Cabinet, my reply is that I am not aware of it.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to give Notice that I shall call attention, on the Vote for the Foreign Office, to this matter, and endeavour to ascertain whether any Member of the Government has caused representations to be made to the Holy See in reference to the internal government of the Catholic Church.

PARLIAMENT — PUBLIC BUSINESS — CENTRAL ASIA — RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN — DIPLOMATIC NEGOTIATIONS.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish to ask the Prime Minister, in regard to the course of Business this evening, Whether he will be willing to agree, as soon as he has made his statement, to the adjournment of the debate, so that there may be time to consider what course ought to be taken?

MR. GLADSTONE: I am in very great doubt whether that request will be made after the statement is made; but I certainly can enter into no preliminary arrangement on the subject. Probably the right hon. Gentleman will ask me whether I have any further intelligence with regard to the telegrams from Sir Peter Lumsden. The state of the case is this—Sir Peter Lumsden has from time to time transmitted certain pieces of intelligence partaking very much, on account of his position, of the nature of rumour, and sometimes apparently altogether of the nature of rumour, with respect to which we have referred to St. Petersburg whenever there appeared a case for doing so. On Saturday we had a telegram from Sir Peter Lumsden, in which he states that he has instructed Mr. Stephen, whose name is probably known to many Members of the House, to leave for London, in order to convey to Lord Granville a map and detailed despatch of all the circumstances connected with the Russian attack on the Afghans at Penjdeh, as also with a view of communicating to him the actual position of affairs. I think it very doubtful whether we shall receive any isolated information which it would be desirable to lay before the House on the point. It is with great satisfaction I have heard of the mission of Mr. Stephen. The date of his arrival here I am not able to fix, because I do not know exactly the time the journey may occupy.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I wish to ask the Prime Minister whether he can state now if a despatch by M. de Giers, which appeared in all the English newspapers of the 23rd, and which threw the responsibility for the unfortunate affair at Penjdeh on Sir Peter Lumsden's escort, and on the meeting between the Viceroy and the Ameer—I wish to ask whether this despatch is authentic or not?

MR. GLADSTONE: I believe this Question was replied to on a former day. My noble Friend the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs stated that it would not be expedient for us to give any answer in regard to that subject at the present time.

MR. E. STANHOPE: Are we right in supposing that Mr. Stephen has started from Meshed, or is he still with Sir Peter Lumsden?

MR. GLADSTONE: I am not able to answer that Question. The telegram was, I think, stated by me in effect. I cannot tell whether at the moment of the despatch of this telegram he was with Sir Peter Lumsden or not.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Can the right hon. Gentleman say when Mr. Stephen may be expected?

MR. GLADSTONE: We will make inquiry about the matter.

MR. RITCHIE: I wish to ask whether the Government propose to suspend and postpone the negotiations with Russia on this question till Mr. Stephen arrives?

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir.

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND) BILL.

MR. HEALY: Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister if it is intended to take the Irish Registration Bill further in Committee to-night?

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION) BILL.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON asked, Whether, in the event of the Report stage of

the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill being concluded on Tuesday, the Government intended to take Wednesday for their Business?

MR. GLADSTONE said, he was told that there was no probability of the Report of the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill being finished on Tuesday.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

VOTE OF CREDIT—DIVISION OF THE VOTE.—RESOLUTION.

MR. GLADSTONE, in moving that the Speaker do now leave the Chair, said: Sir, I think that it would be in accordance with the course usually pursued by the House on these occasions that we should go into Committee on the Vote of Credit, and that upon getting into Committee I should propose the Vote and state to the House such considerations as I think bear upon the question whether the House should grant the Vote or not. I regret that the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) proposes to raise as a preliminary question the division of the Vote of Credit, and to ask the House to affirm that the expenses on account of the Soudan Expedition shall be considered separately from those on account of military and naval expenditure. Having this proposal before me, what I intend to do is as follows—to state very briefly indeed the reasons why I hope that Motion may not be addressed to the House. I may succeed in that object, or the hon. Member may persist in pressing the Motion on the House. If the debate should become general and broader questions are raised, and there is a desire for further information as to the general merits of the Vote, I should have no alternative but to state to the House what I had intended to say on the Vote itself. At present, I will only speak on the question of the division of the Vote. I have no hesitation in admitting that where two Votes are proposed in the nature of Votes of Credit for Services which are not only distinct, but which are likely to remain distinct until they are respectively accomplished, the proper course is to submit those sums as separate Votes of Credit, and to ask a separate authority from the House to deal with each, so that the money granted for each may be applied to that for which it was granted, and not for the other. But the consideration which has led us to submit this sum in one Vote is of an entirely practical character. It is that, although in their apparent objects these Votes are separate, yet in their possible application they are not separate. I have before stated to the House that under no circumstances would the Government take upon itself to apply to the Soudan Expedition the Votes we are about to ask under the head of special preparations; but I reserved entirely, and I hope the House may approve our reserving, the discretion to apply the money taken for the Soudan Services to purposes which would fall under the head of special preparations. The very ground on which we make our proposal with regard to the Votes for the Soudan Services is that the grant admits, and even, to some extent, contemplates, the application of a portion of the money for what we now know as special preparations. Under those circumstances, it would be very inconvenient that we should be tied either to spend in the Soudan money not required for purposes in the Soudan, or else that we should be under the necessity, before we could use any of these moneys granted by Parliament for the special preparations, which we deem to be of the highest material importance, of again giving Notice, again raising debate, and again proposing a separate Vote of Credit for the purposes for which we ask special preparation. Well, Sir, that appears to us to be a reasonable view of the case; and, if it is not, I must put it to the House that if it is not distinctly unreasonable in the view of the House, nothing could be more inexpedient than that, upon a question which is one of practical convenience rather than of distinct principle, we should go to an issue with anything like lengthened discussion, and with division of Party forces in face of the world, and at the present moment, and in the present circumstances of the Empire. I thought, Sir, that I had pointed out that a perfectly unexceptionable way of raising the discussion was reserved to any Gentleman by moving the diminution of the Vote

in the Committee; but I do not dwell on that. I hope the House will not see ground for entertaining even that Motion. I sincerely hope that there will not be a disposition to press the Amendment now before us. It would certainly be our duty to resist it; and I think it would be far more convenient that we should be allowed to go into Committee, and that I should be allowed to make my statement. The right hon. Gentleman (Sir Stafford Northcote), if he saw cause, or any other, would then either demand time or take whatever course he pleases; but we should have, at any rate, a single question before us, and we should not be divided at the very threshold of the matter by discussion on a point of procedure, with respect to which I think it is hardly to be doubted that we have reserved to ourselves reasonable discretion in asking the House to vote this sum in such a way that moneys granted *primâ facie* for the purposes of the Soudan may, should it appear to be practicable, be applied for the purposes of the special preparations. I move that you, Sir, now leave the Chair.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR, in rising to move—

"That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that the Vote of Credit to be submitted in Committee of Supply on account of the Soudan Expedition should be considered separately from the Vote of Credit to be submitted on account of other Military and Naval expenditure,"

said, he could assure his right hon. Friend that in putting his Amendment on the Paper he was not at all actuated by Party motives. Nothing of the kind was contemplated. He had no particular personal desire to press his Motion. In order to ascertain whether it was necessary to take any preliminary objections to the Vote, he had consulted the authorities of the House. His only motive in submitting his Amendment was to secure, if possible, a clear and intelligible discussion of the two very different matters proposed to be submitted to the judgment of the House. He objected very much to the Votes being so proposed, because he believed it involved an entire departure from a long line of precedents, and might be fraught with mischievous consequences. There had been, since the Crimean War, an almost uninterrupted series of Votes of Credit; and every single one of them, down to this one, was taken for a separate Service. The present proposal of the Government involved a departure. He instanced the Votes of Credit for South Africa, for the Abyssinian War, and the Vote of Credit in 1870, when there was war in Europe. Votes of Credit in those days were given under rules much less stringent than existed now. His main contention, however, was that the Vote for the Soudan should not be a Vote of Credit at all, but a Supplementary Estimate. The Vote for £11,000,000 was divided into two parts, and these were again sub-divided. As to the £4,500,000 for the Soudan, after making allowances for all the demands that the Prime Minister had enumerated, including even the Nile steamers, there was a balance of £2,750,000. This was for military expenditure; but there was to be no expedition to Khartoum, and there were to be no further operations in the Soudan. It would be easy for the able official accountants to give an approximate idea of what proportion of this balance would be needed for the cost of the occupation of Suakin by the British or Indian troops. Then, as to the £6,500,000 for special preparations. The naval expenditure was to consist of £2,500,000, and the Prime Minister told them how that was to be spent—in torpedoes and guns for the Navy. Now, what the Prime Minister was asking for was that not only should the £4,000,000 under "special preparations" be appropriated to military expenditure, but that, without any definite authorization, he should be able to draw upon the £2,750,000 nominally taken for the Soudan, but which it was calculated would never be wanted for the Soudan. Thus, a sum of £6,750,000 was asked for for the Army, to be disposed of in any way the Government liked. Why? Because their mismanagement of the Army administration had been so grievous and glaring that it was the only way they could possibly find for covering the deficits in the Army Estimates. By the alteration of the rule applicable to this matter, the Government had been able to elude financial scrutiny during the past few years. Upon the authority of the Accountant

General, he could state that when once a Vote of Credit had been agreed to the House parted with all its control over the expenditure of the amount of that Vote. So much was this the case, that in 1879, in a letter printed at the end of the Appropriation Accounts of that year, the Lords of the Treasury said—

"Votes of Credit are not current only for the year in which they are taken, and my Lords make it a rule to substitute for them wherever possible Supplementary Estimates. These latter leave less discretion to the spending Departments."

In 1879, when a Vote of Credit was agreed to in reference to the war in South Africa, the Comptroller General was unable to certify that the amount of money voted for that war had been actually expended for that purpose, and not for general purposes. From a statement made by the Prime Minister, it appeared to be perfectly competent for the Government to make a reasonably close approximation to the expenditure which still remained to be incurred in connection with the Soudan. The Government had, therefore, all the materials before them for proposing a Supplementary Estimate instead of a Vote of Credit. The presenting of such an Estimate would be in accordance with the advanced financial arrangements of the country, with the strong recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee, and with the rules laid down by the Treasury itself, and to be observed by the spending Departments when asking for sums on account like the present. The Prime Minister had told the House last week that he would give them an assurance that no portion of the Vote of Credit to be taken for the Soudan Service should be appropriated for the other Service. He, for one, feared that the language of the right hon. Gentleman on the present occasion would somewhat detract from that feeling of confidence with which hon. Members might otherwise have been inclined to look back to the right hon. Gentleman's utterances of last week. Before this question was disposed of, he trusted that three right hon. Gentlemen opposite, who were experienced Parliamentarians—some known for their political consistency, and some less remarkable for that quality—would take the trouble to look over the speeches which they had severally delivered in a famous debate in 1878. The right hon. Gentlemen to whom he referred were the Members for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), and for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), and the present Prime Minister. On the occasion to which he referred, the present Opposition brought forward a proposal similar to that now introduced—namely, a Vote of £6,000,000—to enable the Government of the day to make a show, as was thought right and proper, before the world, in view of certain hostilities which they anticipated would occur. He did not know that he should put the House to the trouble of dividing upon his Amendment, because he believed that the end he had in view would be fully satisfied by his drawing attention to the technical question. He had taken the course he had done because he was somewhat afraid that it might be ruled that the Motion he had placed upon the Paper could not be put from the Chair, and that it could not be brought forward in Committee of Supply. He begged to move that, in the opinion of that House, it was desirable that the Vote of Credit to be submitted in Committee of Supply on account of the Soudan Expedition should be considered separately from the Vote of Credit to be submitted on account of other military and naval expenditure.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND said, he begged to second the Amendment. He understood that the hon. Member (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) who had moved it did not desire to go to a division, nor did he (Sir Henry Holland) desire to do so; but he seconded the Motion as a protest against the course—the unprecedented course—adopted by the Government in moving one Vote of Credit for two distinct services, one of which should have been provided for by a Supplemental Estimate. This question of Votes of Credit and Supplemental Estimates had many times been discussed in the House and before Public Accounts Committees, the object, of course, being to give to the House as large a power as possible over the expenditure, and full means of ascertaining and checking it; and in 1880 the point was closely considered by the Public Accounts Committee which sat in that year, and he would venture to read to the House one paragraph of their Report—

"Your Committee have arrived at the opinion that in all cases of special service, where the Department can make a fairly definite Estimate of the Service, and of the general head under which the proposed expenditure will mainly fall, it is desirable that a Supplementary Estimate should be presented, as in the case of the Indian Native troops; and that Votes of Credit should, as a rule, be only resorted to when from the nature of the services to be performed it is very difficult, if not impossible, to give any fairly approximate Estimate of the amount required."

Now, the hon. Member who moved this Amendment with so much ability had shown beyond all question that it was perfectly possible to make a very fair Estimate for the Soudan expenses; and a Supplementary Estimate should, therefore, have been presented, and not a Vote of Credit asked for. He was quite aware that in many cases a Vote of Credit was absolutely necessary, and there was less objection to such a Vote now than there used to be, as the expenditure under it was so much more closely watched; but he feared that a great blow would be struck at Votes of Credit if proceedings of this kind were to be sanctioned. All precedent pointed to this—that a Vote of Credit should be confined to one special and separate Service. He certainly had understood the Prime Minister to say some days ago that though this Vote of Credit applied to two Services, the money asked for in respect of one Service should not be applied to the other; but it now appeared that the money asked for for the Soudan Expedition might be applied for the Special Preparation Service.

MR. GLADSTONE: That, Sir, is a point of very great importance upon which I do not wish to be misunderstood. I will venture to say that I can hardly have been misreported in the very careful words I used on the occasion to which the hon. Gentleman refers. I then gave a most distinct pledge that we should not apply to the Soudan any of the money voted for the special preparations. I gave no pledge whatever in the converse sense. On the contrary, we have always stated that our policy was to hold the Forces in the Soudan available for service elsewhere.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND said, he was sure the Prime Minister would acquit him of any wish to misrepresent what had been said. He had only stated what he had understood; and he must add that when the Prime Minister said that the Soudan money might be applied to the other Service, it was not a great stretch of imagination to suppose that the converse treatment of the money voted would also be allowed. He would not detain the House any longer, but he ventured to think that this kind of Vote of Credit for two Services was without precedent, and should not be allowed to pass without a strong protest.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that the Vote of Credit to be submitted in Committee of Supply on account of the Soudan Expedition should be considered separately from the Vote of Credit to be submitted on account of other Military and Naval expenditure,"—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I do not feel that I am competent to deal with the speech of the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) in regard to the financial argument of which he made use; but if the House should desire that this question should be fully discussed, my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer and others will deal with that part of the subject. I will now endeavour to state to the House the extreme inconvenience, amounting almost to impracticability, which would ensue from following the course pursued by the hon. Member for Queen's County. Probably the House will be of opinion that the hon. Member has not been very successful in quoting precedents. He referred to the year 1878, when he said there were complications in Europe and in South Africa; but I did not understand him to say that separate Votes were taken in that year. Even if that were the case, the House will perceive that the question of that year was altogether distinct from the present one. In regard to the alleged precedent of 1870, the hon. Member did not say that in that case two separate Votes of Credit were moved. The hon. Member only referred to the Report of the Committee on Public Accounts, which stated that the extremely irregular and objectionable practice had been followed in 1874 of applying sums in the Vote of Credit for the Abyssinian War Votes long before in the payment

of the liabilities of that year. Altogether, the hon. Member's argument appears to me to be rather against Votes of Credit than an argument in support of the particular proposition that this Vote of Credit ought to be divided into two parts. Before we laid this Vote of Credit upon the Table we considered the alternative measures of procedure, and we adopted deliberately the course we have adopted, without any political object whatever, and with a view to the financial convenience of the Services and of the War Office. We certainly did not adopt that course with the view of withholding any information from the House. In the statement accompanying the Vote of Credit, the Government has placed the House in possession of as full information as they are able to give. Neither did they adopt this course in order to prevent the House raising any issue it chose, for that that could easily be done is abundantly evidenced by the Notice of Motion given by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). The reasons which influenced the Government are briefly these. The general preparations determined upon by the Government contemplate the employment elsewhere of a very large portion of the Forces either now in the Soudan, or which may have been raised for the operations there. The extra cost of the Force which would thus be released would cease to be a charge in the Soudan operations. Large quantities of supplies and stores have already been ordered and despatched to Egypt. So long as the troops are engaged in Egypt these stores, although the troops may be available for service elsewhere, will continue to be charged for the preparations made for the Soudan. It will be impossible, under the system of the War Office accounts, to break up these charges in the accounts and to distinguish the part chargeable to the garrisons left in Egypt and the troops employed in the Soudan from the charges for the Forces available for service elsewhere. When the accounts of the Army Expenditure of the year are completed, an approximate statement will be made in the form of an Estimate, showing as far as can be done the charges incurred for the two services; but I am informed by the financial authorities of the War Office, it will be impossible to support that statement by vouchers in the way a Parliamentary account is supported so as to satisfy the Auditor General. For instance, the claims of the contractor for the supply of meat at a station is for the quantity delivered in bulk to the Commissariat. No distinction is made between that to be consumed by the Cavalry, Infantry, Artillery, or Militia; much less is there any distinction of the claims for the food of those men who may have been added to the Forces as the result of either the general preparations or the Soudan operations. Similarly as regards stores. The reserves of small arm ammunition have been largely diminished by the issues to these troops, and orders have been given to make up these reserves. It is not possible to distinguish in the charges for wages in the accounts of the Royal Laboratory the extra wages due respectively to these two causes. For the reason therefore that a separate account, in the proper sense of the word, cannot be kept of the expenditure as occasioned by the two causes, one Vote has been asked for; but the Paper circulated with the Vote may be taken as fairly distributing the charge, on the assumption that all extra expenditure upon that portion of the Force in Egypt, which the Government has determined to withdraw as soon as possible, shall, so long as it may remain in Egypt, be regarded as chargeable against general preparations. There are other reasons which prevent the division of the Vote. They are, no doubt, reasons of a highly technical character; but they are the reasons which have influenced the financial advisers, and I doubt whether the requirements of the law can be met if the House were to insist upon the proposed division of the Vote. If no necessity for general preparations existed, if the troops could be brought back from the Soudan, if the establishment which had been increased on account of the Soudan War could at once be reduced to its normal strength, if the provision of supply for the Soudan Expedition could at once be stopped, the money necessary for the House to provide on account of the Soudan Expedition would be near the amount stated in the Papers presented to Parliament; but, in the present circumstances, no such process will take place. The troops who are employed and who are necessary to be employed in the Soudan, will not be brought home. They will be

held available either in Egypt or in any other station which may be thought necessary for general service. Supplies for their use will not be stopped, but, on the contrary, increased. Considering, therefore, that the two operations are so closely and inextricably bound together, it appears to me absolutely impossible, and would tend rather to the confusion of the House, and to diminish rather than to increase the real control which the House has over the military expenditure of the country if the course proposed by the hon. Member were taken. I trust the House will not be disposed to agree to the proposal of the hon. Member, but will accept the assurance of the Government that this course has been taken, not by any means with the intention of diminishing the control of the House over the expenditure, or of hiding any information from the House which we have the power to give, but simply from the cause I have stated of rendering the money voted by Parliament most available for the general service of the country, in whatever part of the world it may be required.

MR. CHAPLIN: I hope the House will permit me to say half-a-dozen words in support of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor). I trust myself that the Amendment of the hon. Member will be something more than a protest on this occasion. The noble Lord the Secretary of State for War and the Prime Minister have both informed the House that there is no great matter of principle involved in the question. I am not, therefore, without some hope that the Government will yield to what appears to me to be the exceedingly legitimate and reasonable proposition of the hon. Member; and if the Government are not disposed to take that course, I hope, for my own part, that the hon. Member will press his Motion to a division. I confess that I was much surprised myself at the form in which this Vote was originally presented to the House, and it seems to me that the Amendment of the hon. Member simply places it on its natural and its legitimate footing. What is the position of the House in regard to this question? The Vote which is now before us deals with two questions, not only separate in themselves, and which, therefore, as the Prime Minister said, ought to be treated as distinct, but with regard to which we may hold, and many of us do hold, very different opinions as to the course we ought to pursue. Now, as to the first question—that which relates to military preparations—if the Government come forward on their own responsibility and say that this Vote is required for the safety of the Empire, which under their guidance has recently been greatly in peril, I apprehend that there will be very little difference of opinion, and, without hesitation, I have no doubt the House of Commons will grant whatever sums are demanded for securing the safety of the Empire. But with regard to the Vote for the Soudan, that Vote appears to me to stand on a totally different footing altogether. Now, I think there is a great deal to be said on the question of the Soudan, and the Votes which the Government are asking for that Expedition now. I am not going to enter into details upon the question; but before this Vote is granted for the Soudan, the Government will certainly be called upon to reconcile the statement of their policy announced a short time ago with the totally different attitude they are adopting at the present moment. The House will assuredly require some further explanation with regard to the way in which it was induced to sanction the money for the construction of the Suakin-Berber Railway. The House will remember what occurred on that occasion. Many of us, and myself among the number, always regarded the construction of the Suakin-Berber Railway as all moonshine from the first. But what happened? When the noble Lord asked for a Supplementary Estimate on a former occasion, he said that the very first thing Lord Wolseley wanted, after the fall of Khartoum, was the despatch of an expedition to Suakin. And on his responsibility, as a Minister of the Crown, he came forward and told us that the railway was absolutely essential to the safety of the Expedition and the Forces under Lord Wolseley. We now find that the railway is not to be made to Berber, as I certainly thought it never would be, and we shall require some explanation from the Government before this Vote for the Soudan is granted. I think it will probable be the case that while the House will grant whatever money is required, it may be

necessary for us to accompany that grant of money with something like a Vote of Censure on the conduct of the Government for the way in which, as far as I can ascertain, they have been making ducks and drakes of the money of the British taxpayer. Our position is this. We desire to do nothing whatsoever to stand for a moment in the way of granting money to the Government for any military preparations that may be necessary to secure the safety of the Empire; but at the same time we are determined to exercise the full right of criticism, and if necessary of censure, with regard to the way, as far as we can gather, the money will be expended in the Soudan. Under the circumstances, I would throw out a suggestion of this nature — that, the money should be divided as the hon. Member proposes — that the Vote for military preparations should be taken first; and that having been done, and the statement of the Government having been made in reference to the Soudan, that the debate on the money necessary for the Soudan should be adjourned for further consideration.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he hoped that unless the Government had a better case to put forward they might find it convenient to accept the Amendment of the hon. Member. He did not think he had ever heard a weaker and more confused case put before the House than that stated by the noble Lord. The Government had carefully abstained from committing themselves as to their policy in the Soudan; and until they announced their intention to abandon operations in that country it was manifest that the amount to be expended there should form the subject of a distinct Vote. The Prime Minister had deprecated a discussion of this question in the face of Europe with a great appearance of division in their counsels; the right hon. Gentleman was anxious that they should present to Europe an united front. He maintained that the Government were themselves provoking that division of opinion by resisting the Motion of the hon. Member. What was the inevitable result of the course which the Government were taking? When the Speaker was got out of the Chair the Committee would begin to discuss, first, the Soudan Vote, then the Afghan Vote, next the Soudan Vote again, and then the Afghan Vote again, and, lastly, the military preparations. Hon. Members on the Opposition side who were prepared to support the Government in any course they thought necessary for defending the honour of the country in Asia would be forced against their will to appear as critics of the Government when dealing with the Soudan. It was the action of the Government which compelled them to import into the controversy in Committee of Supply those questions on which there were acute differences of opinion between the two sides of the House. It was really a case of "tacking" on the part of the Government. The Government knew perfectly well that the Opposition were prepared to support them, and to do all they could to help them out of the muddle into which they had got in Afghanistan. They knew very well that if they were to divide this Vote, giving a Soudan half and an Afghan half, the Opposition would be unanimous as to the latter half, whereas on the Soudan portion there would be vehement Party controversy. It was to prevent the country seeing in the clearest manner how they had again "tacked" in regard to their policy of two months ago that the Government had included these two entirely different Votes in one. He hoped the Government would even now think fit to accede to the Motion of the hon. Member. He could assure the Prime Minister that if he would do so he would adopt the best course of avoiding that appearance of division in Committee of Supply in the face of Europe which he was so anxious to prevent.

MR. W. FOWLER said, that the noble Lord, in the course of his speech, had stated that there might be money, previously voted for stores in the Soudan, but not expended on actual service in the Soudan, which would be in hand to be expended for other purposes not mentioned—that was to say, for purposes mentioned in the Vote of £6,500,000. They were asked to vote in a lump money which was really going for two entirely different purposes. Now, although he did not believe that the Government were actuated by the motive attributed to them by hon. Gentlemen opposite, he objected to the idea of money being voted for one purpose and then being used for another. Under the French Empire the system of *virements* grew up by which enormous sums

were voted in one way and applied in another, involving immense abuse. He hoped that in this country they would not enter upon that course.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I wish, Sir, to support the observations that have been made by the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler). From his experience in such matters, I think the House would be justified in attaching very considerable weight to any remark falling from the hon. Member on a financial question. I must say, after what we have heard from the noble Lord the Secretary of State for War, it appears to me to be an extraordinary thing that the arrangements of the War Office should be in such a condition that it is utterly unable to take an accurate account of the stores and provisions of various kinds that may be re-shipped on the Coast of Egypt and transported elsewhere. I believe there is no person engaged in any great operation in this country who would not be prepared to insist that the charge connected with the employment of any number of men and any quantity of materials in any particular service in which he was concerned should be properly computed and ascertained. But I object to the proposal of the Government, because it appears to me to be an entirely new departure. We have had Supplementary Estimates and Votes of Credit to meet a national emergency before; but I do not remember that any single Vote of Credit has been taken to cover the expense of two entirely distinct objects. Can it be necessary that there shall be one Vote of Credit to deal with two totally different emergencies?—for that is the gist of the complaint which is now made. There is one point on which I would particularly insist, and that is that when a service was foreseen, when it became perfectly well known to Her Majesty's Government that troops would be required, that provisions would have to be furnished, and that a railway would have to be made, and when they asked for a Supplementary Estimate, as they did in the last financial year, for purposes in Egypt, they were bound to include in the ordinary Estimates of the year the expenditure which they contemplated and had decided upon. The noble Lord the Secretary of State for War told us that contracts had been entered into, that large payments had been made and liabilities incurred, and all actually without the vote of Parliament. Parliament has not sanctioned these estimates or these liabilities. They are included in this Vote of Credit. If the late Government had attempted to do anything of this kind, great financial authorities on the other side of the House would have told us at once that we were violating all the Rules of Parliament and defeating the proper control which Parliament is entitled to exercise over the national finances, and thereby over the enterprizes in which the Government may embark. I say that if a portion of this money has been paid, if these engagements have been entered into, Parliament ought to have been informed in the ordinary and regular way; they ought to have been included in the Estimates laid before the House in February last; and a proper opportunity would thus have been afforded for discussion. But I object strongly to our being asked in this way to make provision for two distinct services in one Vote of Credit, thus depriving the House of the power of adequately discussing those objects separately, and taking from hon. Members the power of protesting as effectually as they desire to do against one portion of the Vote while they wish to support another.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: My right hon. Friend at the head of the Government took pains the other day to explain the principle applicable to this Vote. The right hon. Gentleman opposite and the hon. Member for Cambridge say—"Here are two Votes for two absolutely separate objects, which have no connection or dependence the one upon the other." That is not an accurate statement of the fact. If it were, I should entirely agree with the right hon. Gentleman. I accept altogether his financial doctrine on that subject. But the very basis of the statement of the Government which has already been made to the House is that these two matters are not separate, but that they have to a certain degree a dependence the one upon the other, and that the proposals that have been made with reference to the Soudan have relation to the position of the Empire in other parts of the world. Therefore, the whole foundation of the right hon. Gentleman's argument fails, because the two things are not distinct, but to a considerable

degree dependent on each other. My right hon. Friend at the head the Government stated with reference to the Vote of Credit and with reference to the Soudan that certain operations might be undertaken or might not be undertaken in the Soudan according to the pressure of the necessities of the Empire elsewhere. Well, it is obvious to anybody who considers that proposition that there are future contingencies under which the releasing of the Forces in the Soudan—I think that was the phrase employed—for service elsewhere may be greater or may be less. The consequence is that the exigency of the demand for the Vote in respect to the Soudan may be more urgent and larger in one contingency than in another; and therefore it may be possible that the sum asked for the Soudan may not be under the circumstances entirely wanted to be expended in the Soudan. And here I am not alluding to the past expenditure, which alone the right hon. Gentleman referred to in his remarks, for stores and matters of that kind, but to the expenditure which may or may not take place in future. If that be so, and if the policy be such as I have described, is it not most reasonable that if by releasing Forces in the Soudan you do employ those Forces, or have them at your disposal elsewhere, you should have the means, if so it be, to appropriate such surplus as may remain after the Soudan Vote to purposes elsewhere? That is the extent and the only extent of the transfer of moneys now proposed; and the two objects are not independent of each other, but have relation one to the other. That entirely disposes of the objection of the hon. Member for Cambridge, and therefore the question of *virements* does not arise in this case. It is very desirable that we should at all events come to an early decision on this point. The hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) is not always charitable in his interpretation of the motives of the Government. I am very willing to deal with facts. The hon. Member always knows our motives, and it always seems to him that they are the worst possible. He thinks that our object in making this proposal is not that which we have avowed, and which is patent on the face of the Vote—namely, that if there be a surplus available from the Soudan it should be applied to the general purposes of the defence of the Empire, but that we desire to evade discussion and to escape the Vote of Censure which the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire, with his authority with his Party, has been good enough to announce in the present juncture of affairs. Surely, however, if we desire to evade discussion in regard to the Soudan, we could not do it. When we go into Committee on this Vote, it will be perfectly open to the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire to refuse all moneys for the Soudan as he seems to desire.

MR. CHAPLIN: The right hon. Gentleman has evidently misunderstood me. I said I would do nothing whatever that would stand in the way of the voting of money for special preparations necessary for the safety of the Empire, but that the two things were totally distinct, and it might become a duty to propose a Vote of Censure in regard to affairs in the Soudan.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I do not object to the hon. Member moving a Vote of Censure if he thinks it is a favourable moment. By all means let him do it to-morrow if he likes. But I was answering the hon. Member for Hertford, who alleged that we wish to evade discussion in respect to the Soudan. We could not evade it if we wished, which we do not; and there will be every facility for the hon. Member for Hertford to discuss the question of the Soudan on this Vote. He can say what he likes upon it, and he can refuse the money which is asked for.

MR. GORST said, he thought that it was a great pity that the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary had made the speech which he had just made, because it was a most unfortunate thing that Her Majesty's Government and the Members of Her Majesty's Government should endeavour to make it appear that there was in that House on that night any difference of opinion upon the main matter before them. He thought that it was a great pity that there had been any controversy at all upon it. It had been caused by the Home Secretary and the Members of the Government who, instead of confining that controversy to the technical question raised by the hon. Member for Queen's County, had endeavoured to give it a wider scope, and to make it appear as if the hon. Member for Mid

Lincolnshire had desired to pass a Vote of Censure on Her Majesty's Government. The fault was entirely that of the Government. The Government wished to propose in the House two Votes for purposes really distinct. They knew that one would be granted by the House without any difference of opinion at all, and as to which it was most important that that unanimity of the House of Commons should go forth to Europe to-morrow. The Government knew that there was another Vote on which differences of opinion must arise, and they had deliberately mixed up these two, and it was they who were to blame if there was any want of unanimity shown. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary had told them to wait till the matter was before Committee of Supply; but no one knew better than the right hon. Gentleman that it was impossible really to raise the question there except by moving that the Chairman leave the Chair. Did the right hon. Gentleman think that any Member on that side of the House would take the responsibility of moving the reduction of this Vote? They knew the sort of speech which would be made by the Prime Minister. It was only at this time that the proceedings of the Government could be called in question. Her Majesty's Government had chosen to fly in the face of Treasury Orders, of the Committee of Public Accounts, of the practice of the House of Commons, and of all precedents that had ever been set. He thought that with regard to this Motion the Government would have been in a better position without the speech of the Home Secretary. For his own part, he entirely disagreed with what had been said by the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War as to the joining of the expenditure which had been incurred with that to be incurred. It appeared now from the speech of the Home Secretary that there was a reason for mixing them up, and it was a serious one, which the House could not help taking note of. It appeared from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman that the Government were still halting between two opinions, and that they were in the future intending to incur expenditure with reference to the Soudan, as to which they had not made up their minds whether it was to be strictly Soudan expenditure or general expenditure. He had ventured to object two months ago to the expenditure of money and the slaughter of Arabs without any distinct policy being stated. His arguments had then been ridiculed by the Home Secretary and other Members of the Government; but since then the slaughter which he had predicted had taken place. The time had now at least come when there should be no doubt in the minds of Her Majesty's Government. If the Home Secretary was really speaking the mind of the Government in this matter, and if there was any doubt or hesitation in their minds as to how the Vote was to be spent, it was most essential that they should have a more certain voice than that of the Home Secretary before the House of Commons should be asked to do that which it was perfectly ready to do—namely to place in the hands of Her Majesty's Government ample funds for the purpose of making special preparations in the present condition of affairs.

MR. O'DONNELL said, that the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, in challenging somebody to propose a Vote of Censure, reminded him of one of Dickens's attorneys who had shown a touching anxiety to be kicked before witnesses. He could not but think that the provocative bearing of the Home Secretary was singularly inappropriate in what should have been a business discussion. It had been pointed out by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) that the money asked for in this Vote was for a double purpose. He failed entirely to understand the reasons for the extraordinary reticence on the part of the Government and their mysterious references to special purposes. It appeared to him that this was the same policy as that of the fabled ostrich; it was an elaborate pretence of hiding what could not be hidden. The conduct of the Government gave too much reason for the suspicion that they were trying to evade inquiry into their Soudan policy, and it would provoke the proposal of a Motion in Committee which would plainly and distinctly set their Soudan expenditure upon one side for the special examination of the House.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish to say a few words especially to the Prime Minister. It appears to me

that the sense of the House in this matter is all very much in one way. I have heard a good many speeches in favour of the separation of the Vote, and the absolute silence of hon. Members behind the Treasury Bench shows that they have also felt the force of the observations which have been made. For my own part, I feel greatly the force of these observations; and though I do not go so far as my hon. Friend the Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) seems to have done in implying that there is an intention on their part of tacking, yet the way in which the Vote is proposed is a way in which the stronger case will carry the weaker. I am unwilling to be put in a position in which we are not to get a full discussion of that part of the Vote which relates to the Soudan. There is a practical unanimity with regard to the special preparations Vote. We have not the same unanimity with regard to the conduct and views of Her Majesty's Government with reference to the Soudan; and before that Vote is passed it is probable that the House will desire to have some more definite and clear assurances of the policy of the Government with regard to the Soudan. We have been waiting until a proper occasion shall arise—which I suppose is to-night—to learn what the policy of the Government is with regard to the Soudan. Now we are placed in this difficulty, that we can only hear the statement of the Prime Minister immediately before we are asked to vote money. I wish, under the circumstances, to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman will think it possible to meet the objections which have been raised by making a division of the Vote itself, and proposing first that part relating to special preparations and afterwards that relating to the Soudan?

MR. GLADSTONE: The right hon. Gentleman will perhaps allow me to correct him in the supposition that I was about to make a lengthened statement on this subject while the Speaker is in the Chair. My intention has all along been to make that statement in Committee. The right hon. Gentleman appears to think that he will suffer some great disadvantage from a combination of these two services in one Vote; and he seems to think that it is in my power to relieve him from that dilemma by the course he suggested, which he apparently thought would not necessarily involve any fundamental difficulty in the plans of the Government. I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that he is in error in both those suppositions. It is competent for any hon. Member to move a reduction of the Vote of £4,500,000 asked for the Soudan, and that will distinctly raise a question on which any objections that may be felt to the conduct of the Government in regard to the Soudan can without prejudice be stated. I will reply to the right hon. Gentleman's appeal by appealing to him to take the opportunity which such a course will present, and so relieve himself of the difficulty which Her Majesty's Government cannot relieve him from without striking at the basis of the policy which we have announced. That policy is to hold the Forces in the Soudan, while they remain in the Soudan, available for service elsewhere. In that policy we ask the House to uphold us. The hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) must know that the business of concentration in the Soudan is a serious military operation; that the withdrawal of a considerable Force from the heart of the country is a costly and even to some extent a protracted business; and it is totally impossible for the Government to draw that line and divide the Vote. I shall state frankly to the Committee, when that stage is reached, that Her Majesty's Ministers are asking the House to a certain extent to vote money with regard to which, in certain contingencies, the Government will have a choice. I cannot tell to what extent it may be necessary for us to apply the Vote in regard to the Soudan to the purpose of special preparation. It may or it may not be that £2,000,000 out of the £4,000,000 will be spent in the Soudan and the rest elsewhere. If we had not the liberty of applying the £4,500,000 as we required the only course for us would be to continue to ask £4,500,000 for the Soudan, because the money might possibly be spent there, and £12,000,000 for special preparations, because the money may be wanted for that purpose. The result would be that we should have to ask Parliament to spend £2,000,000 more. I do not, however, think it desirable to ask Parliament to authorize the Government to spend £2,000,000 more than they are likely to want. It would not

have been right to make such a demand and to require the Chancellor of the Exchequer to add these £2,000,000 to the sum which on Thursday will be asked for in Committee of Ways and Means. That being so, I think I have shown that while on the other side the objection to the course we propose is of a technical character, on ours it is a matter of substance, inasmuch as it enables us to apply money granted for the purpose of the Soudan to other objects. As to the Soudan Enterprize, we have bound ourselves not to prosecute offensive operations or to undertake an early advance on Khartoum; and our Forces remain there only until we can safely bring them home or make them available for employment elsewhere. I cannot but think that our proposal is a reasonable one, and that the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends will have ample opportunity of raising the Soudan question, by moving the diminution of the Vote, and making that Motion the means of censuring Her Majesty's Government for its conduct with regard to the Soudan.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 229; Noes 186: Majority 43.—(Div. List, No. 129.)

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—VOTE OF CREDIT.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

(1.) £11,000,000, Naval and Military Operations, 1885-6 (Vote of Credit).

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir Arthur Otway, I will, Sir, endeavour to explain, as clearly as I can, the nature and grounds of the Vote which we now submit, trusting to the indulgence of the Committee, because I am conscious—I have, I am sorry to say, for months past, been conscious — of an habitual hoarseness, which may make the function of listening very disagreeable and irksome.

I trust that the Committee, at least in some degree, now understand that, if there is anything unusual in the nature and character of this Vote, it arises, not out of a caprice of ours, still less out of an unmanly intention of avoiding controversial debate adverse to ourselves, but out of the nature of the case. We have before us a case, Sir, for which in a material point there is no precedent known to me. We propose a Vote of Credit amounting to £11,000,000; £6,500,000 being likely to be spent in what we term "special preparations," and being secured from being spent for any other purposes; £4,500,000 being likely to be spent in and in connection with the Soudan, but being in a degree that I cannot at present define capable of being spent for another purpose—that is to say, the same purpose as our special preparations. And I ask leave of the Committee to repeat my words, that, adhering to the policy we have announced to the House of holding the Soudan Forces available for service elsewhere, I believe that we have had absolutely no option except either to ask the House to vote money which may be wanted in the Soudan, with the power to use it for the purpose of the special preparations, or else to vote twice over a very large and uncertain sum of money, to which course, I believe, strong and just and even insurmountable objection might be taken. Moreover I will point out that, until it is shown that there is some other course open to us, the objection with regard to the special nature of this Vote entirely falls to the ground and is worthless.

Sir, the peculiarity in the case to which I refer is, of course, this: I know of no instance, either in or beyond my own recollection, since the financial system of this House was well developed—and, indeed, it hardly had come to be thoroughly developed when I first became a Member of this House — in which it has been the duty of the Government to propose to the House at one and the same time two very large sums of money for military purposes, one of which, the second, may run into the first, although the first is not to run into the second. We ask it upon this ground: It is essentially bound up with the policy of holding the large Force now in the Soudan available for transfer and for service elsewhere. That is the justification of the course which I agree with my hon. Friend the Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler) should be taken upon no ground except that of strong necessity, and of making the best choice we

can between rival inconveniences. I certainly, for one, would never have dreamed of taking it on any other ground, and I believe that I am speaking for my Colleagues when I so speak.

It is thought by some that we take this course because it evades a Vote of Censure upon us on account of our policy in the Soudan. It appears to be assumed that it would have been competent to Members of the Committee to say, first of all, that they would give us the money for special preparations, and, secondly, give us the money for the Soudan Vote, but that in giving the money for the Soudan Vote they would combine with it a Vote of Censure upon the Government. Sir, I believe that it would not have been competent, either in point of form or in point of substance, for the Committee to have taken that course. I do not think that it is upon record that an attempt has ever been made to take such a course. This the Committee may do with perfect consistency—they may give the money for the Soudan, founding that Vote on the necessity which has been created, and they may reserve to themselves the discretion of censuring the Government, notwithstanding that they have voted the money. Surely that doctrine is sound, because, otherwise, why vote the money for the special preparations until you are satisfied that in everything which touches them we deserve your approval? I do not suppose that you are quite prepared to affirm, as one Gentleman has declared to-night, that we and not Russia are responsible for the difficulty in which we stand. [An hon. MEMBER: Hear, hear!] Another hon. Gentleman cheers, so that there are two persons, at any rate, who will be in the predicament of either refusing money for special preparations or else of being content to reserve to themselves for some future occasion the power which they undoubtedly possess, and may very legitimately exercise, of censuring us for the wrong principles upon which we have proceeded, or for the want of judgment with which we have endeavoured to apply the right principles.

There appears to be a mistaken idea pervading the minds of young Members of this House, and, indeed, of some old ones, that the granting of a Vote of Credit which it is not intended to refuse is an usual occasion for bringing the Government to trial upon matters to which the Vote relates.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Your Party did it in 1878.

MR. GLADSTONE: I am very much obliged to the noble Lord. My memory goes back to 1878, and it goes back somewhat further. I do not bring forward a proposition of this kind without being prepared to examine and to stand by it. As the noble Lord challenges me to begin with that extraordinary precedent, I may say that we had in 1878 a Vote of Credit proposed to this House which is without parallel in our history. We fought that Vote of Credit upon principle. We objected to the most dangerous precedent then established. We objected to the purpose which it had in view. I will on this occasion save hon. Gentlemen the trouble of doing what they are fond of doing—of paying me the compliment of quoting me—and I will quote myself. Someone said to-night—"I wish the right hon. Gentleman would read the speech he made in 1878." It was a most unkind wish. He could not have doomed me to a task more irksome and unacceptable; but, anticipating what was likely to happen, I was beforehand with the hon. Member, and I do not think there is one word which in the same circumstances I should not be ready to repeat. I hope the noble Lord will, when any former speeches of his are referred to, be always in a position to quote them with as much security. On that occasion I ventured to say—

> "So far as I know, there is no case when a Conference of the Powers of Europe has been called together where those Powers, as a preliminary to its assembling, have increased, or taken powers to increase, their naval and military establishments."—(3 *Hansard*, [237] 949.)

I believe no novelty more astounding in form and in substance is to be found than the astonishing proposal that, when the Powers of Europe were about peacefully to meet for purposes of the highest deliberation, to be conducted by pacific means, in the common interest, and with the highest authority in the civilized world, that peaceful meeting was to be disturbed by the clash of arms, and that one of the Governments which are to take part in the proceedings of that Assembly is to spend £6,000,000 in military pre-

parations, for the sake, forsooth, of strengthening its hands.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: What about Alexandria?

MR. GLADSTONE: Interruptions of that kind are totally irrelevant, and are hardly compatible with the decencies of this House. If it be true that on this occasion, with respect to the money we ask for the Soudan, there is a disposition to refuse it upon principle—if the case is really analogous to that of 1878, when our desire was not to grant one farthing of those £6,000,000 for what we deemed to be unlawful and evil purposes—if that parallel prevail, by all means let opposition be made to what we now propose in whatever way you may like to make it. But I understand, on the contrary, that you are prepared to vote the money, and it is on that supposition that I argue. It appears to be said that we ask for information. What information had we given us? I hold all the information given, and it was this, as I summed it up at the time—

"I have heard a great deal said about the Vote of 6,000,000 being intended to strengthen the hands of the Government, to protect British interests, and to put us on a footing with other Powers."

I should like to know, after receiving information such as that, in what point were we one jot the wiser? We knew nothing of what was to be done. We knew nothing of the Salisbury-Schouvaloff Agreement. We knew nothing of secret Covenants with other Powers, although the Powers of Europe were at the time assembled in Council. We knew nothing of Anglo-Turkish Treaties; we knew nothing of the occupation and administration of Cyprus in particular, to be assumed in defiance of the Treaty of Paris and the law of Europe. All these things were concealed. These were the matters on which we ought to have had information, and if we had had it I am not sure that even the last Parliament would really have voted the £6,000,000. But, Sir, undoubtedly, if that is the sort of information that you want, we can give it; we want the hands of the Government strengthened, we want British interests protected, we want British honour guarded. All these generalities, which were all that we extracted from you upon a former occasion, we are ready to return; but we have not the audacity to pretend that, in paying you off with such coin as that, we think we are really giving you political information.

Sir, the fact is that, so far as I am aware, it has not been the practice of this House to choose Votes of Credit as occasions for general discussion of the matter to which they refer. I will appeal in support of what I have said to the evidence of facts. There are certain occasions which I will not quote, because if we were in the middle of a great war like the Crimean War, and after providing so many millions for the Navy and so many for the Army, my right hon. Friend (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) were to demand a Vote of Credit over and above, there then could be no occasion for discussion, for the policy of the war must be a thing notorious to and accepted by the House and the country. Votes of Credit of that kind may be given without discussion. I will take another case when it was not so. It was a Vote of Credit proposed when I was Chancellor of the Exchequer. Indeed, it was a double Vote of Credit proposed in 1860 for the purposes of the China War. We began on the 16th of March by proposing a Vote of £850,000. The hour was late, and the necessity was great. There was no statement, and no debate. There was merely a protest made that the Vote was only allowed to pass on account of the great urgency of time in connection with our financial needs. On the 19th the Vote was reported in the regular mode, and debate arose. But the debate which did arise was entirely upon military detail and nothing else; and, although undoubtedly that Vote was upon a very serious subject of policy—a subject which required discussion, and which obtained discussion—it was not discussed on the occasion of the Vote. In the month of July we had to propose, unfortunately, a very much larger Vote for purposes connected with the same Expedition. In that month what happened was this: We had sent to China in the interval certain offers of peace. These offers had failed. Military operations became necessary, and we had to ask for no less than £3,356,000 on the 12th of July. Again there was no statement of policy in connection with it. There was, again, a military debate. Late in the evening Sir John Pakington—not Mr. Disraeli, who de-

manded no discussion upon it—said he would like, at the end of the speech, a fuller explanation as to the definite objects of the war; and Lord John Russell, in the space of a very few minutes, said he thought that the right hon. Gentleman, belonging to the former Government, was as much responsible for the war as the Government then in Office, and that the terms of peace then offered were quite reasonable. So that there was no discussion on either of those occasions—practically no discussion and no arraignment of the Government.

But, Sir, it may be said, and said truly, that the war was going on. Therefore, I will quote a case which will amply make good what I have said, and when no war was going on. This was the case of the Vote of Credit which it was my duty to propose when I was Prime Minister in 1870. It was a Vote of £2,000,000 of money. On the 1st of August Mr. Disraeli raised a debate on the critical state of affairs on the Continent of Europe. It was in the course of that debate that I stated the intention of the Government to ask for a Vote of Credit without defining the purposes of the Vote further than this—not very much unlike the information we got in 1878. I said—

"We are neutrals in the war. We are on terms of unequivocal friendship with both the parties, and our object is to maintain a dignified and friendly position."

That, Sir, was the statement made by me on the part of the Government on the 1st of August. On the 2nd of August, no war existing, we being in no way a party to any quarrel, being in no difficulty and in no danger—though we had an object in view, of which the House was aware like the public, in a general way—we asked the House, without a word of statement, for the £2,000,000, and without a word of objection it was given. On the 8th of August Earl Granville produced a Treaty in the House of Lords, and I produced a Treaty in the House of Commons, which we had concluded with a view to the neutrality of Belgium. Some discussion then took place. Mr. Disraeli, in particular, said that he thought that the proceeding was a good and a manly proposal. There was a general concurrence in the House, and such short debate as took place was not of a contentious character. But what I am contending is that that debate occurred a week after the Vote of Credit. The Vote of Credit had nothing to do with it, and the circumstances in which the Vote of Credit was proposed were again deemed to be circumstances which made it wise not to choose that moment for a general discussion on the merits of the question.

Well, now, Sir, what is the present case? I am not at all surprised that Gentlemen in this House should say that the Government are censurable in their determination to ask no money in the present Vote for the prosecution of offensive operations in Egypt. I think that is a question of a dignity and order perfectly warranting the conduct of anyone who may think fit to call the attention of the House to it at a proper time; and if any Vote of Censure is to be moved on the Government for such a purpose from the proper source, and with proper authority, it will have from us every proper attention and accommodation. We shall give every opportunity for its being discussed, whatever its issue is to be. But what we wish to do now is simply to make understood the purposes of this Vote, and to give the opportunity which it has been the custom of the House to use, though I do not wish to tie it down to that custom, for discussing the military provisions which it is the object of the Vote to make. The first thing we ask is a Vote of £4,500,000 for the Soudan, as being likely to be spent in the Soudan, but with the plain declaration, which is the basis on our part of the whole of these proceedings, that, as far as we are concerned, and quite apart from any wider opinions that any of us may entertain against the proceedings in the Soudan, we are all determined, so far as we are concerned, that the Soudan shall not by anything hereafter to be done offer an impediment to the full discharge of the duties of the Empire, with the whole purpose and the whole power of the Empire, in whatever quarter of the world they may happen to lie. For this reason, avowedly and undisguisedly, we ask you to give us this money, because the troops are now in the Soudan. We cannot say how much of it may be spent there, because it is possible that none of it may be spent there, except in connection with certain specified objects there or for bringing

the men home. We ask you distinctly to give it to us with an unfettered discretion to apply it elsewhere for higher purposes and for higher duties, if necessary. I hope that is intelligible, and I hope that will not be mixed up with any question of technical fidelity to rules for voting money which on every ordinary occasion we are most desirous strictly and rigorously to maintain.

With regard to the Soudan portion of this Vote, explaining it as I have now explained it, the state of the case is this: I have nothing of a substantial character to add to what I stated on the 20th of April, when, on the part of the Government, and in words agreed upon with and by my Colleagues, I said that we had found it necessary to review the whole situation of the Empire, and that we considered the time to be one at which it was necessary to hold its entire resources well in hand for use and for application wherever they might be wanted. If the Committee does not agree with that proposition, let them reject the proposal we now make. If the Committee does agree in the proposal, they may canvass, they may criticize, they may censure, they may expel and eject the present Government, if they like, and most welcome they will be; but they cannot withhold from us the money which we ask. I wish broadly to draw this distinction between the granting of the money on a Vote of Credit which we ask, and the reservation of the amplest liberty on the part of the House to discuss the merits of the question, and to visit upon the heads of responsible and guilty Ministers a Vote of Censure or whatever penalty they may deserve.

At the same time, while that is really the substance of the proposition that I make on the part of the Government as the basis of this plan, the Committee may naturally remind me that it is not the first declaration made this year on the subject of the Soudan. On the 19th of February, when the House met, I made a declaration on behalf of my Colleagues not less formal, not less binding, than that to which I have now referred. I therefore go back to the 19th of February and the discussion of that evening, and to the decisions which at that time I announced to the House as having been taken by the Cabinet, and having received the sanction of Her Majesty. When on the 4th of February we heard of the betrayal of Khartoum, the Cabinet was of course summoned, and it was gathered together next day. The desire of the Cabinet at that time was to endeavour to prevent the spreading of the disturbance to do everything that could be done on behalf of General Gordon, if he were alive—and at that time we had no means of judging whether he was alive or not, or even whether he was continuing resistance or not—and if possible, of course, to go forward at once to the accomplishment of the purpose of Lord Wolseley's Expedition. That was our starting point. As I stated on the 19th of February, Lord Wolseley pointed out to us that we must move forward from that starting point. There were, he told us, two plans of military operations, one based on the idea of taking Khartoum, and the other based upon the abandonment of that object. We thought, Sir, that we were not justified, under the circumstances of the hour, in the abandonment of that idea; and we therefore adopted the plan pointed out by Lord Wolseley, which was meant to reserve to us a full discretion upon the facts as they then stood before us to go forward to Khartoum at a later period, presuming it to be impracticable to effect its capture immediately, and presuming, of course, that Parliament should be found disposed to sanction such a plan, and that we ourselves, on further consideration, should find reason still to adhere to it. On that ground we founded the statement that I made on the 19th of February, and retained to ourselves in full the power to marching to Khartoum.

I referred at that time to various circumstances, and I think that, upon an impartial view, or upon any intelligent view, it must be admitted that many of those circumstances have since that period undergone serious change. In the first place, the heroic General Gordon, we know, has sealed his purpose with his blood. Of that we had no knowledge whatever at the time when we came to the decisions of, I think, the 6th of February. We saw at that time, as the world saw, an indefinite but possibly a very great danger in the effect that might be produced both upon Egypt and with regard to the defence of Egypt, and likewise in other quarters of the East, by a simple policy of retirement

in the face of a triumphant Pretender to the dignity of a prophet. The Mahdi was then triumphant, and his position was a very grave factor in the case before us. That position has greatly altered. In the flush of his triumph he attempted to move down the river; but not many days were required to show to him the vanity of that operation. He retired to Khartoum. He has retired from Khartoum. He is attacked in his own seat. Left to themselves and not immediately menaced by us, a rival or rivals have started up, and the Mahdi is not the formidable character that he was in the first week of February. As to the defence of Egypt, we in no way relax the obligations under which we hold ourselves to stand. In my announcement last Monday on the part of my Colleagues, we declared that we held to that duty, as we had held to it before. As respects the general effect of the betrayal of Khartoum upon the East, what we had then to contemplate was that, if we had ordered a retirement of our Forces—a retirement accompanied with general inaction in the East—we should have had to compute the probable or possible effect, not in Egypt only, but beyond Egypt—throughout the East and in the Indian Empire—of that retirement. That was the alternative before us then. I could almost wish it were the alternative before us now; but it is not so; and the policy that is necessary in the existing circumstances, which I shall say nothing to exaggerate or to worsen—the policy that is before us now is of necessity a policy of preparatory action in the East, which puts wholly out of view any apprehensions that either a timorous or a prudent man might have entertained in the first week of February, in connection with the possible moral effects of the betrayal of Khartoum, and the apparent triumph of the Mahdi.

There were other smaller, or rather, narrower considerations, although very far indeed from being unimportant. I mentioned to the House at that time that there were several topics which we were unwilling summarily to brush aside; though we did not bind ourselves to do anything beyond what might be found reasonable and practicable in regard to them. One of them, though I did not give it a very prominent place, was the question whether the possession of Khartoum would enable us to impose a serious check upon the prosecution of the Slave Trade. I may say that an examination does not at all tend to show that the possession of Khartoum would have any vital or any very appreciable influence on that evil traffic. A very important consideration, both at that moment and throughout the whole of last year, was this—to whom did General Gordon hold himself bound in honour at Khartoum? General Gordon was under the belief, and that belief we derived from his telegrams, sporadic as they unfortunately were from the necessity of the case, that a large portion of the population of Khartoum were deeply bound up with him in interest and feeling, and that their fate was dependent upon his. But the evidence positive and negative before us—what we have heard and what we have not heard, connected with the betrayal of Khartoum—does not, so far as it goes, support that belief of General Gordon. What is quite plain is this—that with his heroic character and his extraordinary gifts he exercised a power of fascination upon a few of the natives and soldiers who were in personal contact with him, and there is some reason to suppose that he mistook that for a general attachment of the soldiers, and even for something more. We have no reason to suppose that any considerable body ever attached themselves to him, and we have not indeed sufficient reason to suppose that the general population of Khartoum—though I have no doubt some of the immediate adherents suffered in their lives or fortunes—suffered by what has taken place. There was, further, a consideration with respect to the establishment of a Government at Khartoum; but there, again, we are not at present entitled to assert, of our own knowledge or conviction, that the Government of Khartoum is at this moment worse than it was four or five years ago. As regards the Egyptian garrisons, one or two of the smaller garrisons have quite recently been relieved, and the principal garrisons hold their ground. We are not able to say what is their exact condition, what are the motives of their present conduct. We are not able to say that it is not in their power, if they cease to represent Egyptian supremacy in the Soudan, to leave the country. That is a question on which we can give no positive

opinion. We never have admitted that we were bound to use the forces and sacrifice the blood and the treasure of England in the heart of the Soudan for the relief of those garrisons, whom we did not send there, and with whose despatch we had no concern whatever. Though we should have been very glad, had it been in our power, to assist them in removal, it would have been a piece of guilt and folly were we to have made that a capital object of our policy, and to expend British life and treasure in relieving them. This is only a reference to changes or modifications of circumstances, but I shall say no more on the Soudan. I go back upon my main proposition.

That proposition is that it is a paramount duty incumbent upon us to hold our Forces in the Soudan available for service wherever the call of duty and honour may summon them in the service of the British Empire. I have heard with great satisfaction the assurance of hon. Gentlemen opposite that they are disposed to forward in every way the grant of funds to us, to be used, as we best think, for the maintenance of what I have, upon former occasions, described as a "National and Imperial policy." Certainly, an adequate sense of our obligations to our Indian Empire has never yet been claimed by any Party in this country as its exclusive inheritance. In my opinion, he would be guilty of a moral offence and gross political folly who should endeavour to claim, on behalf of his own Party, any superiority in that respect over those to whom he is habitually opposed. It is an Imperial policy in which we are engaged.

With respect to this Vote, I have, indeed, heard comments upon the smallness of the Vote. But it is the largest Vote of Credit that has been asked, as far as I know, within the last 70 years, unless it were in the time of the Crimean War. What I wish to observe is this, that the Vote is a little larger than it looks, because while it is stated at £6,500,000, in the first place, it is contemporaneous with a large increase of charge in the annual Estimates for the Army and Navy, dealt with by the House in the course of its regular duty. In the second place, possibly, and more or less probably, it contemplates receiving a considerable addition from the other branch of this Vote of £4,500,000 which we have put down as likely to be spent in the Soudan; and thirdly, and more important than either of those two items, which I do not hold to be trivial, it must be borne in mind that this case is primarily an Indian case of military preparation. Those who want to know what is the total amount of effort now going forward, and the total amount of the charge likely to be entailed by the present preparations upon the subjects of Her Majesty, would require to know, which we certainly do not yet know, what will be the cost of the vigorous and effective measures which, as we hope and believe, are being taken in India, to enable the Government of that country to meet its share of the present obligations.

A demand for information is always a plausible demand, often a reasonable demand, never a demand to be treated with anything but respect. Let us consider what is the present position, and what is the mode and conduct on the part of the Government adapted to that position. It is not a case of war. There is no war before us, actually, or I may even say, perhaps, proximately—although I am slow to deal with epithets that are, of course, liable to some latitude of interpretation. I am not called upon to define, and I should find much difficulty in defining, inasmuch as it does not depend upon any choice of mine or my Colleagues, the degree of danger that may be before us. We labour, we have laboured, and we shall continue to labour, for an honourable settlement by pacific means. One thing I will venture to say with regard to that sad contingency of an outbreak of war, or a rupture of relations between two great Powers like Russia and England—one thing I will say with great strength of conviction, and great earnestness in my endeavour to impress it upon the Committee. It is this: We will strive to conduct ourselves to the end of this diplomatic controversy in such a way as that, if, unhappily, it is to end in violence or rupture, we may at least be able to challenge the verdict of civilized mankind, upon a review of the correspondence, upon a review of the demands made and refusals given, to say whether we have, or whether we have not, done all that men could do by every just and honourable effort to prevent the plunging of two such countries,

with all the millions that own their sway, into bloodshed and strife, of which it might be difficult to foresee the close.

In my opinion, the question before the Committee at this moment—not the final question—but the question at this moment is a simple, I might say even a narrow question, though in itself a great and important question. What we present to you is a case for preparation. Is there, or is there not, a case for preparation? Look at the facts before you. Try them by that test and by no other. Do not let us urge our own foregone conclusions about the misconduct of Russia or anyone else; do not let us enter into the judicial part of the case—only into that part of it which is prudential. Upon that aspect of the case, and upon that alone, asking for no credit as to the future and no acquittal as to the past, we say it is a case for preparation. All the facts that are within your knowledge are enough to make it your bounden duty so to prepare. Therefore, Sir, if I am asked for more information, my answer is this—it is impossible for us to give you full information. We could not, at this moment, open up the Correspondence that has been going on. We could not lay before you the unsifted intelligence, still less the rumours that have reached us. We could not enable you by any possibility, to judge of a question that has not yet reached a state of maturity for judgment. The evidence is not complete. The development is simply going forward. Do not let us too sanguinely count on a favourable issue. At the same time, do not let us despair that reason and justice may, on both sides, prevail over narrower and more unworthy feelings. We cannot give all the information we possess. If we did give it, it would not place you in a position for conclusive judgment. Were we to give part, we should infallibly mislead you; and, therefore, we stand simply upon what is patent and notorious, and say that, on those patent and notorious facts, with which the whole world is acquainted as well as we are, there is a case, and abundant case, for preparation.

Now, Sir, in order to show that I do not speak wholly without book, shall I, in a very few moments before I sit down, sketch rudely and slightly an outline of these patent and notorious facts? The starting-point of our movement in this case is our obligation of honour to the Ameer of Afghanistan. He stands between us and any other consideration of policy or of danger. Our obligations to him are not absolute. We are not obliged—God forbid that we should ever be obliged—to defend him, or to defend anybody else, were he misled into a course of tyranny, against the just resentment of his subjects. We are not bound, contrary to our just duty, to sustain him, even in a course of folly. We are bound by no such obligation; but we have a contingent obligation to give him our aid and support; and I think everyone who hears me will say that that obligation should be fulfilled in no stinted manner, if it really be a living obligation, contingent only upon this one condition, that his conduct is such as we can honestly approve. That is the present condition of affairs in connection with the Ameer of Afghanistan.

I have stated distinctly to the House that there have been full communications between him and the Viceroy, and that the language which he holds, and the principles which he announces, are those which absolutely entitle him to call upon us, in concert and in council with him, acting for him and as far as we can acting with him, to protect him in the possession of his just rights. Well, Sir, in this view a plan was framed for the delimitation of the Frontier between himself and what was until yesterday Turcoman territory, but has now become by a rapid process Russian territory. I am not about to enter into any invidious comment. We have made, under the force of circumstances, very rapid progress ourselves in various quarters of the world, and the idea which, beyond all, I desire to carry along with me in every step of this painful and anxious process, is a determination to make every allowance and every concession to those with whom we are dealing that we should claim, and that we should expect for ourselves. Therefore I only say this territory has rapidly become Russian, and Russia, as the head of this Turcoman country, is now in immediate contact with Afghanistan. A plan was framed for the delimitation of the Frontier. That plan has, unhappily, been intercepted in the sense that it has

not yet taken effect in action. The question of the delays in the progress of that plan is a question that may have to be carefully examined hereafter. I am not about to examine these delays now. I am not about to make them in any way a matter of charge, but I must point out the injurious effect that they have had in practice; for they led to advances—to military advances upon debated ground, that were obviously, and on the face of them, and in a high degree dangerous—dangerous to peace, dangerous to goodwill, dangerous to the future settlement of the question.

Aware of those dangers, we set ourselves to work to bring about an agreement with the Government of Russia, by which we hoped they might in a great degree have been neutralized. That agreement was concluded on the 16th of March, although it has passed by the date of the 17th of March, inasmuch as, I think, that was the day on which it was telegraphed by Sir Ronald Thomson to Sir Peter Lumsden. The Committee will perhaps recollect the substance of that agreement, and my announcement of it in this House. It made a deep impression on my mind. The agreement consisted of a covenant and of a reservation. The covenant was that the Russian troops should not advance nor attack provided the Afghan troops did not advance nor attack. That was the covenant. There followed the reservation, and the reservation was, "unless in the case of some extraordinary accident, such as a disturbance in Penjdeh." I well recollect the feeling which the reading of that reservation created in the House. The same feeling had been created in our own minds before we announced it in the House. It was obvious that we were just as much entitled to insert reservations on our side. I only now refer to this matter in order to exhibit, as well as I can without injustice, the spirit in which we have endeavoured to proceed—a spirit of liberal construction and interpretation wherever we thought we could apply it without sacrifice of honour or duty. I think it will be admitted that exception might have been taken to that reservation as covering God knows how many and what contingencies, had we been disposed to examine it in a spirit of cavilling or of criticism. But we determined, to give credit for its having been conceived—yes, we thought it our duty and we acted upon that duty—to take it as conceived in honour and good faith. We so construed it, and I do not repent having so construed it. I do not say that the construction is shown to have been wrong, but, come what may, I shall not repent having put that construction upon it. However, it was so taken, and I am bound to say that, although I think the House was somewhat startled by the reservation, it was generally, and I believe wisely, accepted by the House as a binding covenant. Sir, it was a very solemn covenant. It was a covenant involving great issues. There were thousands of men on the one side and on the other—on the one side standing for what they thought their country, on the other side standing for what they thought likewise their patriotic duty, standing in the face of one another without a definite course to contend for, but placed in a position of dangerous contiguity, and with the peril of bloody collision. This engagement came in to stand between the living and the dead, to stand between the danger and the people who were exposed to it, and we hoped and we believed that it would be recognized as one of the most sacred covenants ever made between two great nations with the strictest fidelity, and that if, unhappily, a deviation occurred there would be a generous rivalry between the two Powers to search it out to the bottom, and to exhibit to the world how that deviation had come about, and who was the person, or who were the persons on whom lay the responsibility. All this, Sir, remains in suspense.

What has happened? A bloody engagement on the 30th of March followed the covenant of the 16th. I shall overstate nothing. At least I shall not purposely overstate anything. I hope I shall not inadvertently overstate anything. All I shall say is this—that that woeful engagement on the 30th of March distinctly showed that one party, or both, had, either through ill-will or through unfortunate mishap, failed to fulfil the conditions of the engagement. We considered it, to be, and we still consider it to be, the duty of both countries, and, above all, I will say required for the honour of both countries, to examine how and by whose fault this calamity

came about. I will have no foregone conclusion. I will not anticipate that we are in the right. Although I feel perfect confidence in the honour and intelligence of our officers, I will not now assume that they may not have been misled. I will prepare myself for the issue; and I will abide by it, as far as I can, in a spirit of impartiality. But what I say is this—that those who have caused such an engagement to fail, ought to become known to their own Government, and to the other contracting Government. I will not say that we are even now in possession of all the facts of the case. But we are in possession of many; and we are in possession of facts which create in our minds impressions unfavourable to the conduct of some of those who form the other party in these negotiations. However, I will not wilfully deviate from the strictest principles of justice in anticipating anything as to the ultimate issue of that fair inquiry which we are desirous of prosecuting, and are endeavouring to prosecute. The cause of that deplorable collision may be uncertain. What is certain is that the attack was a Russian attack. Whose was the provocation is a matter of the utmost consequence. We only know that the attack was a Russian attack. We know that the Afghans suffered in life, in spirit, and in repute. We know that a blow was struck at the credit and the authority of a Sovereign—our ally—our protected ally—who had committed no offence. All I now say is, we cannot in that state of things close this book and say—"We will look into it no more." We must do our best to have right done in the matter.

Under these circumstances, I again say, there is a case for preparation; and I hope that the House will feel with me, after what I have said about the necessity we are under of holding Soudanese funds available for service elsewhere. I trust that they will not press upon us a demand for time, which can have no other effect than that of propagating, here and elsewhere, a belief that there is some indecision in the mind of Parliament; whereas I believe that with one heart and one soul, and one purpose only, while reserving absolute liberty to judge the conduct of the Government, and to visit them with its consequences, they will go forward to meet the demands of justice and the calls of honour, and will, subject only to justice and to honour, labour for the purposes of peace.*

Question put, and *agreed to*.

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS.

(2.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £37,643, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Offices of the House of Lords."

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said that, before discussing this Vote for the House of Lords, he would like to ask the Government for some explanation of a proceeding which appeared to him to be most extraordinary. They had put down on the Paper Classes I. and II. of the Civil Service Estimates, and in the ordinary course the Committee would have been invited to consider the remaining Votes in Class I. before proceeding with any Vote in Class II. They were now very suddenly informed that the Government had postponed one Class of the Votes, and they were at once asked to plunge into Class II. of the Estimates when they had had no intimation whatever that it was the intention of the Treasury to bring that Class under the consideration of the Committee. Before this Vote for the House of Lords was disposed of he wished to ask the Financial Secretary to the Treasury what was the explanation of that proceeding, and why Class II. was to be considered in the first instance before the remaining Votes in Class I. were taken?

MR. HIBBERT said, he had intended to give an explanation of the reason why this Vote was taken out of its order. As a matter of fact, there were only two Votes left in Class I. One of them, which related to the Houses of Parliament, had been postponed, owing to the fact that the Committee appointed to consider the question of the restoration of the outside of Westminster Hall was still sitting, and therefore it was impossible to take that Vote; and with regard to the second, he had been asked by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) on Thursday night to postpone

* NOTE.—See subsequent remarks on April 30th—page 1127.

it for the present. It was a Vote which, among-t other things, had reference to harbours, and there was also an intimation that it was not desirable to discuss it until the Report upon Arklow Harbour was in the hands of hon. Members. He made that explanation in order to justify the course which had been taken. It had been his intention to proceed with the Votes in their regular order. He was still in the hands of the Committee, and if they desired to go forward with the Vote in which the harbours were concerned, he was quite prepared to take it. He had thought, however, that in postponing it for the present he was simply complying with the wishes of the Irish Members, and therefore it could not be said that anybody had been taken by surprise.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he recollected the circumstance to which the hon. Member referred. The hon. Member had certainly been invited to consider whether it was not desirable to postpone the Vote for Public Works in Ireland. The suggestion, in point of fact, emanated from himself, and the Secretary to the Treasury said he would consider the suggestion; but he had never for a moment thought of suggesting that all the other Votes in Class I. should be postponed.

MR. HIBBERT said, there was only one other Vote, and that was for the Houses of Parliament.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that in regard to the Vote now under discussion, he would ask the hon. Member to explain the circumstances in which the Fee Fund of the House of Lords now found itself placed. He believed that the Fee Fund was, to a certain extent, called upon to defray certain salaries and pensions, and he imagined that the pensions, at any rate, which were so drawn from the Fee Fund, were perfectly within the cognizance of the House of Commons. He wished to know what was the amount of the Fee Fund, and what was the amount of the pensions paid out of it, which pensions were indirectly supplemented by something from this Vote?

MR. HIBBERT said, the pensions now amounted to a sum of £2,783 per annum, which was much smaller in comparison with previous years.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked what was the amount of the Fund?

MR. HIBBERT said, the amount received during last year in fees was £32,470, of which nearly £30,000 was paid into the Exchequer. The pensions were calculated upon the salaries, and he believed the House of Commons had no power of reducing them.

MR. CALLAN desired to have some explanation of the reason why the Librarian of the House of Lords had a salary of £810 a-year, and also an official residence. Upon the average, the House of Lords generally rose about 7 o'clock in the evening. He thought that was rather a high average, because that House frequently rose as early as 5 o'clock. The House of Commons generally sat until 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning; and while the Librarian of the House of Lords had an official residence, which included light, coal, and freedom from all taxes, the Librarian of the House of Commons, who was up until 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning, had no official residence at all. He wished, further, to know upon what principle official residences in the Houses of Parliament were granted? He had intended some time ago to move, and he would do so shortly, for a Return showing what the official residences were, and the authority under which they were granted. It seemed to him that, although the House of Commons had not been in existence for much more than 30 years, it had already become an official rabbit warren, overridden by persons who came there and occupied official residences without any authority at all. He could not understand why the Librarian of the House of Lords should have a residence supplied to him, while the Members of the House of Commons, who were engaged in the discharge of their duties until all hours of the morning, had scarcely a place in which to lock up their papers. It was certainly undesirable to give up those enormous buildings to residences for officers who were in receipt of large salaries. He did not suppose there was in the British Empire an official who was paid for the duties he had to perform a higher salary than the Librarian of the House of Lords. He would invite hon. Members to go into the Library of the House of Lords and compare it with that of the House of Commons. They would find that very few of the books were ever removed from the shelves—complete lassitude

prevailed from one end of the building to the other—and yet the officer in charge of the Library had an official residence to protect him from the night air in case he might otherwise have been required to go home at a late hour. In order to secure an explanation, and have a clear understanding why this official residence was provided, he would move to reduce the salary of the Librarian of the House of Lords from £810 to £500. The item would be found at page 83, sub-section 6.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. Member propose to reduce the Vote by the sum of £310?

MR. CALLAN: Yes.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Item of £810, for the Salary of the Librarian of the House of Lords, be reduced by the sum of £310."—(*Mr. Callan.*)

MR. HIBBERT said, the hon. Member was quite right in asserting that it was an anomaly that, while the Librarian of the House of Lords had an official residence provided for him, the Librarian of the House of Commons had none; and he fully admitted that the Librarian of the House of Commons was much more entitled to an official residence than the Librarian of the House of Lords. But, as a matter of fact, this residence was entirely out of the control and management of the House of Commons. The House of Commons had no power whatever over the arrangements of the House of Lords in connection with their own officials. They could only control the salaries; but they had no power over the allotment of the residences. A Committee of the House of Lords managed the whole of the arrangements for the rooms required by that House, and the House of Commons had no control over them. He should be very glad if it were possible to propose a residence for the Librarian of the House of Commons; but that was another matter. He hoped the hon. Member would not press this reduction, because the Committee had really no power over the salary or the residence.

MR. CALLAN asked who had the allocation of the residences in the Houses of Parliament? He put that question quite irrespective of this particular case. He wanted to know who had the right to grant those residences, and he would go to a division for the purpose of testing what the feeling of the Committee was in regard to the matter. Members of Parliament had no convenience whatever. They sat on a narrow bit of a bench about 14 or 15 inches in breadth, and about two feet high, and all they had in the shape of accommodation was a small box in a Lobby outside; whereas he found that nearly every official had a residence provided for him.

THE CHAIRMAN: The observations of the hon. Member do not apply to this Vote, which is for the House of Lords. The Committee will come to the House of Commons Vote presently.

MR. CALLAN said, he wanted to know whether the official residences were under the control of the Chief Commissioner of Works, and why the Houses of Parliament had been allowed to become an absolutely official rabbit warren? The House of Lords rose sufficiently early to permit of its Librarian spending the rest of the evening at a theatre or a music hall; and why should he be provided with an official residence while the Librarian of the House of Commons, who was in attendance all night long, had none? He took it that the value of the residence in this case would be about £310 a year, and, therefore, he proposed to reduce the Vote by that sum. The Houses of Parliament belonged to the nation, and this was a matter of great interest. Unless he received a satisfactory reply he should divide the Committee upon the Vote.

MR. HIBBERT said, he could only explain, as he had already done, that the House of Commons had no power over the official residences, or the allocation of them in the House of Lords. It was a matter entirely under the management and control of the House of Lords itself; and he believed that the Lord Chamberlain made the necessary arrangements in connection with the allocation of rooms. He would remind the Committee that when the House of Commons required rooms for the Grand Committees last year they had considerable difficulty in obtaining them, and only succeeded in doing so after negotiations between the First Commissioner of Works and the House of Lords. In regard to the Librarian of the House of Commons, the provision of a residence for that officer would rest with the Speaker; and he would confer with the Speaker in order to see whether any

arrangement for rooms could be effected. He was afraid that the great difficulty in regard to official residences in the House of Commons would be to find suitable rooms. He would, however, be glad to bring the matter before the Speaker in any way that would conveniently raise the question. If the hon. Member wished to have a Return of the number of persons who had official residences in the Houses of Parliament, he thought it was a proper subject upon which information should be given, but beyond that he could not go.

MR. CALLAN said, that the explanation was quite satisfactory except in the most essential point. He wanted to know by what statute or authority the Lord Chancellor, or the Lord Chamberlain, or any other official presumed to allocate chambers in the House of Lords, which belonged to the nation, to the occupation of any individual? The buildings and fittings were the property of the nation, and in Committee of Supply the House of Commons voted the salaries of all the officials.

MR. HEALY said, it appeared to him that the question raised by the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan) was an important one. At the present moment there was a Bill before the House for reducing the judicial expenditure in Ireland, and yet in this case they had a number of useless officials who got annually nearly £50,000, for which the country received no value. He thought it was quite time the House of Commons commenced a systematic attack upon the officials of the House of Lords. He would suggest that Inspector Denning should be sent over to clear out the whole lot, and let them provide a place of their own, or meet, if they chose, in the Westminster Palace Hotel. He thought they ought in that House to attack systematically anything connected with the House of Lords; and he thought the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan) was perfectly justified in asking questions, and in moving the reduction of the Vote. He was somewhat surprised to find the empty state of the Benches opposite. If that class of persons who were described as "Robust Radicals" would really devote some attention to the discharge of their Parliamentary duties when these Estimates came on something effective might be done; but he was sorry to say that the "Robust Radicals" were at that moment solely represented by the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold). It did appear to him (Mr. Healy) extremely cool that the House of Lords should draw a sum of nearly £50,000 a-year, for which the country did not get 1*d.* of value, while the Treasury should display such great anxiety to cut down the little salaries that were paid in Ireland. The salaries put down in the Estimates were exceedingly large. There was the Lord Chancellor, whose official salary was stated at £4,000 a-year; the Black Rod, who was put down at £2,000; the Yeoman Usher of the Black Rod, who was in receipt of £1,000 a-year; and the principal door-keepers, who were put down as receiving £600 a-year. Those were all gentlemen who were not required to meet until about 5 o'clock in the afternoon, and whose duties were generally over about 6, after one hour's work a-day, which they had to perform for less than six months in the year. The fact was that those officials did not do 200 hours work in the whole 12 months; and yet a country, which was supposed to be distinguished for its common sense, went on paying those salaries year after year without protest or objection. There was one item put down under the head of this Vote as to which he should like to ask a question. He referred to an item of £350 which was charged for "Witnesses attending Committees." What was the meaning of that charge for the expense of witnesses attending Committees of the House of Lords? He would remind the Committee that the House of Commons had sent a Bill to that Chamber last Christmas, and they had never heard anything of the measure since. The House of Lords read the Bill a second time, and then choked it by referring it to a Select Committee, and it would appear that they had incurred an expense of £350 in trying to find out what the people of Ireland thought of the Bill; but what had become of the measure since then nobody seemed to know. He maintained that the House of Commons was entitled to known under what circumstances the expenditure of £350, to which he had drawn attention, had been incurred. In his opinion, the time had come when some attack in force ought to be made on those items of excessive expenditure. Here was a charge of £200 for the Se-

cretary to the Lord Great Chamberlain, and all the other items were in proportion. Really something ought to be done in the way of making a vigorous protest against those ridiculous charges.

THE CHAIRMAN pointed out that the hon. and learned Member could give effect to his views in regard to this Vote when the question under discussion was disposed of. At the present moment the matter under consideration was a special item in the Vote relating to the salary of the Librarian of the House of Lords, and the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan) had moved the reduction of the Vote by £310. The discussion ought, therefore, to be confined to that proposal.

MR. HEALY wished to call attention to the fact that a question had been asked with reference to this Vote, to which no answer had been returned. The question was, under what authority, statutable or otherwise, a certain room had been appropriated to the use of a certain official? The suggestion of the Secretary to the Treasury appeared to be that it was by the authority of the Lord Chamberlain.

MR. HIBBERT said, he had intimated that it was under an arrangement made by a Committee of the House of Lords.

MR. HEALY said, the answer just given carried them no further than they had got before. He should like to know who had given the Committee of the House of Lords that power? Surely the House of Commons, which had command of the National purse, was the Body that ought to be consulted in reference to those matters, and he thought that that House ought to assert itself in the face of the Upper House. The House of Lords had shown no hesitation in encroaching on the privileges of the Commons by throwing out Bills which the House of Commons had passed, especially Bills relating to Ireland, whenever they were sent into the Upper Chamber; and the House of Lords ought to be made to feel that in regard to those matters of money expenditure the House of Commons had the power of control, and that there was some other power over the Palace of Westminster than that of a Select Committee of the House of Lords, headed by the Lord Chamberlain. That Committee had no right to give away rooms that belonged to the country at large; and seeing that the officials of the House of Lords were a great deal better treated in every way than those of the House of Commons, who were an exceedingly hard-working body of men, whose time was taken up from 4 o'clock in the afternoon very often until 4 o'clock in the morning, it was time that some satisfactory explanation was given of this Vote.

MR. HIBBERT said, he had already given the explanation asked for. He might, however, state that at the time the Houses of Parliament were built a division was made of the amount of space available as between the two Houses, a certain amount being allotted to the House of Commons, and a certain amount to the House of Lords.

MR. PARNELL asked whether that division was made under an Act of Parliament?

MR. HIBBERT said, he could not say that it was made under an Act of Parliament; but it was made under an arrangement that was come to at the time. Moreover, it should be remembered that several years ago a further arrangement was made, under which the House of Commons had obtained the use of one or two additional rooms which used to be occupied by the House of Lords. The House of Commons had, however, no power over the allocation of the rooms used by the House of Lords, nor had they any power over the regulation of the salaries of the officials of that House. Therefore, whatever opinions might be entertained with regard to the different accommodation afforded to the Librarians of the two Houses, the matter was one with regard to which the House of Commons had no power. They had, however, power, through the Speaker, of communicating with the Office of Works, and endeavouring to obtain accommodation for the Librarian of the House of Commons if the House should think it desirable to take that course.

MR. HEALY said, he had generally found that on occasions of this kind the Treasury were willing to say that when the salary of a certain officer fell in, as, for instance, in case of death, they would give their attention to the matter. In a case of this kind, where the House might be extremely anxious to appropriate the residence allocated by the House of Lords as the residence of the Librarian of the House of Commons—an officer who was constantly kept at his post

until the long hours of the morning—he wished to put it to the Government whether they would not come to the conclusion that, whenever the circumstances should arise that would render that residence vacant, they would take the necessary steps to ensure its being given to that officer who had by far the most occasion for it?

MR. HIBBERT said, he could not make the promise asked for; but, as he had already intimated, he should be glad to bring the matter prominently under the attention of the Speaker, and he should feel as much gratified as anyone to see the Librarian properly housed in that building.

MR. CALLAN said, he was glad to see that attention had been drawn to the injustice done to the Librarian of the House of Commons; but he desired to state that in moving the reduction of the Vote on the grounds he had stated he had acted without communication with that officer in any sense or form, and, in fact, had carefully avoided mentioning the matter to him. Still, he felt that an injustice was done to the Librarian of the House, and he should be glad to see the injustice remedied. He had brought the question forward on another ground — namely, because he considered that there had been an assumption of right without any legal authority whatever. He asked, who really was the authority having charge of the Houses of Lords and Commons? Was it not the First Commissioner of Works? If not, who was the official who was responsible for the charge of the two Houses; or was there any responsible authority at all?

MR. HIBBERT replied that the Lord Great Chamberlain was responsible for the House of Lords, and the Speaker for the House of Commons.

MR. CALLAN asked under what statutable authority, if any, such jurisdiction was vested in the two officers named in regard to the Houses of Lords and Commons? It seemed to him that the authority exercised proceeded on the title of internal assumption. He had looked into the matter—he would not say very carefully—but he had recently spent half-an-hour in looking at Acts of Parliament extending over the last 20 or 30 years, in order to find out whether there was any statutable authority under which the Lord Chancellor, or the Lord Chamberlain, or the Speaker of the House of Commons presumed to allocate the different parts of that building to the detriment of the Members of the House of Commons—for it was to their detriment if it precluded them from the use of rooms which might otherwise be at their disposal—and he had altogether failed to find any such authority. They must remember the discussion that had taken place about the allocation of rooms for the telegraph and post offices, when it was made to appear that the jurisdiction was under some antiquated authority, the origin of which was anything but clear. Under the circumstances, he must press his Motion to a division; though he would not take that course if the hon. Member for Leeds (Mr. Herbert Gladstone), or the Secretary to the Treasury, would furnish the Committee with any definite information as to the statutable authority under which the Lord Chancellor or the Lord Chamberlain presumed to exercise authority in regard to the allocation of private residences within that building. If that information were not furnished, then, as a protest against this allocation of private residences to officials who had no right to them, he should go to a division on the Motion he had submitted.

MR. PARNELL said, he always liked to go back to the beginning in discussing questions of this kind; and as a very interesting point had been raised by the subject brought under the consideration of the Committee by the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan), he should like to ask the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury how it was that there seemed to be so little control in regard to the distribution of space in the House of Lords? How came it that there was so little control over that distribution on the part of the House of Commons? He should like to hear from the hon. Gentleman in what way the title to the land upon which the House of Lords stood was vested, and in what body? Was it vested in the House of Lords itself, or was it vested in some Committee appointed by that Body, or in some official appointed by the House of Lords, or in the Houses of Parliament generally? He should also like to know, going a little further than that, if the land were not vested by title, whether it was vested by prescriptive right; and, moreover, he would ask the

hon. Gentleman a question as to the buildings themselves. He supposed the Houses of Parliament were originally built under the authority of a Vote of the House of Commons. He had no doubt the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury was acquainted with the history of those matters, and that he would be able, consequently, to enlighten his (Mr. Parnell's) ignorance. He assumed that those buildings, which were modern, were originally built out of money provided by a Vote of the House of Commons, and that they were in all probability erected under the direction of a Governmental Department of the State. If he were right in that assumption he should wish, further, to inquire whether the buildings so erected were vested in any particular body, and whether—this being a collateral inquiry to the other question as to the authority in which the land was vested—if the buildings were vested in some particular body, the hon. Gentleman would state in what body they were vested? He put those questions because it might turn out that the House of Commons had a very complete control, not only over the land on which the Houses of Lords and Commons was built, but also over the buildings themselves, and over every portion of those buildings. It must, he thought, be obvious to everybody that the control of the House of Lords over any portion of the buildings was of a very nominal and shadowy character; that if the interest in the ground on which the buildings stood were vested in some particular body under the control of the House of Lords, nevertheless the House of Commons was the authority outside the House of Lords in which the land or buildings were vested, and might say to the House of Lords—"We give you that notice to quit which is so very often given to Irish tenants." He believed that in this country it would only be a quarter's notice to quit, and that failing a possible surrender on the part of the House of Lords, the House of Commons could direct the sergeants and constables of the Metropolitan Police to take forcible possession of the building from which the Lords were evicted, and hold it according to the will and pleasure of the body of Trustees in whom it was really vested. They had heard something in the course of that discussion about the Lord Chamberlain.

MR. HIBBERT: The Lord Great Chamberlain.

MR. PARNELL said, it had been stated that the Lord Great Chamberlain had the right to allocate the space in the other House. But no statement had been made as to how the Lord Great Chamberlain derived his authority. He (Mr. Parnell) assumed that that authority was derived from a Resolution of the House of Lords; but to go back a little further, how did the House of Lords derive its authority in the matter? Had the House of Lords anything more than a prescriptive right? He must assume that the land and buildings would be property to which there was some title, and he wanted to know what the title to that property was. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury did not appear to have full and sufficient information on the subject; but he trusted the hon. Gentleman would not consider that these inquiries were useless, and that when they came to discuss these matters next year—or, better still, when they came to discuss them on the Report, because they could not control the action of a House to be elected by a new constituency—the Secretary to the Treasury would be able to furnish full information on the interesting questions that had been raised with regard to the original control of the land on which the Houses of Parliament had been built, and also with reference to the original control over the buildings themselves. If the hon. Gentleman were going to purchase property, even if the seller were so great a personage as the Lord Great Chamberlain himself, he would, before he paid for it, ask the Lord Great Chamberlain to produce his title.

MR. HIBBERT said, there were some points that had been alluded to upon which he was not in a position to furnish information, and he thought he could hardly be expected to go back to the history of the building of the Houses of Parliament, and all the circumstances immediately connected with the allocation of the different parts of the building without Notice. All he could be expected to do was to describe the practical effect of the arrangements that were then made, and that he had endeavoured to do. He had already informed the Committee that the Lord Great Chamberlain was responsible for

the arrangements carried out in regard to the allocation of space in the House of Lords on the one side, while the Speaker was on the other side entrusted with the requisite authority in respect to the allotment of space in connection with the House of Commons. He had also stated that from time to time the House of Commons had obtained more space for the use of Members and officers, and that that additional space had been given up by the House of Lords. If, however, the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) desired to go into the question more closely than he (Mr. Hibbert) was able to do at the present moment, he could assure the hon. Gentleman that he should be glad to obtain the information he desired, either on the Report of the Vote, or when it was again brought forward, supposing he should then hold the Office he now had the honour to fill. In any case, he should be happy to obtain the information, not only for his own sake, but because it had been asked for by the hon. Member.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, the question before the Committee was a very narrow one, and with reference to the proceedings of the Committee of the House of Lords on the Office of the Black Rod he should like to ask a practical question. The Committee of the Black Rod had reported on this very subject with reference to the appropriation by the First Commissioner of Works of certain rooms below the Bar in the House of Lords. That Committee had reported to the House of Lords that the First Commissioner of Works had appropriated those rooms, and that they ought to be given up again to the other House. He should like to know whether any decision had been arrived at with regard to that matter, and whether the rooms referred to were to be given back again?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he had to state, in reply to the question asked by his hon. Friend, that his action in the matter alluded to had been called in question by the Black Rod Committee, who thought that those rooms, which had originally been allotted to the House of Lords, had been wrongly disposed of. The Committee on the Office of Black Rod had inquired into the matter, and had made the Report to which the hon. Member had referred; but he was not aware that any action had been taken on that Report. He had reason, however, to believe that the House of Lords were satisfied with what had been done. In reply to the question put by the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), he had to state that in theory the assent of the Lord Great Chamberlain was necessary in relation to any change that might be made in the allocation of rooms in both Houses of Parliament, because he was the appointed Officer of the Queen, and the Houses of Parliament were a Royal Palace. But, as a matter of course, the Lord Great Chamberlain would not make any change in respect of the House of Commons without the concurrence of the Speaker; and, on the other hand, no change would be made affecting the House of Lords without the concurrence of the Committee on the Office of Black Rod. So that, practically, the decision with regard to those matters rested in the one case with the Speaker, and in the other with the Committee of the House of Lords.

MR. PARNELL was obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for the information he had given, and he thought that what had so far been elicited had furnished proof of the very great anomaly, that not only the House of Lords but also the House of Commons could be turned out of doors by the Queen if it should please Her to take that course. It appeared that not only the ground on which the House of Commons conducted its proceedings, but also the Houses which had been erected upon it were the property of the Queen.

LORD JOHN MANNERS said, it seemed to him that the position of the two Houses of Parliament in regard to the Lord Great Chamberlain and the Queen, which had been termed an anomaly, was in strict analogy with everything connected with the Constitution; and that if everything belonging to that Constitution was to be pushed to its extreme logical conclusion many other things besides the relations between the Houses of Lords and Commons, as to their accommodation in this Palace, might be brought to a very uncomfortable stand-point. Having himself held the Office of First Commissioner of Works he must say that he had never, during his tenure of

Office, found that any practical inconvenience resulted from the slightly confused relations between the great Officers of State. The Lord Great Chamberlain's Office was always conducted with the greatest prudence and respect for all the other authorities; and in the same way Mr. Speaker, acting through the First Commissioner of Works, had invariably pursued a similar course. Until the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had unearthed the question he had introduced that evening, he (Lord John Manners) had never heard of any difficulty arising out of the relations existing between the Lord Great Chamberlain and Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SEXTON having risen,

THE CHAIRMAN said, before the hon. Member addressed the Committee he desired to call attention to the question they were then considering, and which they had for some time been wandering away from in a most extraordinary manner. It had been moved by the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan) that the salary of the Librarian of the House of Lords be reduced by £310; and all the points that had been raised in the discussion which was then proceeding had really nothing to do with that question.

MR. CALLAN said, he had moved the reduction of the salary of the Librarian of the House of Lords because he called in question the authority under which that officer was provided with an official residence, and that was the only way in which he could raise the question as to the advisability of giving an official residence to the Librarian of the House of Commons. The sum put down in the Vote that had been put from the Chair, as the salary of the Librarian of the House of Lords, was £810, and in addition to that amount the Lords' Librarian was provided with an official residence. The reduction he had moved was what he took to be the value of that official residence, not merely in the shape of house-rent, but also all the accompaniments of the official residence, including attendance.

THE CHAIRMAN said, he hoped the hon. Member (Mr. Callan) could have no idea of the number of times he had stated the same thing. He should think he was not exaggerating when he stated that the hon. Gentleman had made the same statement 50 times.

MR. CALLAN said, then he stated it for the 51st time now.

THE CHAIRMAN: If the hon. Member makes remarks of that sort it will be my duty to adopt a very different course. I hope the Committee will now confine itself to the discussion of the Question immediately before it.

MR. CALLAN said, he wished to point out that the Librarian's residence included fire, and light, and attendance, which he took it amounted in value to more than £310. He should press the Amendment he had moved; and with all due respect to the Chair, he begged to say that he had not made the same statement more than three times, instead of 50, as the Chairman had stated.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member having contradicted the statement I made just now, I will appeal to the recollection of the Committee as to whether I am not right in saying that I believe he has made the same statement in almost the same words more than 50 times?

MR. SEXTON said, the question that had been under discussion by the Committee was one that related to the power possessed by the Lord Great Chamberlain, and that had led to the further question whether the Lord Great Chamberlain had the allocation of the space on which the two Houses of Parliament stood? He took the noble Lord who had spoken from the Front Opposition Bench (Lord John Manners) as an authority with regard to Constitutional usage; and the noble Lord had assured the Committee that what had been commented upon as an anomalous arrangement was, in reality, strictly Constitutional. But when the matter was reduced to the stand-point of common sense, it was somewhat startling to be told that the Representatives of the people were liable to be evicted at the discretion of a Court official. That, he thought, threw some light on a recent occurrence, when the Speaker had felt it his duty to make new Regulations as to the admission of strangers to the Lobbies of that House.

THE CHAIRMAN called the hon. Member to Order. The subject he was raising had nothing to do with the Question before the Committee, which was that the salary of the Librarian of

the House of Lords be reduced by the sum of £310. That Question had no connection whatever with the Regulations made by the Speaker in regard to the admission of strangers to the Lobbies of the House of Commons.

MR. SEXTON said, he would raise the question he had been about to have introduced on the next Vote.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 17; Noes 92: Majority 75.—(Div. List, No. 130.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. PARNELL desired to move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £350, which was set down as the cost of witnesses attending Committees during the year 1885-6. That appeared to be a constant sum, as a similar amount was taken for the same purpose in 1884-5; in fact, all the expenses of the House of Lords appeared to be of a constant character. Under sub-head M, for instance, £750 was taken each year for short-hand writers, and for miscellaneous expenses £350 was asked for each year. His reason for calling attention to that matter, and moving the reduction in question, was that he thought the House of Commons would do well to exercise a very severe check and control over the appointment of Select Committees by the House of Lords for the purpose of considering Bills, or, practically, hanging up and destroying Bills, which they did not like to oppose openly and directly, which had been passed by the House of Commons, and sent up to the Lords for examination and consideration. He thought that the Government were very much to blame in that matter—the Government, at all events, in the House of Lords—and he assumed the Members of the Government in the House of Lords were in constant communication with the rest of the Government in the House of Commons. He assumed that the action of the Members of the Government in the House of Lords was arrived at, and carried out, after consultation with the rest of the Government. But however that might be, he thought that the Government in the House of Lords, through Earl Granville, or the other responsible Leaders of the House, assented much too easily to the appointment of Select Committees for the purpose of considering Bills which had passed the House of Commons; and that they, in that way, heaped expenses upon the taxpayers of the country—in many cases very useless and unnecessary expenses. He desired very much to know how the expenditure of £350 for witnesses attending Select Committees of the Upper House was incurred? He confessed he did not understand whether all the money was expended on account of witnesses attending Select Committees, or whether some of it was expended on account of witnesses attending ordinary Private Bill Committees. [MR. HIBBERT: Select Committees.] That was his (Mr. Parnell's) impression; but he was not quite certain on the point. They were asked to pay an aggregate sum of £1,500 for the expenses of the Select Committees of the House of Lords; and in order to bring the matter formally before the attention of the Committee of the House of Commons, he proposed to reduce the Vote by the sum of £350, being the expenses of the witnesses attending the Select Committees in question. Now, nothing was complete without an illustration, and in order to bring the matter home to hon. Members, he would give them an example of the way in which that money was spent. In fact, he fancied that that particular item was spent in regard to the very example he should give, as he had not heard that any other Select Committee necessitating the attendance of witnesses had been appointed lately by the House of Lords than the one he had in his mind. His example was the Select Committee which was appointed by the Upper House to inquire into the subject of the Poor Law Guardians Elections (Ireland) Bill. That was a Bill which had passed the House of Commons, with very little opposition, in the Session of 1883. It was then sent up to the House of Lords, and rejected on the second reading by that House without any examination or discussion worthy of the name. In the Session of 1884 the Bill again passed the House of Commons, and was sent up to the House of Lords, which, on that occasion, appeared to be rather chary of throwing the measure out in the summary method adopted on the previous occasion. Their Lordships passed the second reading; but on the Motion for going into Committee they

The Chairman

resolved to refer the Bill to a Select Committee for examination.

The CHAIRMAN said, the hon. Member seemed to be directing his remarks to the conduct of the House of Lords. He (the Chairman) did not think that that could be fairly discussed in regard to Committees acting on Bills in that House. The hon. Member himself would see that the conduct of the House of Lords could hardly be properly discussed on an item of £350 to defray the cost of witnesses attending Committees.

Mr. PARNELL said, he should, of course, bow to the Chairman's ruling. He would not further discuss the conduct of the House of Lords; but he submitted that it was necessary to go, to some extent, into what had been done for the expenditure of the money. It was necessary, in order that the Committee might judge as to whether they ought to vote this money or not, to consider the action of the House of Lords which gave rise to this item.

The CHAIRMAN said, he did not desire to interrupt the hon. Member in any observations which were in Order. The province of this Committee was to vote certain sums, or to refuse them, for certain specific purposes. He doubted whether it would be in Order for the hon. Member to go into any great development of the action of the House of Lords, even by way of illustration; because this was a sum of £350 for a specific purpose of defraying the costs of witnesses attending Select Committees in the other House. He should say it would hardly be in Order to discuss the general conduct of the Upper House on such an item as that.

Mr. PARNELL appreciated the point of the Chairman's ruling, and, of course, would bow to it. He saw that there was a considerable difference between the action of the House of Lords, from a Constitutional point of view, and the action of a Minister of the Crown. There was, of course, a considerable difference between the manner in which they would approach a Minister of the Crown, and the manner in which they might be permitted to approach a Vote with regard to the action of the House of Lords. Whereas they might freely go into the merits of the action of a Minister of the Crown with reference to any particular matter; whereas they might criticize his action, and the policy of his action, when they were asked to vote a Minister's salary, perhaps the same argument might not hold good with regard to the action of a Committee of the House of Lords, or of the House of Lords itself. He desired, with great respect, without wishing to express any opinion of his own, to bow most humbly to the Chairman's ruling. He would only say why he objected to this Vote for the expenses of witnesses brought over from Ireland for examination before a Select Committee of the House of Lords. In his opinion, those witnesses were not impartially summoned. Of course, he desired to keep himself strictly within the limits the Chairman had laid down, and not to transgress them in any way. He would suggest for the consideration of the Government whether they ought not to take up a firmer attitude in the House of Lords with regard to the Select Committees appointed by that House; whether they should so readily yield to the appointment of those Committees; and whether, when a Committee had been appointed, in the teeth of the Government's protest with reference to a Bill to which they gave their sanction—whether, when a Committee was appointed by the House of Lords in order to oppose a Bill which the Government, and which the House of Commons, had almost unanimously passed, the Government might not fairly set down their foot, and tell the House of Lords—"All we can say is this—if you appoint this Committee we shall not support the payment out of the public purse necessary for this Committee, when that payment is proposed in the House of Commons. We shall leave you to pay for such Committees yourselves." That Bill had been hung up in the House of Lords. It was a Bill which was admittedly necessary, and which nobody had a word to say against. It was a Bill of which they had heard the last in that Parliament; and, forsooth! the Irish and English taxpayers were to pay for the infliction upon themselves of wrong.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the item of £350, for Witnesses attending Committees, be omitted from the proposed Vote."—(*Mr. Parnell.*)

Mr. HIBBERT pointed out to the hon. Gentleman that though this amount

appeared to be the sum that was voted in previous years, it was really not the amount that was expended each year. The amount was taken on the assumption that it would probably be required next year. £350 was not spent last year in defraying the costs of witnesses, but only £251; and the year before that the charge under the same head was only £119.

MR. PARNELL: Will the hon. Gentleman tell us what Committees were appointed?

MR. HIBBERT said, that he was not able to do that. He did not know anything about the Select Committees of the House of Lords; indeed, it was a matter with which the Treasury had no right to interfere; and he should doubt whether he should be in Order in going into the question of Committees. He was quite satisfied that he would not be in Order in expressing his opinion as to the action of the House of Lords upon the Poor Law Guardians Elections (Ireland) Bill; and, therefore, he hoped the hon. Member would excuse him from doing so. The hon. Member objected to this item because it might, he said, be put to the purpose of re-imbursing Irish witnesses who had been brought before the Select Committee on the Bill just mentioned. That could not be the case with respect to this particular £350. This charge was taken for Committees who would sit during the present Session; and, therefore, it was not known whether any such Committee, as the hon. Member referred to, would be appointed. Moreover, it could not be known whether any Irish witnesses would be sent for.

MR. PARNELL: The Committee is sitting now.

MR. HIBBERT begged the hon. Member's pardon, because he did not know that that was the case. This money might therefore be used for the purpose of paying the expenses of Irish witnesses; but perhaps he ought to draw attention to the fact that the payment for witnesses before Committees of the House of Lords was a matter with which the House of Commons had no power to deal.

MR. BIGGAR remarked that the explanation of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert) was very peculiar. The hon. Gentleman had stated that although £350 was set down for the expenses of witnesses attending Committees, only £251 was expended last year, and £119 the year before. That seemed to him (Mr. Biggar) to be a rather loose mode of estimating. In fact, they might just as well have no Estimate at all. They might as well, at the end of the year, pass a Vote that whatever was expended should be made legal. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury ought to tell the Committee whether or not he believed that the present system was an advantageous one, and whether he did not think he ought to adopt some revised plan of making Estimates? The money they were now asked to vote seemed to him (Mr. Biggar) to be expended for the purpose of doing harm rather than good; and he certainly thought that the Treasury, who was supposed to supervise the expenditure in all the Departments, should reserve to itself the right to put a veto upon expenditure which it believed to be unreasonable. In point of fact, the Treasury should assist the House of Commons in stopping any payments which they thought were useless. Now, the appointment of the Select Committee of the House of Lords upon the Bill to which the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had alluded, was unquestionably made with the object of defeating that very meritorious Bill, and also, if possible, to convey perfectly erroneous ideas as to the real facts connected with the Bill. The Members of the Select Committee were of a partizan character, and would endeavour to mislead the public with regard to the real merits of the case. He thought it should be within the power of the Treasury to refuse the expenses of admittedly useless witnesses, because if that were so, a very considerable saving of expenditure would be effected.

MR. SEXTON said, it appeared to him that the hon. Gentleman in charge of the Vote (Mr. Hibbert) did not possess information sufficient to enable him to give particulars which hon. Members were entitled to receive with reference to this item. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) suggested, in the course of his speech, that some of this money might have been used for the purpose of paying the travelling expenses, and the maintenance expenses, of Irish witnesses

summoned before a Committee of the House of Lords. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert) replied that he did not imagine such a contingency could arise with respect to any part of the present item.

MR. HIBBERT said, he was not aware when he spoke that the Committee on the Poor Law Bill was now sitting. Had he been aware of that fact, he should not have made the remarks he did.

MR. SEXTON said, the Committee was sitting; it was appointed last year, and had not yet reported; consequently, its investigations were now in course of progress. The assumption made by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) was one which was substantiated by facts. What degree of information were Members of the House entitled to expect on items of this kind? He had always understood that every Vote in the Estimates was accounted for by some accounting officer; that there was someone whose duty it was to render to the Treasury and the House an account of the manner in which the last payment had been spent. Who was the person to account for this expenditure? Who signified to the Comptroller and Auditor General that the money granted to the House of Lords had been duly and properly expended, and what particulars would that officer afford as to items of that kind? Would he inquire in reference to what Committees that money had been spent, what witnesses had been called before those Committees, and what expense had been paid? He (Mr. Sexton) thought the Committee might claim to have put before them that information, because a very important question was here raised. Evidence brought before the House of Lords was very often used for the purpose of evading information; and he therefore asked in reference to what Committees that money would be applied? He would put a case to illustrate his meaning. A Bill passed through the House of Commons by a large majority, and was rejected by the House of Lords. A second Session it passed the House of Commons, and the House of Lords, being unwilling to incur the odium of rejecting it, though the merits of the measure were well known, and though it was obvious that no further inquiry was required into it, referred it to a Select Committee. In that way time was killed, the Bill was deferred for months—it might be for years—and in that way the wish of the House of Commons was defeated, and defeated to a large extent through the agency of the money they voted to the House of Lords. It was perfectly evident that if the purpose of the appointment of those Committees was to evade legislation the Government should challenge the House of Lords, and ask them to reject Bills finally, rather than to waste money in killing time and calling witnesses in matters on which no information was required. If the information he was now requesting in this item, and, in fact, in all the other items in the Estimate, was not forthcoming, he thought they would not be asking too much that the Votes should be postponed.

MR. P. J. POWER said, that it appeared to him that the House of Lords was too active in the way of obstructing useful legislation.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, Order!

MR. P. J. POWER said, that if he were not in Order, he would confine himself to the items in the Vote. One of the methods of obstructing legislation pursued by the House of Lords was by referring Bills to Select Committees; and that seemed to him to be about the worst possible mode, as it incurred a large amount of unnecessary expense, and brought witnesses unnecessarily to London. Witnesses were summoned, particularly from Ireland, of a class unfriendly to the Party he had the honour of representing, so that that Party suffered particularly from that mode of referring Bills approved by the House of Commons to Select Committees when they reached the House of Lords. Irish Members were, therefore, bound in duty to, at any rate, offer a protest against that practice of referring Bills to Select Committees when the conclusions were really foregone.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:* — Ayes 20; Noes 108: Majority 88.—(Div. List, No. 131.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(3.) £45,772, House of Commons Offices.

MR. PARNELL said, they had had an interesting discussion some time ago with reference to the Vote for the House of Lords as to the particular body in which the ownership of the buildings and ground of the Houses of Parliament were vested; and hon. Members had been informed that the Houses of Parliament, being Royal Palaces, were vested in an official—namely, the Lord Great Chamberlain, as representing the Crown. The Lord Great Chamberlain, then, was really the owner, as representing the Crown, of the Houses of Parliament and the ground on which they stood. However, by usage or by custom, the right of allocating a portion of the space within the Houses of Parliament, and the right of dealing with the rooms of the Houses and with the internal arrangements of the Houses generally, seemed to have been transferred to certain bodies and certain individuals; and he supposed the Board of Works had already a great deal to say on the matter, at all events in the House of Commons. But what he wished to call attention to was this—namely, to certain inconveniences which had arisen, owing to the new Rules made by Mr. Speaker with regard to the admission of strangers. He wished to call attention to those inconveniences, and to suggest a remedy. After a recent occurrence in the House—an explosion of dynamite, which he believed took place in the lower corner on the Government side of the House—Mr. Speaker felt it necessary to interfere with the usage that had prevailed with regard to the admission of strangers, and to direct that no strangers should in future be admitted into any part of the House of Commons upon the order of a Member; and the right hon. Gentleman had taken upon himself the right of admitting all strangers to any part of the House. He (Mr. Parnell), of course, did not intend to allude at that moment to the right of the Speaker to make such Rules and Regulations, though he thought that that right might be seriously challenged; but he wished to point to one result of those Regulations. It was formerly the custom to permit Members' secretaries to write from the dictation of Members from the Tea Room of the House; but one of the results of the Rules of Mr. Speaker had been that Members' secretaries could no longer see Members in the Tea Room, and were compelled to remain outside the precincts of the House altogether. It was not possible for Members to bring their secretaries to the Tea Room or any of the Libraries. He believed it would be possible, by going through a very roundabout form, to obtain permission for them, if there was room, to sit in the Strangers' Gallery, to bring them down to one of the Smoking Rooms of the House, and so to enable them to discharge their duties. But that would be a very inconvenient method; and so far as he knew, the private secretaries who were, or had been, in the habit of coming to the Tea Room for the purpose of performing their duties, had not attempted to perform them in any part of the House of Commons since the new Rules were made. Now, what he would suggest would be this—in fact, he might say he had communicated with the Speaker's Secretary on the matter, and had had the honour of receiving a reply that the Speaker was in communication with one of the officials of the House for the purpose of providing a room where Members might see their secretaries. What he would suggest was that proper provision should be made for the convenience of hon. Members in this respect, and what he wished to know was whether any steps had been taken to carry out that half promise of the Speaker? Was there any prospect of a room being provided for the purpose of enabling Members to see their secretaries? If not, would tables be set up in the Central Lobby, and writing paper and envelopes, &c., provided, to enable Members to dictate their correspondence to their secretaries? Would places be provided for secretaries to sit and write, and for Members to come and sign their letters after they had been written? To those Members of the House who had a large correspondence, and whose duties compelled them to be in somewhat constant attendance in the House, this system, under which it was impossible to see their private secretaries, made it extremely inconvenient, almost impossible, to fulfil their duties to those people who were in correspondence with them. It was almost impossible for them to answer letters, and at the same time attend to their functions in the House, because a man obviously

could not be in two places at once. Even if a Member's office were in the immediate neighbourhood of the House it was exceedingly inconvenient to have to rush out between divisions and between times when it might be possible for him to devote a few minutes away from his Parliamentary duties to the carrying on of his correspondence. It was next to impossible for a Member to rush out into the street in the snow or the rain, or however inclement the weather might be, perhaps to catch cold, for the purpose of looking after his correspondence. That, he thought, was a matter on which private Members were entitled to ask that some room should be assigned to them to enable them to carry on their correspondence as heretofore. It was almost impossible for a Member to get through his correspondence now, unless he wrote his letters himself. That applied to a Member who had but a small correspondence; because, of course, in the case of a Member with a large correspondence it was obviously next to impossible for him to get through it at all. He hoped this matter might have considerably advanced since the beginning of the Session when, as he had already said, Mr. Speaker had informed him that he was engaged in communication with the officers who had power to deal with the rooms of the House. He hoped he might hear of there being some probability of a convenient, well-aired, well-warmed, and well-lighted room being given to Members for the purpose of getting through their correspondence.

MR. HIBBERT said, he was not aware of the difficulty the hon. Member alluded to with regard to the rights and inconveniences of Members and their secretaries; but, no doubt, all hon. Members had had to submit to inconveniences since those unfortunate occurrences in Westminster Hall and the House of Commons. He was not prepared to give a definite reply as to the position in which the matter now stood; and he could only say that, so far as he was concerned, he should use his influence in order to secure to hon. Members the necessary means for transacting their business in the most comfortable manner possible. At the same time, they all knew there was not very much space at liberty in the House of Commons. With regard to a room being set apart for the use of Members and their secretaries, he could see no objection to the proposal personally, and he would promise to draw the attention of the Speaker to the matter once more. Even if a room were granted, he could not promise that it would be a very comfortable or desirable one for the purpose.

COLONEL NOLAN considered that the hon. Member for the City of Cork was a great deal too modest in bringing forward this question. The grievance was one which he (Colonel Nolan) could thoroughly understand, and which had been very much under his attention. The question was not merely one of providing for the convenience of Members. The Government had at their disposal some 30 rooms in the House—some Members of the Government having two, and some even three. [MR. HIBBERT: No, no!] He thought the Chief Secretary for Ireland had two or three rooms, or ante-rooms. Would the hon. Member say how many rooms the Government had in the House? He (Colonel Nolan) believed it to be somewhere about 30.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the hon. and gallant Member that these observations are not in Order on the present Vote. This Vote is for the payment of officials in the House of Commons, and it is not in connection with the Government nor the Speaker. The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) made some observations for the purpose of eliciting information which seemed quite permissible under the circumstances, and, therefore, I did not stop him. But it will not be right on this Vote for anyone to impugn any arrangement made by Mr. Speaker.

MR. PARNELL: I see there is an item here for shorthand writers.

COLONEL NOLAN said, the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had no business to speak unless he wished to address the Chair on a point of Order, as he (Colonel Nolan) was in possession of the Committee. As the hon. Member was not speaking to a point of Order, he (Colonel Nolan) should like to point out that the Serjeant-at-Arms was in this Vote, and he supposed, therefore, that it had something to do with keeping order in some part of the House, possibly in the Library. He (Colonel Nolan) wished to

make a complaint with regard to the Library, and he would ask the Chairman whether he would be in Order in going into that subject?

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. and gallant Member may mention whatever he likes in connection with the Serjeant-at-Arms Department.

COLONEL NOLAN: I also see the Department of the Chairman of Ways and Means down in this Vote. I object, Sir, to your having a room.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. and gallant Member is perfectly in Order in alluding to that subject.

COLONEL NOLAN said, it was not because he had any fault to find with the Chairman's ruling, or because he did not think the hon. Gentleman had presided very admirably over their Committees; but he thought the Chairman's room ought to be sacrificed until the arrangements of hon. Members were satisfied. Members of the Cabinet had rooms behind Mr. Speaker's Chair, and right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench also had rooms. [An hon. MEMBER: Have they?] Yes. Hon. Members did not seem to be aware of those facts. The Whips of the Government had rooms outside in the Lobby, and the Whips of the Opposition had also got them.

THE CHAIRMAN: There is no reference to these officers in the Vote under discussion. They are connected with the Building Vote, and that would be the proper place to raise this question. It would be competent to move the reduction of the salary of the Chairman of Ways and Means, or any other official of the House on this Vote, but not to discuss the allocation of rooms.

COLONEL NOLAN said, that if the Chairman ruled him out of Order on this point—if the Chairman ruled that he had no right to say that he (the Chairman) should not have a room—of course he would reserve his observations to another occasion.

MR. PARNELL said, he was astonished to hear the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Hibbert) say that he had heard nothing, up to that moment, about the matter he (Mr. Parnell) had submitted to him. From the letter he (Mr. Parnell) had received from Mr. Speaker, he was induced to believe that the matter had been brought under the hon. Member's notice, or under the notice of some other official. He had presumed that the hon. Member was the official under whose notice the matter would have been brought.

MR. HIBBERT: No.

MR. PARNELL: Then under whose notice would it have been brought?

MR. HIBBERT: I think the Office of Works.

MR. PARNELL wished to say a few words with regard to the Vote for the Department of Mr. Speaker. He observed that in that Department the House provided salaries for the Librarian, Assistant Librarian, Messenger in Library, Extra Messenger in Library; in short, all the officials connected with the Library. He believed that it would at once strike the Committee that the number of assistants in the Library was very limited indeed, in respect of the duties they were called upon to perform. Now, there had been a discussion a short time since in the Committee on the Vote for the Librarian of the House of Lords. They saw that a very large sum of money was voted to the Librarian of the House of Lords, and he certainly thought that this was a matter which might very fairly engage the attention of the Committee. In the American Congress a very large number of Librarians and assistants were employed to enable the Members to get on with their business. If one required to be informed about any question it was only necessary to go into the Library and state the information required, and within a certain time it was produced, and the whole subject made up, so to speak, cut and dried; but in the case of the Library of the House of Commons, every obstruction and obstacle seemed placed in the way of Members, not by the officials, who, considering their number, did more than their best for the purpose of serving and attending to the requirements of Members, but owing to the system which had been adopted of having a small number of officials who were overburdened with the task of getting down books for Members to read, which made it impossible for hon. Members to get the information they required when it was most wanted. Returning to the subject of shorthand writers and secretaries, if those assistants were not allowed access to Members in the House, he thought it the duty of the Government to provide

shorthand writers for them in the Library for the purpose of taking down letters. He believed that with proper facilities the correspondence of Members could be got through with an immense economy of time, and that posts would be saved which were under the present arrangements very often lost. In his own case, he knew that between the impossibility of getting at his shorthand writer and the subsequent delay of his letters in the Post Office which always took place his business arrangements were very much interfered with. Besides the delay caused by missing the post, he found that his letters did not arrive until long after the time at which they should have reached their destination, having in the meantime been examined in the Post Office, and in some cases by the higher officials at the Home Office. But he said that if they were not to have access to their shorthand writers, the Government should put down a Vote for the purpose of supplying shorthand writers for Members who, by the aid of the new type-writers, would then be able to perform their duties to their constituents in a shorter space of time than they were now able to perform them in owing to the existing arrangements. With regard to the placing of paper and ink in the Central Lobby, he would point out that the Lobby was large enough to afford space for a dozen tables. He thought it would be competent to the Sergeant-at-Arms to place tables in the Lobby at which Members could conduct their correspondence, and he did not see why it should not be done. At present there was a little room at their disposal not much larger than the Table at which Mr. Speaker so ably presided; on the outside there was written, "For the use of Members," and inside the room there was a table and three very dim gaslights. Driven to extremity the other evening, he went into the room for the purpose of writing some letters, and he found the light so dim that it was impossible for him to see the tracings of the pen on the paper. He did not see why a table with the needful appliances should not be placed in the open Hall. Pens and paper were cheap, and there was no reason why Members who were driven away from the House and from the Tea Room by the arrangements of Mr. Speaker should not be allowed to write their letters in the Central Lobby, and that they should not, like the bird sent out of Noah's Ark, be unable to find a place for the sole of their foot.

MR. GIBSON said, he observed that while Mr. Speaker, of course, the Clerk of the House, Assistant Clerk, and Sergeant-at-Arms had official residences, and certain assistants had allowances from the House, it was, in his opinion, absurd that almost the only officer of high rank and position next to Mr. Speaker had no house allowance. He ventured to say that there was no officer except Mr. Speaker whose presence in the House was so constantly needed as that of the Deputy Speaker. That was a matter which had been considered by past Chief Commissioners of Works and past Financial Secretaries to the Treasury, and he would be glad to know whether it was intended to provide a residence for the officer he referred to?

MR. HIBBERT said, they had had a discussion on the subject of a residence for the Librarian, and he was, therefore, unwilling to go again into that question; but he certainly thought that his right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gibson) had made out a strong case for providing residences for officials whose presence was required in the House at any hour of the night, and he would take care that the subject was brought before Mr. Speaker. With regard to the suggestions made by the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), he should be glad to lay all the hon. Gentleman's proposals before Mr. Speaker, who he was sure would, if it were possible, order a suitable room to be provided for Members who had to dictate to their secretaries.

MR. CALLAN said, it was stated in the discussion about an hour ago that the Librarian had no official residence provided for him; but he had ascertained since that time that an official residence was formerly provided for the Librarians, and that by some jerrymandering the present Librarian had been deprived of that accommodation. The total amount of this Vote, £51,772, was spread over three Departments—namely, those of the Clerk of the House, the Speaker, and the Sergeant-at-Arms. Taking the first of those Departments, he thought it was very strange that the Department of the Clerks of the House, which comprised a number of inferior

officers, should receive under this Vote £26,201 a-year, and that the sum of £9,456 only should be allotted to the Department of the Speaker. He was ready to acknowledge that the 36 clerks in the first Department who drew this large amount as salaries were useful; but he wished to ask this question—Had those 36 clerks passed a competitive examination? He heard the Secretary to the Treasury say that they did; but he was bound to challenge that statement. He would like to know under what number of marks obtained at competitive examination Mr. Northcote, the son of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition in that House, received his appointment? He asked the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury for the competition warrant. He asked the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan), who was entitled to the credit of having secured for the country the system of competitive examination, whether it was by public competitive examination, by private nomination, or by some test examination that those clerks were appointed? [Mr. HIBBERT: Yes.] But that was not competitive examination. His question was this—By what competitive examination had Mr. Northcote, within the last 10 days, received his appointment as a Clerk of the House? Was it by nomination, or was the appointment given to the best man out of, say, five or six selected for examination; in other words, was the examinatiom a sham or a reality? If the Committee were to vote this £26,000 a-year to the Clerks of the House, he said that they ought to have the right of nomination, or the appointments should be made after public competitive examination. Did the right of nomination lay with Sir Erskine May? If so, he would ask how it was that he only nominated the sons, nephews, and brothers of Members of the House? If hon. Members took up the list of clerks appointed, they would find that they were not men appointed by merit, but because they were relatives of Members of the House; and he said that that was a corrupt system, and a system which, if the country knew of its existence, would be at once put down. In the same way he took the Department of the Speaker. The most overworked Department was that of the Serjeant-at-Arms, which, he said, was an efficient Department; and the manner in which it was conducted afforded a contrast to the other Departments of the House.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he also wished to press the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) on this subject. He recollected that the right hon. Gentleman had been very zealous to introduce competitive examination into the Foreign Service and Diplomatic Service, and that he had brought forward Motions on the subject. The question of competitive examination in those Services had been debated in the House of Commons, and he recollected that there were Motions and divisions upon it, and so great had been the strength of public opinion on the subject that it forced the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to establish the system of competitive examination. It now appeared that the service of that House was placed in an entirely different position from that in which the whole of the service of the State was placed. Therefore, he asked the Representatives of the Government now on the Treasury Bench why clerks were to be appointed to the subordinate positions in the service of the House without any competitive examination whatever? The nomination to those appointments appeared to him to be an undue power for any official to possess. Even Ministers of State had not the right to appoint clerks to Parliament. But here, in the House of Commons, in which the principle of competitive examination with regard to appointments in the Public Service had been established, it would seem that that was the only Department in the State which ignored its own rules, and allowed young men to be appointed without competitive examination before the Civil Service Commissioners. He understood the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury to say that Mr. Northcote had passed a test examination. He would ask some Member of Her Majesty's Government to say why it was that, with all their interest in the procedure of the House, no Member of the Government had insisted on the same competitive examination with regard to appointments in the service of the House as they had enforced in every other Department of the State? He should be glad to hear from the noble

Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, or the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, why that great abuse had been allowed to exist in the House of Commons when it did not exist in any other Department of the State?

Mr. HIBBERT said, he would point out, in reply to the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff), that the appointments of the Clerks of the House were made by the Clerk of the House under an Act of Parliament passed in the Reign of George III. Up to the present time the appointments had always been made by the Clerk of the House under that Statute. There was no competitive examination in the case of those appointments such as had been suggested by the hon. Gentleman; but there was a test examination, and, looking at the clerks who entered the service of the House of Commons, he did not know that the system of test examinations in force had provided them with an inferior staff to those of other Departments in which competitive examination had been adopted. He had seen a great deal of the clerks of the House of Commons, and he thought they were men quite as capable of doing the work they had to perform as if they had been brought into the position by competitive examination. At the same time, he did not say that it was not a strong argument to urge that there should be competitive examination for those appointments; but he would point out that if any alteration were to be made, it would require consideration on the part of the Authorities of the House, and, of course, he was not prepared to enter into that question.

Mr. SEXTON said, in looking at that Vote for the House of Commons Officers, there was one matter connected with it on which hon. Members could all agree, and that was the uniform urbanity of the Serjeant-at-Arms and his assistants in everything relating to their convenience. With regard to the question of the examination of clerks on their appointment to the service of the House, he had listened with interest to the discussion which had taken place, and he was bound to say that he thought both the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan) and the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) had done a public service in calling attention to that subject. Most Members of the House would agree with what had fallen from the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury as to the general efficiency of the staff of Clerks of the House. His own experience was that they were both courteous and efficient. But that was beside the question; and although hon. Members might agree that the present clerks were fit to hold their office, it did not by any means follow that the system under which they were appointed was one which ought to be continued. Now, what were the arguments in support of the present system? The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury, in justifying appointments by the Clerk of the House, had fallen back on a Statute of George III. But that Monarch ascended the Throne 135 years ago, and the Committee would know very well that a great many things happened in the Reign of George III. which no one would attempt to justify at the present day. Why should the Clerk of the House have this patronage? [Mr. Hibbert: I have not defended the system.] He was glad to have that declaration from the hon. Gentleman. He asked why the Clerk of the House should have this patronage? Why should the Business of the most important Assembly in the country—the Business of the Departments of the House of Commons—be discharged by men appointed under a system which went back further than the days when, in the language of Lord Macaulay, votes were bought and sold in Smithfield? Why should the ghastly corruption of the 18th century have a place in the 19th? He maintained that if it were necessary to carry out the system of competitive examination in respect of the appointments of officials in the various Departments of the Public Service, it was equally necessary that there should be competitive examination in the case of appointments to the Departments of the House of Commons. With regard to what had fallen from his hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) on the subject of the want of proper accommodation for Members of the House, he would point out to the Committee that one of the officials of the House of Lords had the use of six rooms. His hon. Friend had made the very moderate proposal that tables and chairs, with the necessary writing materials,

should be placed in the Central Lobby, so that Members of the House under pressure of their own business and of public affairs should be saved from having to resort to the grotesque expedient of endeavouring to sign letters upon their knees. If the Government were not prepared to provide Members with shorthand writers, on the ground that it might interfere with the Post Office arrangements to which his hon. Friend had alluded, he pointed out that it would only be necessary for the officials of the Government to go into the Library and open and read the letters before they were posted. He would be glad to know whether the Chairman of Ways and Means was an official subject or not to any other official of the House —whether he was subject to the Rules laid down by the House with reference to such occasions when disorder arose in the House; when Report was made to the House, and when Report had to be made with regard to certain proceedings in Committee relating to hon. Members and otherwise? He believed he was correct in stating that the Chairman of Ways and Means was subject to no other authority than the Rules laid down by the Members of the House.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he had been rather astonished by the speech of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury. The hon. Gentleman accused him of being a reformer; but he might describe the hon. Gentleman as an old retrogressive Tory, because his arguments were always made use of as reasons against reforms in the Public Service. The hon. Gentleman had made a statement in the course of his speech to which he could assent—namely, that the Clerks of the House were an admirable set of men. He quite agreed with that view; but the clerks at the Admiralty and in other Departments of the State were also an admirable class of men, and therefore the statement of the hon. Gentleman was no argument in favour of appointments to clerkships in the House of Commons being made without competitive examination. He might call attention to the argument in reference to the abolition of purchase in the Army, when it was said that the officers of the Army were so good that no change was necessary. But he wished to have an answer on the question of appointments from some Members of the Government—some of those reformers who with magnificent perorations wound up speech after speech on the subject of competitive examination. If the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) could perorate on the subject of competitive examination in the Public Service, why could he not perorate on this subject relating to the clerks of the House of Commons? He thought the Committee were entitled to some further reply on the question that had been raised.

MR. TREVELYAN said, that, undoubtedly, the arguments of the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) were unanswerable. There was no reason whatever that the great principles of competition which had succeeded so admirably in the Civil Service and in the Army and Navy should not be applied to that House. The present state of things was an admitted anomaly. It existed because it was under cover of a Statute. There was no doubt that the general standard of public morality with regard to appointments in the different Services had been enormously elevated by means of the system of competition which the hon. Member had so eloquently described. The appointments in that House however, were admirably managed; and the reason of it was that they were in the hands of a gentleman who discharged his functions with public spirit enlightened by very great ability. The system was none the less anomalous; and he was quite certain that the legislative measure for which they were all sighing, and by which the Statute would be altered, would receive the most thorough and the most respectful consideration of the Government.

MR. ONSLOW said, he was sorry to disagree with his hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff), and he was glad to hear the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan). There was no one in the House who knew more about competitive examinations than the right hon. Gentleman. He (Mr. Onslow) was one of those who doubted whether the Public Services in England or abroad had been benefited by competitive examinations. In his opinion they had just as good men formerly as now. Certainly an exception ought to be made

in the case of the House of Commons. The gentlemen who discharged the duties of clerks in the House should essentially be gentlemen; and he (Mr. Onslow) trusted implicitly in the gentleman who now made the appointments. He defied anyone to get, no matter what the system adopted was, a better class of men than they had at the present time. Considering that everything had worked well, and that no complaints whatever had been made about the clerks, he hoped his hon. Friend would not pursue his course. He (Mr. Onslow) was very glad to hear that the son of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition (Sir Stafford Northcote) had recently received an appointment as Clerk in the House of Commons, and he thought that his views would be shared by every Member in the House. Whatever political views the gentleman who now made the appointments might hold, there was no one in the House who could accuse him of jobbery. Why not let things remain as they were now? They could not be improved; and better men could not be obtained. He hoped his hon. Friend would not press his Motion to a division.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, that as a matter of fact there was no Motion before the Committee, and there would be no division. He should certainly, however, bring the subject forward on another occasion.

Mr. HEALY suggested that the hon. Gentleman (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) should bring in a Bill on the subject, in order to see with what energy the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert) and the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) would address themselves to legislation on the matter. He (Mr. Healy) did not rise, however, to pursue this subject, but for the purpose of directing the attention of the Committee to quite a different matter. In the month of last July, when this Vote was proposed, he raised the question of the propriety of having a Select Committee of experienced Members to assist the Clerks at the Table in the revision of Questions, and in the assistance they gave to Mr. Speaker on points of Order. On the occasion to which he referred he drew attention to the enormous labours thrown upon the clerks, and to the fact that when a Speaker or Chairman of Committee was new to his duties, which, of course, was not the case with the hon. Gentleman (Sir Arthur Otway), it must necessarily happen that, to a great extent, the gentlemen who were in charge of the House, and who controlled all its functions, must be the officers at the Table. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Childers), in replying to him (Mr. Healy), said that the matter was one which was open to consideration, though it was not likely the House would be inclined to change its long-standing practice. Now, it appeared to him (Mr. Healy) rather a hard thing that the hon. Gentleman (Sir Arthur Otway) should have the power of summarily silencing Representatives of the people without there being any appeal. Whatever confidence was placed in the officers of the House, he could not help thinking it was advisable to have an influential, and impartial, and independent tribunal, drawn by lot or nomination from the general body of Members, in the same way as the Committee of Selection was drawn, to whom questions might be referred, and to whom Members would have a right of appeal. He could not but believe that, if such were the case, the rulings of the Chair would be received with much more satisfaction than they were at the present time. For instance, a Speaker, in a moment of pique, might rule an hon. Member to be out of Order, or a Speaker might misunderstand an hon. Member, and rule him out of Order. It was only the other day that he was ruled out of Order for referring to the Orange Party in Ireland as the "toothless Orange Party." The Speaker thought he said "truthless;" but that was altogether a mistake. Again, the word "snobs," which was used the other day, was ruled out of Order. Of course, those were only trivial instances of the inconvenience which arose under the present system; but when it came to be a matter of a Member losing his liberty of action in the House for an entire week—when he was excluded, not only from participation in the debates in the House, but from voting, and from attendance on Select Committees—it was very necessary that there should be a tribunal to whom questions of that kind might be referred. It could not be denied that the Clerks at the Table could exercise, if they were so pleased, almost uncontrolled power over the Speaker; because if the Speaker happened, as

must be the case in a new Parliament, to be newly-elected, he was obliged, on nearly every question, to refer to the clerks for guidance. No one had more reason to be thankful to the Clerks at the Table than he (Mr. Healy) had, because he supposed he troubled them as often as anyone else, and he had never failed to receive illumination from them; he had generally found that he was wrong, and that they were right, upon matters on which he had had occasion to confer with them. They were gentlemen of many years experience in the House, and no one could pretend to have the same amount of knowledge of the Forms of the House as they; but he objected to any gentleman, no matter how great his experience, having the right to give, without revision, an opinion on which the Chair might act, and with regard to which hon. Members had no power of appeal. He really did think that if Gentlemen like the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes), or the hon. Gentleman the Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread), or Gentlemen who had filled official positions in the House, would undertake the duties, so to speak, of a Court of Appeal, very great good would result. If hon. Members could refer to the Gentlemen he had mentioned for direction, if questions could be submitted to them for revision, if matters occurring one day could be adjudged upon the next day by such Gentlemen—not in hot blood, but in a cool and collected manner—if, when the Speaker, for instance, had ruled an hon. Member out of Order, or a particular expression to be out of Order, or had suspended an hon. Member for a week or a fortnight, or for the whole Session, an appeal could be made to an impartial and independent tribunal, it would be very satisfactory. An hon. Member who had incurred the censure of the Chair would feel much more satisfied if he knew that the ruling of the Speaker had been reinforced by the decision of an independent tribunal. Parliament would be much more democratic in the future than it was at present—at least, it was supposed that it would so become. Members of less experience would enter it, and there would probably be more friction between the democracy and the Chair than there was at present, and in that event it was very necessary that what he suggested should be adopted. There was one matter in particular in which the Clerks at the Table necessarily exercised an almost complete control. It was quite impossible that the Speaker could revise 50 or 60 Questions; and, therefore, the duty devolved upon the Clerks at the Table. If an hon. Gentleman asked a Question on foreign policy which was inconvenient to the Government, and it was stopped at the Table, it would be much more satisfactory to the Questioner if he could refer the matter to a Committee of Gentlemen on whom the House generally could place reliance. The hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) and the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) would feel greatly relieved, if Questions of theirs were stopped, if they knew that an independent tribunal, altogether apart from the Clerks at the Table, had sat and pronounced upon the propriety of the Questions. He did not intend to take up the time of the Committee any longer. He had laid his views before the Committee on a previous occasion, and the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Childers) was good enough to say that, although they were not very feasible, they ought not to be entirely excluded from the scope of consideration. In view of what was happening, and in view of the fact that the Speaker in the new Parliament must necessarily be inexperienced, it was not right that Representatives of the people, who had been elected because, in the opinion of their constituents, of their fitness, should be expelled like unruly children from the Chamber simply, perhaps, upon the irate feeling of the Speaker. Of course, they knew that the present Speaker never lost his temper, and his remarks in no sense applied to that right hon. Gentleman. As to the Chairman (Sir Arthur Otway), he (Mr. Healy) must frankly acknowledge that on all occasions the right hon. Gentleman exercised the greatest consideration and courtesy towards all Members of the House.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, that the hon. Member had made his suggestion with great moderation. He could find no fault with the hon. Member for bringing forward this question, or with the manner in which he had brought it forward. He must say,

however, that at the first blush it appeared to him that the suggestion was one which could not be entertained by the House. The hon. Member had said that they looked forward to a more democratic Parliament in the future, and that other Regulations than those which at present obtained would have to be made. Well, that might be the case; but he thought that it was very undesirable for the House of Commons to look forward to what might be necessary in the future. What they had to deal with was the House of Commons that existed now; and it appeared to him that the powers which were intrusted to the Speaker and to the Chairman of Committees were adequate for the proper discharge of the duties of those Gentlemen, and adequate—but not more than adequate—for the preservation and maintenance of Order in debate. The hon. Member had suggested that the Clerks at the Table and the Speaker should be assisted by a Committee in the duty of revising Questions which were placed on the Paper. The hon. Member brought forward that subject last year, and the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Childers) gave, what appeared to him (the Marquess of Hartington), an extremely reasonable answer—namely, that the hon. Member himself and other hon. Members, who were a good deal in the habit of putting Questions to Ministers, would be the first to object to any such change of procedure if their Questions had to wait very long for revision—to wait, it might be, until all interest in them was lost. The hon. Member had carried his suggestion a good deal further, for he had said there should be a Court of Appeal, consisting of a number of experienced Members of the House, and that that Court of Appeal should have the power of revising the decisions of the Speaker and of the Chairman of Committees. Now, that was certainly a suggestion to which he (the Marquess of Hartington) could not give any concurrence whatever. It appeared to him that the powers which were intrusted to the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees were powers necessarily of a somewhat autocratic character—powers which were absolutely necessary for the preservation of the decency and order of debate in the House. If the functions of such a Committee as had been suggested by the hon. Member were anything but nominal, the exercise of such functions would, in his (the Marquess of Hartington's) opinion, be destructive of the authority of the Chair. How could a Speaker maintain any effective authority over the administration of the House, and expect to have his decisions respected, if his decisions were subject to appeal; and if in the course of a few days a Committee of experts, such as had been suggested, were to overrule the decision which the Speaker had given? It seemed to him (the Marquess of Hartington) that all they could do was to elect that Member from amongst themselves, in whose fairness, and impartiality, and knowledge of the Rules of their procedure, the House had confidence; and, having so elected that Member from amongst themselves, to place great powers in his hands and implicit confidence in his authority. For those reasons it was quite impossible for him to give any support to the suggestion of the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy).

MR. GREGORY said, that the proposition of the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) struck directly at the authority of the Chair. It was quite impossible, in the interest of proper debate, that the decisions of the Speaker or of the Chairman of Committees should be subject to appeal. The House selected its Speaker and its Chairman because of their authority in the House, and because they were learned in its traditions and its business; and they reposed in those Gentlemen the most absolute confidence. If it was shown that that confidence was not justified by anything in the rulings from the Chair, it was quite clear that the decisions of the Chair would not be of long standing. The adoption of the hon. and learned Member's suggestion would be destructive of all authority in the House.

MR. HEALY said, that perhaps the Committee would allow him to say a few words for the purpose of correcting, to some extent, the remarks the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) had made. The noble Marquess had entirely addressed himself to this subject from the point of view of maintaining the authority of the Chair. He would ask the noble Marquess, was there no other authority in the House to maintain?

Were the rights of the Representatives of the people not to be maintained? It was all very well to talk about the authority of the Chair. Nobody objected more strongly than the English people to the Infallibility of the Pope. The English people railed at Roman Catholics in the most extraordinary manner because they subscribed to the Pope's supreme authority upon Divine and religious matters; but here they were dealing with human affairs, upon which every person could form a judgment of their own, and with regard to which hon. Members met in the House all together upon an independent and equal basis. He asked the noble Marquess if it were not possible for them to have a hasty or angry Speaker; and was it to be tolerated that the rights of 600 Members of Parliament, elected by the people to carry out their will, should be entirely at the mercy of one man, without appeal? He thought it was very desirable that the Speaker and Chairman of Committees should have the right of revising their own decisions, and that right the present Rules did not give. If the Chairman of Committees ruled him (Mr. Healy) to be out of Order, he was bound to respect the authority of the Chair, because he had no means of questioning the decision; but if he had the means of arguing the point, without meaning any disrespect or discourtesy to the Chairman, he might be able to prove that the hon. Gentleman was in the wrong. It might happen that once in 10 times he (Mr. Healy) might be right, and the Chairman wrong; and, therefore, his point was this—that granted the Chairman might once out of 10 times be wrong, and he (Mr. Healy) right, the Chairman should have the right and power to revise his decision. At present, if the Speaker or the Chairman, acting upon the suggestion of one of the Clerks at the Table, said that he (Mr. Healy) was out of Order, or that an expression he used was out of Order, the Speaker or Chairman had no power to revise the decision. The decision appeared upon the pages of *Hansard*, and it became for all time a cast-iron decision. All he wanted was, that the Speaker or Chairman, as the case might be, should have power to revise his decision, if necessary, with the assistance of experts, so that if it should happen that an hon. Member, who had been ruled out of Order, was able, by letter or other private communication, to show the Speaker or Chairman of Committees that he had mistaken the argument addressed to him, and that the Speaker or Chairman was entirely in error, it should be within the power of the Chair to remedy his error. At present a Member, whose vote on a question of peace or war might turn the scale, could be suspended for a whole week, at the instigation of the Speaker; and it might so happen that during that week a most momentous decision was arrived at. As a matter of fact, the position of the Speaker in the House of Commons was more infallible than the Pope's position in the Catholic Church. The Pope was provided with a Council, but the Speaker of the House of Commons was provided with nothing of the kind. It would be to the advantage of debate, and it would not in the least detract or derogate from the position of Speaker or Chairman of Committees, if those Gentleman had some authority to guide them, independently of the Clerks at the Table. As he had said before, they had all very great respect for the gentlemen at the Table; but it was quite evident that those gentlemen were bound to impart into all their rulings something of what he might call a professional spirit. They very naturally desired to see the work of the Government done, and they did their best to facilitate the work of the House. A Committee of independent Members of the House, drawn from both Parties, would, he believe, take an independent and impartial view; and it was under these circumstances that he appealed to the noble Marquess not to be led away with the idea that there was nothing in the House to be preserved but the authority of the Chair. At present, when the political temperature was at a great heat, as it might be, for instance, if war were declared tomorrow, there would be no power standing between the rights of minorities and the position of the Chair. He maintained it was very desirable that there should be some Court of Appeal, so that if wrong had been done hon. Members should feel that there was an authority which should set matters right.

MR. SEXTON said, he noticed that the Clerk of the House was provided

with an official residence, and that the Clerk Assistant was also provided with an official residence. The second Clerk Assistant, however, was paid a salary considerably less than either of his colleagues, and he was not provided with an official residence. Now he (Mr. Sexton), approaching the matter in a most impartial spirit, failed to see the slightest reason for that distinction. He had frequently seen the second Clerk Assistant at the end of a long Sitting retire from the performance of his duty in such a state of fatigue as certainly to require rest upon the premises. If any difficulty arose from want of space, he (Mr. Sexton) certainly thought that the bachelor official of the House of Lords might very reasonably give up some of the eight rooms allotted to him to the second Clerk Assistant.

MR. R. N. FOWLER (LORD MAYOR) said, the remarks of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) gave him the opportunity to repeat an appeal he had made on previous occasions—an appeal he had made to the hon. Gentleman the Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) when he occupied the position of Secretary to the Treasury, and an appeal he made some years ago to the late lamented Lord Frederick Cavendish. It was, whether the time had not come when the salaries of the officials of the House ought to be increased? He had not had the advantage of hearing the debate on the last Vote; but it must be borne in mind that they had nothing to do with the salaries of the officers of the other House of Parliament. Those salaries were given by agreement. One thing was obvious, and that was that the work of the House of Commons had of late vastly increased, and, as far as they could see, it was likely to be still further increased. The work told not so much upon hon. Members as upon the officers of the House. Hon. Members were bound, of course, to attend on the occasion of great divisions; but as regarded the ordinary work of the House, it was rather a matter of their own convenience whether they attended or not. The officers of the House, however, were bound to be in their places always; the three learned gentlemen at the Table, who so ably assisted the Speaker and the Chairman, were bound to be present early and late. Now, he wished to ask the Committee whether it was fair that the salaries that might have been proper some 20 or 30 years ago, when the work of the House was very much lighter than it was now, should continue at their present figure? Hon. Members were aware that the work of the House increased very largely from year to year, and if there was one thing with regard to a future Parliament which he would venture to predict it was this, that it would give a great deal more work to the officers of the House than did the present Parliament. He did not think the Assembly was likely to sit fewer hours than it did, and he thought the present Parliament might take credit for having sat a greater number of hours than any other Parliament in history. He would make an appeal to the Government to know whether the time had not come when they could consider the salaries of the officers of the House with a view to their being increased? The facts he was stating were, he thought, facts which could not be disputed. The hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) he was sure would not dispute that the work of the different officers of the House was much heavier than it used to be. It should be remembered that the remuneration of the Professions had a tendency to increase, and they must bear in mind that the Clerks of the House were gentlemen who, if they had devoted themselves to the Legal Profession, would probably by that time have occupied the position of Judges, enjoying salaries of £5,000 a-year. He was not arguing in favour of the increase of the salaries of those gentlemen to that extent, but he desired to urge upon the Government the desirability of considering whether the time had not come when it was necessary, both in regard to justice and the due efficiency of the work of the House, to make some addition to the salaries of the officials.

COLONEL NOLAN said, he did not wish to take up much time on the subject under discussion, but desired to draw attention to the fact that there were five or six office-keepers whose position was deserving of consideration. He did not disagree with the Lord Mayor (Mr. R. N. Fowler) in what he had just said, but he was inclined to move a reduction of the salaries, because the Irish Members had no interest in those office-keepers. The Chairman

would know the people to whom he was referring, because the hon. Gentleman had one himself. They were people engaged to attend on the rooms of the officers of the House; and he (Colonel Nolan) was pointing out that those were individuals with whom the Irish Members had nothing to do, for the reason that no rooms were allowed to the Irish Members. He did not say the Irish Members objected to having no office-keepers—what they objected to was that they had no offices for office-keepers to attend to. If he got some explanation from the Secretary to the Treasury as to the Vote this subject would more properly come under, he would defer his observations and move the reduction in its proper place. He wished to know who was responsible for the allotting of rooms in the House? Was the Secretary to the Treasury?

MR. HIBBERT: No.

COLONEL NOLAN: Then is the Speaker?

MR. HIBBERT: Yes; the Speaker, with the First Commissioner of Works.

COLONEL NOLAN: Perhaps, Mr. Chairman, you would rule that I am in Order in speaking on the allotment of rooms?

THE CHAIRMAN: The fact that the hon. and gallant Member would make his observations on the question of the allotment of rooms does not alter the case in the least. If the hon. and gallant Member wishes to go into that question it must be on the Building Vote. The Question before the Committee is the salaries of the officials of the House of Commons, and has nothing whatever to do with the allotment of rooms.

COLONEL NOLAN said, that if the rooms were not properly allotted he ought to be able to go into the matter. However, he would take some opportunity of raising the subject, either in the form of Questions or upon other Votes. He found in the Votes eight messengers for the Department of the Clerks of the House, and 12 for the Serjeant-at-Arms Department, and he should like to ask whether any of those messengers served the great political Parties? He should like to get a categorical statement as to what those messengers did, and whether they served either of the two great Parties? [MR. HIBBERT: No.] He (Colonel Nolan) believed the messengers of the Treasury did; however, he would bring that matter up on the next Vote. He would remind hon. Members of the case of Mr. Burgess in the late Parliament. Mr. Burgess was in the interest of the Government, and his assistant in the interest of the Opposition; and those gentlemen were thoroughly impartial, because when the Government went out Mr. Burgess did not go out with it, but went over to the new Government, whilst his assistant went over to the new Opposition. The Government had had a great deal of experience of the controversy on this matter of rooms, and he (Colonel Nolan) intended to work it out to the best of his ability. What he wanted to know was whether the messengers of the House had any connection with the great political Parties? [MR. HIBBERT: I have said no.] Then he would ask the same question on the next Vote. He considered it very hard that the Chairman and several other officials should have attendance in their offices, and should have 20 or 30 offices for their convenience in that building, while Irish Members, who were so far from their own homes, and who came here against their own wishes, should be accorded none of those facilities.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR must say he had been contemplating the aspect of the Committee for some time with a considerable amount of amusement. That Committee, without a single word being spoken in reply to the right hon. Gentleman who had moved the Motion, had voted £11,000,000 to the Government earlier in the afternoon; but since then they had been, for he did not know how many hours, occupied over the details of one small Vote. If that was the way the Committee was to proceed with its Business, he might as well conform to the fashion and fall into the prevailing mood. He wished to point out one little item that had been overlooked. There was an official whom he believed to be as useful in his way as anyone connected with the House. He was not so high placed as Mr. Speaker, or as the Chairman of Ways and Means, or as the Clerk at the Table; but he was, nevertheless, more frequently applied to personally by Members of the House than any of those. He referred to the Clerk in the Library, who was a model of patience, information, and readiness, and

he was sure that there was scarcely an industrious Member of the House who had not had occasion to go to him, and had not received from him the greatest assistance. That gentleman was a very quiet, unobtrusive person, limited to the maximum salary of £300 a-year. That maximum had been reached, and that gentleman had been standing at it now for some time. He was not likely to apply for an increase himself, and he (Mr. A. O'Connor) had not heard from him or from anyone else that he was dissatisfied. However, the fact remained the same that that official was not paid a fair remuneration for the quality of the service he performed. He knew so little about that gentleman that he was not even acquainted with his name; but if no one else would do so, at any rate he (Mr. A. O'Connor) would not neglect the opportunity of saying a word for him. He would ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether that gentleman could not be allowed something more handsome than £300 a-year?

MR. HIBBERT said, that before he replied to the hon. Gentleman, he wished to say that, with respect to the attendants in the Office of the Chairman of Ways and Means, they were not really the hon. Gentleman's attendants at all; they were merely attendants in the Private Bill Office.

COLONEL NOLAN: Why are they connected with the Office of the Chairman of Ways and Means?

MR. HIBBERT: Because the Private Bill Committees come under his Department. The messengers are not in attendance upon the Chairman of Ways and Means, however. With regard to the gentleman referred to by the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. A. O'Connor), I have to say that the Government have no power over these salaries in the House of Commons. These salaries are fixed by Commissioners. There are certain Commissioners who have the management of these matters.

MR. HEALY: Who are they?

MR. HIBBERT: They are certain Members, four or five in number.

MR. HEALY: Members of the House?

MR. HIBBERT: I do not know; but I can say that the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer belong to the Commission. There are four or five who fix the salaries of the officers. With regard to the matters I have referred to, and also in regard to the Clerks at the Table, the whole question of salaries should be raised before the Commissioners who have the management of the matter. It is not a matter for the Government, though I should be glad to consider any point which the hon. Member may submit to me, and communicate it to the Government.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he made it an invariable rule never to have any communication with a Member of the Government except across the floor of the House; therefore, he did not feel disposed to consult either of the high functionaries to whom the hon. Gentleman had referred. If the hon. Gentleman would mention to them what had passed, however, he should be glad.

MR. HIBBERT: I shall take care to do so.

MR. SEXTON said, he had not yet had an answer to his question with regard to the residence of those clerks who at present had to go home after the House rose. If the hon. Gentleman opposite would put the First Commissioner of Works in motion, it would be well for him to consider whether there could not be a more convenient disposal of the spare space in the Parliament building, particular in connection with the House of Lords, than at present adopted.

MR. HIBBERT said, he should be glad to bring that matter before the notice of the Chief Commissioner of Works.

MR. BIGGAR said, he should like to put a question to the Secretary to the Treasury with regard to Mr. Speaker's counsel. He (Mr. Biggar) did not know who he was or what his duties were, but he should like to know what value they got for their money?

MR. HIBBERT said, he believed the duties of counsel to the Speaker were very important duties. That gentleman had to be consulted on very important points, and it was quite open to any Member of the House who presided at a Private Bill Committee, or who had to do with any other Committee, if a question of law arose, to consult the counsel. It was really a very great advantage to be able to consult a legal authority in that way. He (Mr. Hibbert) himself had experienced the advantage of having that legal authority to appeal to in

the House. When acting once as Chairman of Committees, he had found it in the highest degree advantageous to be able to get a legal opinion from Mr. Speaker's counsel.

MR. MOLLOY wished to know where Mr. Speaker's counsel was to be found? Was he a gentleman in attendance on that House during the sittings of Committees, or was he a gentleman who only sat in his chambers to give advice?

MR. HIBBERT said, that Mr. Speaker's counsel was in his office in the House every day.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, Mr. Speaker's counsel had supervision over all the Private Business in the House.

MR. MOLLOY said, he found eight messengers down in this Vote, and he should like to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether it was possible for two of them to be placed at the disposal of hon. Members for the purpose of bringing in books of reference from the Library during the course of debates? Everyone in the habit of speaking in the House must have noticed that in the course of an evening he found himself in need of books from the Library, and that it was sometimes impossible, when one was speaking, to find a Member near him who could be got to take the trouble to proceed to the Library for the purpose of bringing him a book of reference of which he might be in need. He thought it only reasonable that one or two, and, if possible, several more messengers should be in attendance upon the House in order to wait upon Members in that respect. He had frequently seen on the Ministerial Bench even, Members of the Government obliged to run out to the Library for books of reference for their Colleagues who were speaking. Members of the Government generally had the references beforehand; but in the case of private Members it very often happened that they had not. Although he (Mr. Molloy) was not a very frequent speaker, the inconvenience to which he was pointing had happened to himself. He had happened to require a quotation from a speech to which he had been referring, and there had been no one near him whom he cared to ask to go and bring him the reference from the Library. A private Member, therefore, was thrown entirely on his own resources, and he therefore asked that that favour should be shown to him in future.

MR. HIBBERT said, that so far as his experience went he had never found that Members of the Government or any one else, when they wanted books of reference, were unable to get them. Personally, whenever he had been in want of a book of reference, he had always gone into the Library to fetch it. That, he thought, was the best course to adopt.

MR. MOLLOY said, the course pointed out by the hon. Member was easy enough to follow on some occasions; but he would venture to point out that when a Member was on his legs making a speech, to leave the House suddenly in search of a book of reference would be to bring that speech to an abrupt termination, and when that hon. Member made his appearance again with his book of reference, he would find someone else addressing the Chair. He would, in all seriousness, say to the hon. Gentleman that hon. Members were entitled to the privilege for which he was pleading. He was present in the American Assembly not very long ago, during the course of a debate, and he had there found a large number of messengers going in and out the House attending upon Members. In that Assembly if a Member wanted anything, he had nothing to do but to put up his finger and beckon a messenger, who would at once wait upon him and carry out the mission intrusted to him. If the Member wanted a book it was immediately brought. In fact, he (Mr. Molloy) believed that in every Assembly in the world, except that of Great Britain, those messengers were always in attendance. He did not see why, seeing that the Government were so lavish in their expenditure on *employés* in that House, that it was too much to ask the Secretary to the Treasury to endeavour to bring about the appointment of two or three messengers for the purpose he had described. The plan he proposed might be adopted to the end of the Session, and then, if it were found that those messengers were not of much use, some other work could be given to them in the coming Session; but, at any rate, the Government ought to try the experiment. There were messengers in the Reporters' Gallery who communicated between the House and the Gallery; but the convenience of

Members was very little attended to. If a Member was in the Smoking Room and wanted to know what was going on in the House—if he wanted to know whether the Speaker was in the Chair, or what Bill was under discussion, or when the House was going into Committee, there was nobody to send to make inquiries, but he was obliged to leave his work and do the little mission himself. That was extremely inconvenient when a Member was perhaps going through a very heavy correspondence, or preparing himself for a debate which was coming on. As an illustration of the inconvenience to which he referred, he would mention that the other day two Motions in the names of hon. Friends of his were called on, and neither hon. Member was in his place. Because those Gentlemen were not kept acquainted with the condition of Business in the House they were not present to take charge of their Motions, and, consequently, he (Mr. Molloy) had had to go through the form, which was scarcely proper, of moving one of the Motions, and he had omitted a word here and there from the Resolution in order that it might not appear to be the same as that of his hon. Friend, and he had had to keep the House detained on a subject he knew very little about for 10 minutes, until he could get a Member near him to carry a message to his hon. Friend telling him that the question had come on. That was certainly an undignified method of managing those affairs, and yet hon Members were obliged to adopt it. They did not like to see Members who had prepared speeches on the subject of Motions they had on the Paper, unable to bring them on because they did not happen to be in the House at the moment they were reached, and there was no one to keep them informed as to the precise condition of Business. He therefore urged that the messengers to whom he referred should be appointed to tell them what was going on from time to time. There was nearly three months more of the Session, and he was sure it would not make much difference to the Government financially if they adopted the plan he suggested as an experiment for that period.

MR. R. N. FOWLER (LORD MAYOR) said, there was one thing he should like to point out to the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Molloy). He had referred to the case of America, with which he (Mr. R. N. Fowler) was not familiar; but he was acquainted with the practice in what was euphoneously termed "another place." There the messengers were allowed to go into the House, but that practice was not allowed in the House of Commons. Unless there were to be an entire change of the Rules of the House he did not see how the hon. Member's proposal could be carried out, for the Rule at present was that no one who was not a Member of the House could pass the Bar. Under the circumstances he did not see how they could expect a messenger, who had not the right to pass the Bar, to bring books on to the floor of the House.

MR. MOLLOY said, no doubt, as the right hon. Member (Mr. R. N. Fowler) remarked, there was a stupid tradition in existence which said that nobody should pass the Bar of the House but a Member, but, if it were necessary, that Rule could be done away with. If it were done away with, he did not believe the sanctity of the Chamber would very seriously suffer. If he (Mr. Molloy) were not mistaken, the right hon. Member himself had found himself in the difficulty which had been pointed out. On one occasion he believed the right hon. Member had had to find someone to bring him a book, and, unlesss his memory deceived him, he believed that he (Mr. Molloy) himself had performed the mission.

MR. HIBBERT said that he would see that the matter was brought before the Commissioners, together with the other questions that had been raised, although he could not hold out much hope that any change would be made this year. Probably when they had a new Parliament many advantageous alterations in the usages and practice of the House would be brought about.

MR. PULESTON said, that with regard to the question raised by the hon. Member (Mr. Molloy), he could not go so far as to support the suggestion that they should employ runners to go between the House and the Libraries or the Smoking Room. Still he believed hon. Members suffered considerable inconvenience, particularly those who were in regular attendance in the House and who had work to do, through there being no means of communication be-

tween the House and the ante rooms, by which information could be carried to Members outside with regard to what was going on inside the House. A Member might be interested in a Motion which stood No. 20 or 30 or 40 on the Order Book, and, in the absence of such communication as that he was suggesting, that hon. Member had to spend a good deal of his time running between the Library or the Smoking Room, in which he might be occupied, to the House in order to keep himself informed as to what was going on, and as to the likelihood of the measure in which he was interested being reached. That was a great tax upon the patience of an hon. Member who, no doubt, would feel that his time might be much better spent. He (Mr. Puleston) would make this suggestion, that the existing inconveniences and difficulties should be got over by setting up a communication between the House and the various rooms round it, by telephone or by dial. A dial, if that plan were adopted, might be so arranged as to show what Order of the Day was being considered by the House at the time. He knew that the answer to that suggestion would be that grave mistakes might occasionally occur, and that the wrong Orders might be notified through the carelessness of those who had the care of the apparatus. Well, that inconvenience was, after all, an artificial one, and it must be taken for what it was worth. If a Member wished to keep his position quite secure, he would take measures to make it perfectly certain that he would be in the House at the time the Order in which he was interested came on; he would not trust entirely to the dial. However, he thought such an arrangement as that he proposed would conduce greatly to the convenience of hon. Members, and that the Government would experience very little difficulty in carrying it out.

MR. BIGGAR said, the item of £400 for the salary of the Chaplain was open to some comment. He was of opinion that a Chaplain for the House of Commons was not necessary. The invariable custom was that the Members of the Privy Council and the Members of the Government never attended the ministrations of the Chaplain, although he thought they stood in need of them no less than the other Members of the House of Commons. He thought the time had come when they might do away with the office of Chaplain, on account of which a very substantial sum had been annually paid; and, therefore, he was not disposed to vote for that item in the Estimates.

Vote *agreed to.*

(4.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £50,445, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886, for the Salaries and Expenses in the Department of Her Majesty's Treasury, and in the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel."

MR. SEXTON said, there were some questions connected with this Vote which deserved explanation. In the first place, he would refer to the appointments to the office of Postmasters and Sub-Postmasters in Ireland, concerning which he might say that there was an obstinate belief surviving in the minds of some people that the nominations to those posts rested with Members for counties. He himself had had several applications from persons desiring to be nominated. He asked the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury, what was the practice of that Department with regard to the filling up of the office of Postmaster? The office was a small one, but it must be remembered that Postmasters had to discharge duties of considerable public importance. He had known cases in which persons recommended by the most influential men in their district—the clergy and others—had been rejected by the Treasury, while other persons recommended in the dark had received the appointments sought. The way in which those appointments were made had given rise to considerable dissatisfaction in his own county (Sligo). He asked the hon. Gentleman whether the Treasury would be willing to receive and pay attention to such recommendations to the office of Postmasters in Ireland as he had referred to, and whether, if they were unwilling to receive them, he would state on what grounds? He knew a case in which a candidate was very strongly recommended, and whose qualifications and character were suitable for the office; but, notwithstanding that, another person had been preferred, whom he believed was recom-

mended by two Members of that House. Therefore, he said it was desirable to know what sort of influence the Treasury recognized in filling up those offices, and whether there was or not any influence vested in Members of the House with regard to the appointments in question. Then there was another question connected with the Vote, to which he desired to call the attention of the Committee. He observed that lately the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General, in replying to the representations of Members from the West of Ireland, had stated that his desire to improve the Mail Service in Ireland was fettered by the curtailment of his discretion by the Treasury. He wished to know to what extent that Department curtailed or limited the discretion of the Postmaster General in respect of the public Mail Service? The matter was one of great importance to the people of Ireland, and it was consequently one in which Members on those Benches took a strong interest. He had mentioned a case in which the right hon. Gentleman stated that his desire was to meet the wishes of those hon. Members, but that the Department of the Treasury placed an obstacle in the way of the exercise of his discretion; and, therefore, he asked the hon. Gentleman whether the Treasury determined that the Postmaster General should spend no more than a specified sum, and whether they were now willing to consider the general convenience of the districts? His reason for putting that question was because the Postmaster General hesitated to improve the Mail Service between Dublin and the West of Ireland, on the ground that it would cost £3,000 a-year more than was now being paid. The next point to which he would call attention had reference to the Circular recently issued by the Treasury on the subject of the expenses of witnesses at the Assizes. Until the date of the issue of that Circular, the Judge of Assize had it in his power by law to fix the amount of the allowance for expenses of witnesses at the Assizes, and did so fix it, the counties paying the expense in the first place, and the Treasury recouping them. Now, by the recent Circular, the Treasury fixed a scale of expenses, and gave it to be understood that when the Judge of Assize decided to give expenses above the scale, the Treasury would only pay according to the scale, and that the loss represented by the difference between the scale and the actual expenses ordered to be paid by the Judge would have to be borne by the counties. He understood that the pressure of legislation lately had been against throwing Imperial charges on local rates. If there was one charge more than another that was distinctly Imperial, it was the charge for sustaining justice. He was at a loss to understand by what right the Treasury presumed to issue a Circular limiting the discretion which the law gave to the Judges of Assize. The Treasury said—"You may fix the amount of expenses, but if you fix it above the amount set forth in this Circular, the counties will have to pay." The result was obvious; the counties, being helpless in the matter, had to pay the money. He contended that there was no reason why the Treasury should intervene, and by an official Minute break down the powers of the Judges of Assize in this matter, and that so long as the Judges retained their powers in law, those powers should be respected, and the counties not fined save by order of a Judge. That action on the part of the Treasury was so unwarranted that he should be disposed to ask the Committee to resist the Vote until some explanation was forthcoming. Again, he should like to obtain some information with regard to what he might call the growing mystery of the management of the Department of Fishery Piers and Harbours in Ireland, and he had lately put several Questions in the House with that object. The year before last, £250,000 was granted for the purpose of developing fishery piers and harbours in Ireland, and a Commission was appointed, of which the hon. Member for Galway was at present Chairman. From Questions lately put in the House, it would appear that a deadlock had been reached as between the Treasury, the Board of Works, Ireland, the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and the Fisheries and Harbours Commission.

THE CHAIRMAN said, it appeared to him that the hon. Gentleman was raising on this Vote a question which should be raised upon another Vote.

MR. SEXTON said, he raised the question on the present Vote because all

Questions relating to piers and harbours in Ireland were answered in the House by the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury.

THE CHAIRMAN said, the reason of the hon. Gentleman would apply when the proper Vote was reached, but it did not apply in the present case. If the hon. Gentleman raised the question on the Vote for the Board of Works, Ireland, and also on the Treasury Vote, he raised it twice. He thought, therefore, that if the hon. Gentleman wished to discuss the subject of piers and harbours, it should be on occasions when a Vote was proposed for them.

MR. SEXTON said, there was no Vote for them. On a former Vote, it had been pointed out that the Treasury Vote was the Vote on which to discuss the question of piers and harbours. He asked if he was not now entitled to address the Secretary to the Treasury on that subject?

THE CHAIRMAN said, the question would properly arise on the Vote for the Board of Works, Ireland.

MR. SEXTON asked, if he was to understand that a letter directed by the Treasury to a Public Department could not be discussed in Committee of Supply?

THE CHAIRMAN said, he adjudged the question put by the hon. Gentleman according to the items in the Vote. There was no allusion in the Vote to piers and harbours.

MR. SEXTON asked whether, on the assumption that the Financial Secretary to the Treasury answered Questions that were every day put to him in the House with regard to the salaries of officials, as the responsible Representative of the Treasury, it was not competent to him to raise this question?

THE CHAIRMAN said, if the reasoning of the hon. Gentlemen were carried out, every Question might be addressed to the Treasury.

MR. SEXTON said, he had always understood that when the salary of an official came before the House, his duties were a proper subject for discussion.

COLONEL NOLAN said, he wished to say a few words on one of the subjects brought before the Committee by his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton). His hon. Friend had alluded to the manner in which the offices of Postmaster and Sub-Postmaster in Ireland were filled up. Now, he thought it would be a far better and simpler plan if the Government were to say at once that Irish Members should have nothing whatever to do with those small Post Office appointments in Ireland, instead of continuing the present system of giving them the appearance of having some influence with regard to them without the least reality. He pointed out that there were Members who objected on principle to writing to the Postmaster General on the subject of those appointments, and he thought it would be better for the Government to make it known that they would not allow any Irish Member to touch them, and that they wiped out the influence Irish Members were supposed to have with regard to them altogether. He had himself written to the Postmaster General eight or ten times, and the invariable reply was that the subject of his communication had been carefully considered, but that the matter rested with the Secretary to the Treasury, and that application should be made to him. So far as Irish Members were personally concerned, it did not matter how the small Post Office appointments were filled up; and, therefore, he thought it would be well to adopt his suggestion, and then if any persons in the neighbourhood in which there was a vacancy wrote to the Postmaster General with the same result, it would be the Irish people who were shut out. He thought it should be clearly stated either that Irish Members had some voice in the disposal of the £8,000,000 contributed by Ireland to the Imperial Revenue, or that it should be boldly stated that as Irish Members they were entirely shut out from having any share in the administration of the country. He might say that previous Postmasters General had been extremely polite in dealing with this subject; they had smoothed the matter down; but the present Postmaster General, whom he saw in his place, made it pretty clearly understood that Irish Members had nothing to do with those appointments.

MR. HIBBERT said, with respect to the question as to the office of Postmaster and Sub-Postmaster, he did not agree with what had fallen from the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) that the patronage of those small appoint-

ments should lie with Members of the House. He agreed very much with the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan) in the remarks he had made; but he went further, and not only said that, in his opinion, should the patronage not lie with Irish Members, but that no Member for England or Scotland should have it. In that way he thought that Members would get rid of much troublesome work. Even when Members obtained one of the appointments, if they gave satisfaction to one person, they caused dissatisfaction to others. For his own part, he should be glad if the patronage were transferred to the Postmaster General. With respect to the question of the expenses of witnesses at the Assizes, and the other question raised by the hon. Member for Sligo, they were scarcely within this Vote. It seemed to him that the question as to the power of the Treasury to cut down the amount of expenses in the case of prosecutions should be brought forward on the Vote for the administration of Law and Justice, and not upon a Vote for the payment of the salaries of officials of the Treasury. There was no doubt, however, that the Treasury had power to control prosecutions; they had always possessed that power, and he believed it was used in respect of prosecutions in England and Scotland, as well as in Ireland.

COLONEL NOLAN said, he should have been grateful for the answer he had received from the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury, were it not for the fact that he had received exactly the same answer some years ago. He thought the Committee ought to have the advantage of the presence of the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury during the discussion; but as that noble Lord was not on the Treasury Bench, he thought he should be doing his duty by moving that Progress be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Colonel Nolan.*)

MR. SEXTON pointed out that the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury had made use of two or three phrases implying that he acquiesced generally in the views expressed by hon. Gentlemen on those Benches; but he gave them no promise that any representation would be made on the subject of the appointments in question; nor did he tell them whether those small appointments were filled on the nomination of Members of Parliament.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON said, he hoped the views expressed by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury would be adopted. He believed he was expressing the opinion of a number of hon. Members who were anxious to get rid of the trouble caused them in matters of this kind, when he said that those appointments should be made on the responsibility of the Postmaster General.

MR. O'SHEA said, he was glad that an hon. and gallant Member on that side of the House (Sir Alexander Gordon) had risen to speak on this subject. He hoped he should not be using too strong an expression in saying that it was positively indecent that the Patronage Secretary should not be present during that discussion. He believed there was no doubt that in view of the way in which patronage was at present administered in this country, it would be much more agreeable to all Members of Parliament that those appointments should rest with the Post Office Department itself. Under the present system there was no doubt that Members of Parliament were caused a great deal of trouble and annoyance. They were pestered with applications from persons seeking to obtain appointments. Whenever an office was vacant—and even before they were vacant—Members were troubled with letters asking them to exert their influence with the Treasury in favour of the appointment of such-and-such an individual. In his opinion it would be better that all Departments should make their own appointments; but instead of that they found that in this case the Treasury imposed its will on the Post Office. It was very often the case that the Treasury wrote to a Member of Parliament, asking him to nominate persons for appointments; but that was not a satisfactory mode of procedure, because, although the Member might nominate a person after taking the best advice he could get, it was impossible for him to know that the individual was fit for the appointment.

MR. SEXTON said, he hoped the Government would see their way to assent to the Motion to report Progress

for two reasons. First, because he did not think they would make much further progress that night; and, secondly, because he had not received any answer to his question relating to the expenses of witnesses at the Assizes.

MR. HIBBERT: I said I did not think it was in Order.

MR. SEXTON said, he thought that time should be given to consider whether it was in Order to discuss the action of a Department on the Vote under which the salaries of that Department were paid.

MR. MOLLOY said, hon. Members on those Benches asked that Progress should be reported, because the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury had stated that he was unable to give any satisfactory answer to the question put by them. The Committee were surely entitled to have an answer with regard to the Post Office appointments, especially as the hon. Gentleman had said that he was in favour of the reforms asked for. He would suggest that the Patronage Secretary (Lord Richard Grosvenor) should be asked to reply to questions on the subject which the hon. Gentleman was unable to answer. The noble Lord was just outside the House, and he appealed to the Government to ask him to walk in.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 22; Noes 101: Majority 79.—(Div. List, No. 132.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. SEXTON said, that as the noble Lord the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Richard Grosvenor) had now been called into the House by the division, he would like to ask him a question about the appointment to Postmasterships in Ireland. Some people in Ireland appeared still to think, though it must be a delusion, that Members of Parliament had some influence in nominating candidates, or in getting the appointments filled up. He was not aware upon what foundation that impression rested; and he would like to ask the noble Lord whether Members of Parliament practically filled up those appointments; and, if so, was the privilege confined to those Members only who supported the Government? There had been considerable confusion and perplexity over the matter in Ireland, and in one case the candidate recommended by the parish clergy and by other people of influence had been passed over in favour of another candidate of whom nobody knew anything. It would be more convenient for Members and more conducive to the public interest if the supposed right of Members to nominate those officials were altogether put an end to. The Treasury or the Postmaster General, or whoever was most capable, should take the appointments into their own hands.

LORD RICHARD GROSVENOR said, the Post Office patronage was exercised to a certain extent by Members of Parliament who supported the Government; but, at the same time, he frequently had communications from hon. Gentlemen opposite, and from hon. Members who sat in the same quarter of the House as the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), and he frequently attended to recommendations from them and from parish priests. Such recommendations were always duly considered. He thought it desirable to keep up this patronage. Any hon. Member who did not wish to exercise it need not do so, and could leave it alone; but there were others who did wish to exercise it, and it unquestionably brought them into closer contact with their constituents, and enabled them to confer favours of which there could not be the slightest abuse, inasmuch as all the nominations had to be submitted to the Postmaster General, who had the power to cancel them wherever he found the candidates were unsuitable. The patronage was largely exercised by Members of the House, and as they liked it he did not think it was desirable to abolish it.

MR. H. S. NORTHCOTE said, he had supported the Motion for reporting Progress, because he thought that was a very favourable opportunity for getting rid of this pernicious system of patronage in reference to those small Post Office appointments. The noble Lord had admitted that he duly considered all the applications made to him by Members of the House, in whatever quarter those Members might happen to sit. But the noble Lord had omitted to state whether he gave them all a favourable consideration. He (Mr. Northcote) had some knowledge of what went on at the Treasury; and, without making any

charge against the noble Lord, he must say that he entirely disapproved of the system pursued in those matters—a system to which one political Party had been quite as much committed as the other for many years past. He did not think private Members were much attached to that sort of patronage, and he would be glad to see it in the hands of the Postmaster General.

Mr. ONSLOW said, the noble Lord had told them that those appointments all came under the scrutiny of the Postmaster General. But would the noble Lord say that the Postmaster General had ever declined to complete an appointment which the noble Lord had recommended? It might be that now and then that was done; but as a matter of fact those appointments were a huge political job, and the sooner they were taken out of the hands of private Members the better. The whole of the Post Office Service ought to be under the superintendence and responsibility of the Postmaster General. It was absurd to say that those appointments were not given for political purposes, and the result was that all the Postmasters throughout the country took a perniciously active part in politics whenever an election occurred. Whenever this vicious system should be put an end to a great boon would be conferred upon the State. Why the noble Lord wished to maintain it he could not understand.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the Postmaster General was not relieved from responsibility in the matter by the fact that Members of Parliament made certain nominations. He made inquiries, and the final appointment rested with him. During the short time that he (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had held the Office of Postmaster General he had, on more than one occasion, refused to appoint the person recommended by the Secretary to the Treasury. No doubt there was a good deal to be said in favour of transferring the appointments directly to the Postmaster General; but one result would be that all the pressure which was now brought to bear on the noble Lord (Lord Richard Grosvenor) would be transferred to him (Mr. Shaw Lefevre). No great evil resulted from the present system, and he was rather inclined to leave it as it was.

Colonel NOLAN said, he thought he was justified when he moved that Progress be reported; because, if he had not taken that step, they would not have had the valuable speech of the noble Lord the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury. There was not much chance that the system which had been so much complained of that night would be abolished during the next six months, when they were on the eve of a General Election. He would much prefer to see those appointments transferred to the Postmaster General, though he did not pretend to feel very strongly about it, one way or the other. The Irish Members not only had none of that patronage at all, but they had no prospect of ever getting any. The result was that 4,000,000 or 5,000,000 people were altogether left out in the cold, although they continued to pay £28,000,000 taxes for the purposes of the Empire, and their fair share of that £11,000,000 which the Irish Members were foolish enough to allow to pass the other night without protest. It would be well for the Irish people to understand exactly how the matter lay, and that their Members could only obtain those appointments when there were no nominees of anybody else in the way.

Mr. CALLAN said, that whenever he applied for one of those appointments he used to go to the Postmaster General direct, and he had always been received in the most kindly spirit. He wished to know from the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury whether it was true that there was a book kept in the Post Office from which, when a vacancy occurred in a particular county which was worth less than £100 a-year, the clerk would know at once whom he should address to ask whether he had anyone to nominate? Such a book used to be kept. Those appointments were managed on very peculiar principles. Suppose a vacancy occurred this week in a county represented by some general supporter of the Government who happened to be absent last Friday night, when the Government were defeated on the Registration of Voters (Ireland) Bill, what chance would that Member have of getting the appointment for his nominee? They all knew that those appointments were not given for the purpose of corrupting a Member into giving a wrong vote; but they were given as a sop for sitting up at night and helping to "make a House, keep

a House, and cheer Ministers." If a Member went home to dinner and did not return, what chance would he have of getting a place in the Post Office for a nominee, in comparison with another Member who did come back, and did what he could to help the Liberal Whips out of the scrape into which they landed the Government on Friday night.

LORD RICHARD GROSVENOR understood that the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan) wished to be a Whip himself, and perhaps in time he might be. When the hon. Member did reach that position he (Lord Richard Grosvenor) would promise to give him, what he appeared so much to wish for, a valuable receipt for keeping his Party in hand.

MR. GRAY said, he knew the Attorney General had a strong objection to giving abstract opinions upon legal questions; but perhaps the hon. and learned Gentleman would not mind saying whether, if those appointments were given to reward constituents for supporting those Members who obtained them, the whole thing was not a piece of direct jobbery and political corruption, and whether it did not come within the provisions of the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he did not quite understand what was the procedure in reference to those matters. He understood that something mysterious went on, and that the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan) was to be told all about it at some future time. But, so far as he (the Attorney General) was aware, he had never known an hon. Member who would willingly be a party to any corrupt influence.

MR. SEXTON said, he thought the object in view in raising that discussion had been attained. That object was to make it understood that the Irish Members had no connection whatever with those appointments. He thanked the noble Lord (Lord Richard Grosvenor) for speaking so frankly, and for confessing that those appointments were really the cement by which the fragments of a Party were kept together. As it was to be understood that those appointments were given to reward those Members who supported the Government, it would be understood in Ireland that there was no use in applying to those Members who represented the national feeling of the country.

Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow*.

Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday*.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE VOTE OF CREDIT.

OBSERVATIONS.

MR. COURTNEY said, he wished to say a few words upon the question of considering the Report of the Votes in Committee of Supply. His hon. Friend had put down the Report for to-morrow. But as the first Vote was of a very important character, he thought that if the Report was to be taken to-morrow, his hon. Friend would, perhaps, agree when the Votes came on for consideration that the first Vote should be deferred to a day and hour when observations could be offered upon it. He would suggest that the Report of the Vote in question should be the second Order of the Day on Thursday next, when the debate would be taken on the Budget. He hoped that attention would be given to his suggestion that the consideration of the Report of the Vote of Credit for £11,000,000 might be deferred.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I think the proposal of my hon. Friend would be the most convenient one. It is not likely that the Order could be reached till very late, and no doubt hon. Members would wish to have some time for considering it. Therefore, I propose that the matter should rest until to-morrow, when a definite answer will be given.

MR. JACOB BRIGHT said, he hoped the request of his hon. Friend the Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) would be acceded to. No doubt there were many Members of the House who desired to have an opportunity of expressing their opinions upon the circumstances which had led to that important Vote.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

POST OFFICE SITES [PURCHASE OF LAND AND EXPENSES].

RESOLUTION.

MR. SEXTON asked the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General if he

could state the amount of money proposed to be expended in England, Scotland, and Ireland, under the Bill?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he could not state exactly what the amounts would be; but he believed it would be about £350,000 for the purchase of sites and buildings in London. The other objects of the Bill would probably be covered by £30,000 or £40,000.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of sums required for the purchase of lands, and for the costs and expenses which may be incurred by the Postmaster General in carrying into effect the provisions of any Act of the present Session to enable Her Majesty's Postmaster General to acquire lands for the public service.

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow*.

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND) [PAYMENT OF ADDITIONAL BARRISTERS].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the salaries of any additional Revising Barristers, and of any person temporarily acting as assistant to a Clerk of the Peace, who may be appointed under the provisions of any Act of the present Session for amending the Law relating to the Registration of Parliamentary Voters in Ireland.

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow*.

CORPORATION OF LONDON TOWER BRIDGE BILL.

Select Committee on Corporation of London Tower Bridge Bill *nominated* of,—Mr. THOROLD ROGERS, Mr. RITCHIE, Sir HENRY HOLLAND, Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE, and Four Members to be added by the Committee of Selection, with power to send for persons, papers, and records; Three to be the quorum.

House adjourned at a quarter after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 28th April, 1885.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) * (89); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 5) * (90); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 7) * (91).

Second Reading — Tramways (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 2) * (65).

Committee — Criminal Law Amendment (58-92).

Committee — Report — Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 2) * (64).

Third Reading—Drainage and Improvement of Lands (Ireland) Provisional Orders * (70); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 2) * (71); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 3) * (72); Honorary Freedom of Boroughs * (61); Royal Irish Constabulary Redistribution * (75); Egyptian Loan * (74), and *passed*.

Royal Assent — Municipal Voters (Relief) [48 *Vict.* c. 9]; Army (Annual) [48 *Vict.* c. 8]; Elections (Hours of Poll) [48 *Vict.* c. 10]; Local Government Provisional Orders [48 *Vict.* c. i]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) [48 *Vict.* c. ii].

DOMINION OF CANADA—INSURRECTION IN THE NORTH-WEST TERRITORY.—QUESTION.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON asked the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Government have any further information to give the House with regard to the insurrection in Canada?

THE EARL OF DERBY: I telegraphed yesterday to Lord Lansdowne to know what information he could supply, and I have his answer. He says that there has been no battle since that of Friday, of which we have already received the details. A telegram received at Ottawa confirms the reports as to the severity of the action, and puts the number of casualties rather higher than has been stated in the first accounts. The rebels had disappeared, but General Middleton's advance had been delayed by the care of the wounded and the want of supplies. He intends to push on as soon and as fast as possible. That is all the information I have.

EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.)—THE EGYPTIAN LOAN BILL AND FOREIGN CONTROL. QUESTION.

LORD LAMINGTON asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Egyptian Loan Bill will not entirely supersede the Control of the Egyptian Government, hitherto exercised by Her Majesty's Government, as stated in the noble Earl's Instructions to Sir Evelyn Baring in his despatch of January 4, 1884; and, whether the control of the Six Guaranteeing Powers

will be substituted for that Control until the "pacification of Egypt" is effected?

EARL GRANVILLE: I think the noble Lord's Question must have been put under some misunderstanding. With regard to what is called by him "the British Control" in Egypt at the present moment, my view is this—that we are in military occupation of Egypt, and, no doubt, a great responsibility rests upon us; and, being in that position, without attempting to administer the Government of Egypt from this country, it is quite clear, as we think, that we have a right, on all important questions, to give our advice to the Egyptian Government, and to expect that that advice should be followed. I am not aware that the Egyptian Loan Bill in the slightest degree affects that question, and I do not know that the Bill gives to Foreign Powers any right which they do not possess at this moment. They claim, and we admit that the Powers of Europe have an interest in Egypt; but the Bill neither confirms nor increases it in any way.

EGYPT AND FRANCE—SEIZURE OF THE "BOSPHORE EGYPTIEN"—RUPTURE OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. QUESTION.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I wish to ask the noble Earl opposite (Earl Granville), Whether any information or Papers will be laid before the House in reference to a matter which has occupied so much of the attention of the public—that of *The Bosphore Egyptien?*

EARL GRANVILLE: The Papers will be laid upon the Table immediately a final settlement is arrived at. I have no reason to doubt the announcement made yesterday by my noble Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, as to the probability of an agreement with France being arrived at.

CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL.

(*The Earl of Dalhousie.*)

(NO. 58.) COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to order).

Clause 1 (Short title) *agreed to.*

PART I.

Suppression of Prostitution.

On the Motion of The Earl of DALHOUSIE, the following Amendment made:—In page 1, line 8, leave out the words "*Suppression of Prostitution*" and insert instead thereof the words "*Protection of Women and Girls.*"

Clause 2 (Procuring woman to be a common prostitute or to enter a brothel).

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN, in moving in the 2nd sub-section of the clause, as an Amendment, to insert the words "under 21 years of age," said, he did so for the reason that it was really impossible to protect people of mature age from the natural results of their own misconduct.

Amendment *moved*, in page 1, line 13, after ("girl") insert ("under twenty-one years of age.")—(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, the sub-section was necessary in order to protect women and girls from deception. The very fact of procuring implied a certain amount of deception. It was shown in evidence before the Commission which sat on this question some time since that all the girls found in foreign brothels were deceived by false pretences.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, that though not wishing to express any strong opinion on the subject, he thought there was a decided distinction between procuring for English and foreign brothels.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL said, he thought that as the Bill aimed at the punishment of all those who endeavoured to procure young women for these purposes there should be no limit of age.

Amendment *negatived.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 3 (Procuring defilement of woman by threats or fraud):

On the Motion of The Earl of DALHOUSIE, the following Amendments made:—In page 1, line 24, leave out ("any") and insert ("himself or any other"); page 2, line 2, leave out ("any") and insert ("himself or any other"); line 7, leave out ("any") and insert ("himself or any other"), and after ("man") insert—

("Provided that this sub-section shall not apply where such woman or girl knew such connexion to be unlawful");

and in line 9, leave out ("any") and insert ("himself or any other.")

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 4 (Defilement of girl under twelve years of age).

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN said, that it was very difficult to prove the complete offence; and the most horrible and revolting barbarities were practised on children by wretches who, owing to the existing state of the law, escaped anything like adequate punishment.

Amendment *moved,*

In page 2, line 27, after ("labour") insert ("and any one who attempts to commit the said offence, or aids or abets any other person to commit the said offence, shall be guilty of felony, and shall be liable, at the discretion of the court, to be kept in penal servitude for any period not exceeding ten years, or to be imprisoned for any term not exceeding two years with or without hard labour.")—(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, he was unable to accept the Amendment, on the ground that it had not been shown that the punishment which an offender could at present be made to suffer was thought insufficient by the administrators of the law.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK said, he thought that the Bill would be weighted too heavily if the Amendment were agreed to.

LORD BRAMWELL opposed the Amendment, on the ground that it would introduce an anomaly into the law. When their Lordships considered the severity of two years' imprisonment with hard labour, which he had been told by governors of gaols was almost more than a man could bear, they would, he hoped, think it enough for the attempt, which they must bear in mind might differ morally from the full offence, because the man might have relented. He believed that with the exception of attempt to murder no mere attempt was a felony.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN said, he thought the noble and learned Lord opposite (Lord Bramwell) was in error. An assault with intent to do grievous bodily harm was a felony, also an attempt to commit murder; and he altogether failed to see why an attempt to commit a horrible crime of the nature in question should not be placed in the same category. He felt so strongly on the matter that he would ask their Lordships to divide.

On Question? Their Lordships *divided:*—Contents 35; Not-Contents 69: Majority 34.

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Nelson, E.
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Pembroke and Montgomery, E.
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Hawarden, V.
Bath and Wells, L. Bp.
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Gloucester and Bristol, L. Bp.
Hereford, L. Bp.
Lichfield, L. Bp.
Llandaff, L. Bp.
London, L. Bp.
St. Asaph, L. Bp.
Winchester, L. Bp.
Balfour of Burley, L. [*Teller.*]
Clanwilliam, L. (*E. Clanwilliam.*)
Colchester, L.
de Ros, L.
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Brabourne, L.
Bramwell, L.
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Talbot de Malahide, L.
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Tweedmouth, L.
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Amendment *disagreed to.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 5 (Defilement of girl between twelve and fifteen years of age).

LORD NORTON, in moving an Amendment the object of which was to fix the age of protection at 16, instead of 15 years, said, the Report of the House of Lords Committee, 1882, over which the noble and learned Earl (the late Earl Cairns) presided, recommended that the age below which consent should be no defence should be 16. That noble and learned Earl said in the debate on this Bill in Committee, 1883—

"In the Select Committee on this subject, the evidence given established a conclusive case of the necessity of raising the age. He (Earl Cairns), therefore, was in favour of making the age 17, though the majority of the Committee had decided against him, thinking that 16 was sufficient."—(3 *Hansard*, [280] 1391.)

And this was accepted in 1883 and 1884, after discussion in the House of Lords. Why was it proposed in the present Bill to lower the age to 15? There were the following parallel adoptions of the age of 16 in the Statutes and in legal decisions. The 24 & 25 *Vict.*, c. 100, s. 55, on offences against the person, made it criminal to abduct a girl up to 16 from her guardians, though consenting. There was a case of a father recovering his daughter, though against her will, by *habeas corpus*. The 38 & 39 *Vict.*, c. 94, amended this Act by raising the age of protection of girls generally. The Court of Divorce adopted the 16 limit of age, and dealt with the custody of children until 16. The Infants Custody Act, 36 & 37 *Vict.*, enabled the Court of Chancery to give the custody to the mother instead of the father up to 16. The Court of Chancery retained special guardianship up to the age of 16, over which it allowed its wards to choose with whom they would live. Boards of Guardians were legally responsible for the care of girls whom they placed out in service up to 16. Finally, in matters of discretion in minors the law took the same limit. In the Friendly Societies, Industrial and Provident Societies, and Trades Unions Acts, infants up to the age of 16 were not recognized as capable of being members except of children's societies. It was, therefore, according to the general principle of our law that the discretion of a girl under 16 should not be thought sufficient to permit her the unprotected disposal of herself. A girl might marry at 12; but then the man bound himself to her protection, and in common liability pledged his own interests as much as the girl's. Practically, there were scarcely any marriages under 16. Lord Cairns's Committee reported, in their evidence, that—

"No such protection is now given in England to girls above 13 as in other countries is given them up to 21."

The question now was between raising the age of protection as agreed, in former debates, to 16, or falling back to 15. There was no precedent whatever for the adoption of the age of 15.

Amendment *moved*, in page 2, line 31, to leave out ("fifteen") and insert ("sixteen.")—(*The Lord Norton.*)

Question proposed, "That ('fifteen') stand part of the Clause."

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, he was sorry he could not accept the Amendment. The Government were extremely anxious that the Bill should have the unanimous support of their Lordships; and they hoped, by reducing the age from 16 to 15, that they would be able to get the Bill through without serious opposition. The Government also desired to have the sanction of the public in regard to legislation of this kind, and in that view were anxious to make the measure workmanlike, practical, and effective. It was doubtful whether the age of 16 would meet with unanimous approval, and, therefore, they proposed to take the age of 15. He thought that in making the alteration they were taking a wise and prudent step; but if they went one step further in the direction of the Amendment they would be going too far, and would ruin the Bill.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, that in the Select Committee which considered this subject he always voted for the age of 16 when the subject was discussed. There was no doubt that public opinion on the subject was in a very divided and uncertain condition; and if they took too violent a step by adopting the higher age, they would run the risk of turning public opinion against them in this matter. To have public opinion on the side of immorality would be a far more serious loss to the community than

as any advantage which could be obtained in the other direction. The Government, he thought, had exercised a wise discretion upon the question in limiting the age to 15, and he hoped the House would not assent to the Amendment.

THE BISHOP OF LICHFIELD said, he hoped the Amendment would be pressed to a division. So far as means existed of ascertaining public opinion, it had been strongly expressed in favour of the Amendment. For many years the House had been receiving Petitions, which prayed that even a higher age than that named by the Amendment might be fixed. If the Government were anxious for the support of public opinion, they would be more likely to obtain it by accepting the Amendment than by adhering to the clause. The House would be stultifying itself to lower the age which, for two years, had been affirmed by divisions, and that without any new reasons having been given for such a change. It was quite an assumption that the opinion of the other House would not be in favour of the higher age. He hoped the higher age would be adhered to as covering a year in the age of girls at which it was exceedingly desirable to protect them from the temptations to which too many were exposed.

LORD MOUNT-TEMPLE, in supporting the Amendment, said, attention had been directed too much to the possibilities of fraudulent accusations against men, and too little to the misery and degradation of girls whose inexperience and weakness required such protection as the law could afford. The opinion of competent witnesses examined by the Select Committee was that 15 was too low an age at which the consent of girls should be considered a justification for their seducers. The question of the age at which a girl ought to be considered to become responsible for the disposal of her own person required much information and consideration. Those who had devoted their lives to the rescue of women from degradation advocated the ages of 16, 17, or 18. It was a deplorable fact, which their Lordships could not ignore, that the main subject of this Bill was a trade. Some wished it to be a free trade, with as little restriction as possible. That was a trade in girls for immoral purposes; and, unfortunately for the victims, it was carried on by women, so that young girls were thrown off their guard by their own sex. Looking at the question from that point of view, the question was at what age the trade in girls should be interfered with. Those who objected to the intervention of law for the protection of young girls from enticements and injury might be reminded that laws had been passed to protect young fish and young birds, on the ground that it was to the advantage of the nation that fishes and birds should be allowed to attain to maturity. For the preservation of the young progeny of salmon, anglers were prohibited from casting a glittering fly concealing a cruel hook at the season when the young fish required protection. Wild birds had legal protection from snares and nets of captors, at seasons when injuries would otherwise be inflicted on the unfledged nestlings. Even on the lower grounds on which this legislation could be defended, it was surely important that society should defend itself against the evil consequences of sacrificing, to those who traded in vice, girls who were undoubtedly too young to protect themselves.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERRURY said, that the House and the country would thank the Government for their determination to carry a Bill on this subject; but he did not think the House would thank them, and he was sure the country would not thank them, for lowering the age already fixed by their Lordships by large majorities. The dignity of the House was somewhat compromised, seeing that it had declared, once and again, that 16 was the right age. Now, without any pressure being brought to bear upon the House, or any new arguments being used, it was sought to reduce the age to 15. He asked their Lordships, therefore, not to make a retrograde step, but to adhere to their former decisions. He believed that, without any exception, 16 was the earliest age at which the law recognized the right of girls to exercise independent responsibility. A girl under 16 could not marry without parental consent; a ward in Chancery under 16 could not choose with whom she would live; children under 16 could not be made responsible in any decent and suitable matters of life. Was the law, then, to allow a child under that age, who was not held responsible in other affairs of daily life,

to be responsible for handing herself over for self-ruin? Consider the difference the lowering of the age would make to a father in the protection of his daughter. A working man missed his daughter from home; he came to know in what house to look for her, and although he could search that house for a stolen article of trifling value, he could not do so to rescue a child who in no other circumstances could act without him. There was no analogy to the case of marriage under 16; because in the case of marriage there was the consent of the parents, who handed over their child to the care of a man who undertook to maintain and protect her. But even such marriages were extremely rare; for when the statistics were examined, it was found there had been only 130 contracted marriages with girls under 16, out of a total of 750,000 marriages. Public opinion had been gauged in this matter, and the House would be acting in agreement with it, if it maintained the age of 16. The conscience of the people had been roused by recent disclosures on the matter, and they would heartily support that House if it adhered to the higher age.

LORD BRAMWELL said, he must point out to their Lordships that the Bill was not a Bill for the prevention of illicit intercourse between men and women. It was not even a Bill against seduction. The only principle of the Bill was to deal with cases in which men committed offences which, from the age of the girls, amounted to the commission of what might be termed unnatural crime; and that being so, he was in favour of making the age 15, and was by no means sure that even 14 was not a high enough limit, and that it would not have been wiser to have adopted that age. Girls were frequently married at 16, and although he could not admire the wisdom of a man who married a girl at that age, such a marriage was not viewed with repugnance or as an objectionable proceeding. He would warn their Lordships against making the law too severe, and thought that the adoption of the higher age would tend to bring the law into contempt if a man could be indicted whose offence was that only of having intercourse with a prostitute just short of 16 years of age. The Bill would work injustice, and thereby become unpopular, and it was unnecessary and dangerous to meddle with the law as it stood.

LORD NORTON said, he earnestly protested against the distinction which the noble and learned Lord opposite (Lord Bramwell) attempted to draw between what he thought natural and unnatural in crimes of the kind now under discussion—a distinction unknown to the Statute Book, and entirely in the human breast.

On Question? Their Lordships *divided*:—Contents 65; Not-Contents 34: Majority 31.

Amendment *disagreed to.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 6 (Householder, &c. permitting defilement of girl under fifteen on his premises guilty of misdemeanour).

On the Motion of The Earl of DALHOUSIE, the following Amendments made:—In page 3, line 30, leave out ("may") and insert ("shall"); line 32, leave out ("guilty of an offence under this Act"); and in line 33, after ("premises") insert ("and have reasonable ground for believing to have been guilty of an offence under this Act.")

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 7 (Abduction of girl under eighteen with intent to have carnal knowledge).

LORD MOUNT-TEMPLE, in moving, as an Amendment, that a master or guardian who assaulted a girl under 18 years of age should be guilty of a misdemeanour, and be rendered liable to imprisonment for two years with hard labour, said, abuses of power by masters over female servants were common, and by guardians over wards were not rare. A householder was in a position of trust in respect to a servant girl under 18 who had been committed to his care by her parents. If by means of his authority he ruined her morally he ought to be liable to severe punishment.

Amendment *moved*,

In page 4, line 9, after ("labour") insert ("any person who, being the guardian of a girl under eighteen years, or having the care or charge of her, or being her master in domestic service or other employment, or other person whose lawful commands she is bound to obey, unlawfully and carnally knows, or attempts to have unlawful and carnal knowledge of, or indecently assaults such girl, shall be guilty of a misdemeanour, and being convicted thereof

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shall be liable, at the discretion of the court, to be imprisoned for any term not exceeding two years with or without hard labour: Provided that it shall be a defence under this section to show that such girl had been unchaste previously to the offence charged.")—(*The Lord Mount-Temple.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, the Amendment was very wide in terms. It was open to grave objection and liable to abuse, and he could not agree to it.

Amendment *disagreed to.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 8 (Power, on indictment for rape, to convict of indecent assault).

On the Motion of The Earl of DALHOUSIE, the following Amendment made:—In page 4, line 13, after ("indictment") insert ("or of an attempt to commit the same.").

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 9 (Amendment of 2 & 3 Vict. c. 47, s. 54, and 10 & 11 Vict. c. 89, s. 28).

On the Motion of The Earl of DALHOUSIE, the following Amendment made:—In page 5, line 2, leave out ("only of one police constable") and insert ("of one witness only.")

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN, in moving the omission of the clause, said, it gave an unlimited and most dangerous power of arbitrary arrest to the police, against both men and women, and would leave them indeed, when walking through the streets of London, at the mercy of the police, for it would allow any policeman who saw a man and woman talking together to arrest one or both of them—the man on the charge of importuning, and the woman of soliciting. Even if the charge was dismissed the mischief done could never be repaired. In the interests, too, of the thousands of workgirls, who in a large place like London were obliged to go long distances to their homes, he protested against rendering them liable to the danger of a charge by a corrupt or malicious policeman. As the law stood at present, if this solicitation took place to the annoyance of the passengers or inhabitants, the offence was criminal. That was amply sufficient, and there was no necessity for this clause. A Proviso was inserted to the effect that no committal should take place on the testimony of one witness only. As the Bill originally stood, it was "on the testimony of one police constable." That had been altered on consequence of his remarks on the second reading; but it meant exactly the same thing. That was a very strange inconsistency, as the clause gave the policeman this arbitrary power of arrest, and yet said that his evidence was not sufficient for a committal—in fact, that he was not to be believed on his oath. He contended that the existing powers of the law were ample, and on these grounds he begged to move the rejection of the clause.

Moved, "To omit the Clause."—(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, he would point out that the clause was recommended by the Select Committee on the subject. The words were, that soliciting prostitution in the streets should be an offence. The present condition of the London streets was a very great, if not the principal, cause of the corruption of the young; and the Bill having for its object the protection of the young, it would be impossible to pass over the question of the condition of the streets.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, he would point out that the clause, as it stood, differed materially from the recommendation made by the Committee, because there was the remarkable addition that the men should be liable to arrest as well as the women. He thought they were now discussing the question rather from the point of view of those of their own class—those who had houses. But, as their Lordships doubtless were well aware, there was a large portion of the population who, after their day's work was over, went out to walk in the streets and to meet their friends. They walked in the parks and in the streets, and talked with their friends there; and yet by this clause they proposed to make it, if not not an absolute offence, a serious matter of suspicion, if a man spoke to a woman in the streets. Was this a condition of things which their Lordships would like to see brought about? He felt that very serious hardships would result to

those who now very largely used public places for recreation. Such large powers placed in the hands of the police would enable them to damage this Act in public estimation, as had been done in the case of another measure which had for its object the suppression of immorality—the Contagious Diseases Acts—in which the police had had to do very unpleasant things, and the prejudice against these Acts was that they put it in the power of a policeman to damage the character of an innocent girl; and he was afraid that under this clause the characters of innocent young girls would be subject to the same danger. By such a clause he thought they would really run the risk of a very considerable social danger, that they would inflict a great hardship, and would do no good whatever. If his noble Friend (the Earl of Milltown) went to a division he should support him.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, that the question was whether a possible miscarriage of justice under this section was at all to be balanced against the benefit of checking the system if they could. The evil which it was proposed to cope with—the condition of the streets of London—was a very serious and grave one, and full of danger to young persons, and it was felt that this state of things was a source of great public mischief. He would point out that the clause provided that there must be more than one witness to justify a conviction; and, as policemen did not go about in couples, it was certain that the second witness would not be a policeman. As to the case of men, only those were liable who in a thoroughfare or other public place habitually and persistently importuned women for an immoral purpose.

EARL COWPER said, he thought it would be more satisfactory if the matter could have been disposed of by the Committee, and thus the disagreeable discussion, which came before the House year after year, be avoided. But he thought the clause now under consideration would lead to much mischief. In spite of there being more than one witness required, he thought the danger of collusion would be great for the purpose of extorting money, or gratifying any evil design, as in the way of revenge or otherwise. In addition to that, the wording of the clause was too vague, for nothing could be more difficult to define than the words "habitually and persistently importunes." He could not vote for the clause.

LORD BRAMWELL said, he could not understand why two witnesses should be required to prove the strange, vague offence dealt with in the clause, when one witness was sufficient to prove much more serious crimes. That very necessity for having two or more witnesses, in his opinion, condemned the clause, and he should vote against it.

LORD COLERIDGE said, that the opponents of the clause argued that unfounded accusations of solicitation might be brought against a man; but any other crime might be wrongfully charged against a person in the same way, and, therefore, this argument had no special substance. His only objection to the clause was that it would be very difficult to prove persistent and constant solicitation.

LORD NORTON said, that the condition of some of the streets of the Metropolis was far more disgraceful, and the offence of solicitation was carried to a greater length in London than in any other capital in Europe. In the case of women, the only change effected in the law by this clause would be that it would be no longer necessary to prove that the solicitation with which a woman was charged caused annoyance to passengers.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK said, that in his opinion, at least, the proposed change in the law which the clause would bring about might be tried experimentally.

LORD ABERDARE said, he could not but think that there would be little difficulty about proving the offence of persistent solicitation. Women were now seldom committed for the offence; because it was almost impossible to induce respectable persons to come forward to say that they had been annoyed. It was well known that there were men who habitually solicited young women on their way home from business.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE, said, he objected to the clause. It was easy to explain the reason why there were more prostitutes on the streets of London than in Continental towns—namely, that immorality was accepted as an inevitable evil and dealt with accordingly; and houses were licensed where men and women met, and by proper regulations health was protected, as well

as any indecent exhibitions in the streets prevented. It was most desirable to protect young girls; but it was impossible, in his opinion, to do away with immorality, which was the vain attempt made by the supporters of the Bill.

On Question? Their Lordships *divided*:—Contents 45; Not-Contents 34: Majority 11.

Clause *agreed to*, and *ordered* to stand part of the Bill.

Remaining clauses *agreed to*.

The Report of the Amendments to be received on *Thursday* next; and Bill to be *printed* as amended. (No. 92.)

EGYPTIAN LOAN BILL.—(No. 74.)

(*The Earl Granville.*)

THIRD READING.

Bill read 3ª (according to order).

On Question, "That the Bill do pass?"

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Before the Bill is passed, I wish to ask the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can name any date or proximate date at which he is likely to be able to fulfil the pledge or species of pledge which he gave the other night that he would explain the definite policy which Her Majesty's Government intend to pursue with respect to the Soudan?

EARL GRANVILLE: I am afraid I cannot fix a date. I am not prepared at present to make the statement.

Bill *passed*.

NAVY (SHIPS BUILDING)—MINISTERIAL PROGRAMME.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF RAVENSWORTH, in rising to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty, What steps have been or are being taken by the Board of Admiralty to complete in the Royal Dockyards the shipbuilding programme, presented to both Houses of Parliament on the 2nd December last, for the financial year ending the 31st March 1886? said, it would be in the recollection of the House that on the occasion to which he referred the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Northbrook) made a very important announcement with respect to the Navy. The occasion was an important one, and the circumstances connected with it were important. It was felt that the question was urgent then, and if so it was much more urgent now. In his (the Earl of Ravensworth's) opinion, the provision made in the Naval Estimates for the year in respect of the two iron-clads to be built by the Admiralty was most inadequate. In the present state of the country, he considered it would be a mistake to lay down any new ship in any of the four Government Dockyards—namely, Chatham, Sheerness, Portsmouth, or Devonport; because, when repairing and refitting were going on to a large extent, the work of building was liable to serious interruption. That observation, however, did not apply to Pembroke. He asked particularly for information as to what was being done with regard to the 10 torpedo cruisers known by the name of *Scouts*, the 30 first-class torpedo boats, and the two torpedo rams of the *Polyphemus* type, and would conclude by asking the Question of which he had given Notice.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: My Lords, it would be desirable, if any other Questions are to be asked, that they should be put before I make my reply; because if they are put afterwards the Rules of Debate prevent me speaking again. I shall be glad to answer the Question of the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Ravensworth) as plainly as I can. Your Lordships will recollect that, in December of last year, I explained that it was the intention of the Government to ask for money in the Estimates for the current year to enable them to spend a capital sum of £3,100,000 on ships to be built by contract. I explained at the time that for that money we calculated on building one iron-clad, five belted cruisers, two torpedo rams, 10 *Scouts*, and 30 torpedo boats of the first class, in addition to the ordinary rate of shipbuilding. At the same time, I said I was by no means certain that would be the precise manner in which the money would be spent; I said it might be possible that, instead of giving a contract for one iron-clad, we might give contracts for two or three; and that, of course, involved that the money would not go so far to provide ships of the other classes. I will now explain what we have actually done. Instead of ordering by contract one iron-clad, we have ordered two. We have ordered by contract five belted cruisers and six vessels of the *Scout*

class, and we have ordered the whole number of torpedo boats of the first class. We have thus ordered by contract ships representing the sum of £3,100,000; and, indeed, we have gone somewhat above that sum. I have always endeavoured to go a little beyond the pledges given to Parliament, rather than to fall short of them. An iron-clad is more expensive than two rams and four ships of the *Scout* class put together. Therefore, the orders given by the Government for ships to be built by contract exceed the expectation held out in the statement I made in the month of December last. Your Lordships will be glad to hear that in no case has our estimate of the cost of the ships been exceeded by the tenders we have accepted. It is also gratifying to find, owing to the ability of the great shipbuilding firms of the country, that we have secured both for the iron-clads and belted cruisers a speed sensibly higher than we expected. We shall have, for the iron-clads, a speed of over 16 knots, and for the belted cruisers 18 knots. With respect to the programme of shipbuilding in the Dockyards, the matter is more difficult. The circumstances were not the same when the Estimates were framed as they were when I made the statement in December. I then said, and it met with the general concurrence of your Lordships, that if it were necessary to spend more money upon the construction of ships of war, it was desirable, both for reasons well known to my noble Friend, as the Chairman of a Committee that had inquired into the subject, and also because there was at the time a want of employment in the shipbuilding trade of the country, that the extra money should be spent in building ships by contract, and that we should be content to let the Dockyards go on steadily at the rate of construction at which they were then carried on. When we came to frame the Naval Estimates, it appeared to us, for reasons it is hardly necessary for me now to explain, that it was desirable that the naval programme of this year should be based upon the policy of completing, as quickly as possible, those ships which could be completed in the course of the financial year. It is not a very economical thing to do, because to complete a large number of ships at the same time disturbs somewhat the distribution of labour. Still, there were reasons which led the Board of Admiralty to the conclusion that it was the best policy to pursue in framing the Estimates for the year. The number of ships we are expecting to complete this year is considerable. We shall complete in the year the *Edinburgh*, the *Collingwood*, the *Impérieuse*, and the *Warspite*.

THE EARL OF RAVENSWORTH: Not the *Colossus?*

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: The *Colossus* is complete so far as our programme of shipbuilding is concerned. We shall also complete the *Mersey*, a new belted cruiser, and three ships of very nearly the same class, the *Arethusa*, the *Phæton*, and the *Amphion*; these three ships will be completed in the calendar year. I mention that because the financial year is usually understood. There are also, besides these, several small ships I need not mention. That being the basis of our policy, while we are spending this year somewhat more than last year, we are postponing the laying down of ships in the Dockyards until the close of the year. I understand that is the policy the noble Earl approves. During the last few months we have thought it desirable that the ships in the Dockyards should be pushed forward and prepared for sea, and that we should not lay down any new ships, because it would be inconvenient to have the staff diverted from the completion of ships. We propose, towards the end of the year, to make preparations for the commencement of two iron-clads in the Dockyards, one at Portsmouth and the other at Pembroke, of a torpedo ram at Chatham, and a *Scout* at Devonport. If it were desirable to increase the number of iron-clad ships beyond this programme it would be better to do it by contract than to go to the Dockyards, because we cannot undertake more building of that class than we now have on hand. But, in existing circumstances, I do not think it necessary to push on more rapidly the construction of this kind of vessels. I have often said in this House that it is a growing opinion in the Service that it is by no means certain that these large iron-clads will for ever be the ships of the greatest importance in time of war. Therefore, if we were to increase our building programme at the present time, it might be a wiser expenditure of money to order

ships of a different class. My Lords, I am unable to inform my noble Friend what the precise design of the new ships will be. The Admiralty has of late been so much occupied with other matters that we have not had the leisure at our disposal to consider this question. I have shown that the expectations which I held out in December last have been somewhat more than fulfilled. We are building more by contract than I then expected, and we have kept up the same rate of building in the Dockyards. I said that the annual production of armour-clad ships would be increased by 2,000 tons a-year — from 12,000 to 14,000 tons. In the Navy Estimates of this year it will be found that we expect to build in 1885 14,423 tons. That is nearly the figure I gave last December. In addition to that, we shall build no less than 6,000 tons of protected ships, which, compared with the iron-clad ships of other nations, might almost be reckoned as iron-clads. The total tonnage proposed for this year is 28,052. as compared with 20,650 tons last year. Thus we have somewhat exceeded the programme I sketched out last December. My noble Friend asked whether, now that the *Howe* was launched at Pembroke, the men would be set at work on a new ship? The answer is that the men would be emoloyed on the *Anson* and other ships, and can be more usefully occupied by pressing those ships forward than on a new ship. The number of men employed at Pembroke is about the same as last year. There has been a good deal of misrepresentation lately in respect of the policy of the Admiralty, and about one statement in particular which I made in this House. I have been twitted with saying that if the Admiralty had £3,000,000 or £4,000,000 to spend in shipbuilding they would not know what to do with the money. That is a very incorrect interpretation of a remark which I once made in this House. I was referring only to the largest class of ships, and my remark by no means applied to the general construction of ships. I said only what I am sure has been felt by everyone who has considered the subject. I said that if I had put into my hands £4,000,000 or £5,000,000 to spend upon the biggest iron-clad ships, I should find a difficulty in choosing the particular class of ships upon which that money should be spent. I am sure that those of your Lordships who have followed the technical discussions of the merits of one or another class of iron-clads would agree with me in that feeling. I am by no means of opinion that the money could not be usefully spent upon other classes of ships; and this statement is proved by the classes of ships ordered by the Admiralty in consequence of the liberality of Parliament in placing large sums at our disposal during the current year for the construction of ships by contract.

House adjourned at a quarter before Eight o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 28th April, 1885.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEE—Industries (Ireland), nomination [House counted out].

SUPPLY—*considered in Committee — Resolutions* [April 27] *reported.*

PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*)—*Second Reading — Committed to a Select Committee* — Lower Thames Valley Main Sewerage.*

PUBLIC BILLS — *First Reading* — Water Provisional Orders (Barton-upon-Humber and District Water, &c.)* [142].

Considered as amended—Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) [134] [*First Night*], *debate adjourned.*

Third Reading—Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 6)* [118]; Local Authorities (Expenses of Conferences)* [129], and *passed.*

QUESTIONS.

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INDIA (BOMBAY)—FOREST DEPARTMENT—THE THANA DISTRICT.

MR. SLAGG asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether it is a fact that the Government of Bombay has recently appropriated, as a "protected forest," about 1,000 square miles of wooded land in the Thana District; whether the population of the district has not, from time immemorial, exercised unlimited right of user over the said woodlands; whether this step has not caused serious discontent among nearly 1,000,000 people, whose trade, agricultural, and domestic necessities have been seriously affected thereby;

and, whether he can give, or will obtain, information as to the reasons which are held to justify this step?

MR. J. K. CROSS: To the first clause of my hon. Friend's Question, I must reply that the "reserved" and "protected" forests of the Thana Division amounted in 1879 to 2,034 square miles. In 1844, by abandoning lands which it was not considered absolutely necessary to conserve, they had been reduced to 1,486 square miles. For many years previous to about 1870, the restrictions necessary for the protection of public forests were much disregarded, so that in some cases the people have come to regard as rights practices which really are trespasses and destructive of the forests. The enforcement during the last 15 or 20 years of these restrictions has caused some discontent. But the attention of the Bombay Government has been constantly directed to the subject, and every concession has been and will continue to be made compatible with the preservation of the forests.

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—WORKS AT KINSALE AND MALINMORE, BUNDORAN, CO. DONEGAL.

MR. DEASY asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If it is a fact that before the plans for the present harbour works at Kinsale were finally approved of and settled by the Board of Works, the plans were surveyed or examined by the chief engineer of the Board, Mr. Manning; whether the duty of making the survey was imposed on a junior engineer, Mr. Crosthwaite; whether Mr. Crosthwaite discharged this duty; and, if, when the quay walls as now specified are built, the harbour can be deepened without endangering the stability of the walls, so as to allow fishing vessels to come alongside the quay?

MR. HIBBERT: The plans for the present harbour works at Kinsale were designed by the Chief Engineer to the Board of Works. They were drawn under his direction, and were carefully examined before being approved. The survey was made by Mr. Crosthwaite, acting under the immediate direction of the engineer. When the works are finished, fishing vessels will be able to come alongside the pier at low water, and alongside the quay at half-tide.

MR. LEA also asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, When the works in connection with the piers of Malinmore and Bundoran, county Donegal, will be commenced, in accordance with the recommendation of the Fishery Commissioners, and approved by the Treasury; and, if a Return can now be given of all moneys allocated under the recent special grant from the Church Fund?

MR. HIBBERT: The contract for Malinmore is in hand, and the formalities are being completed. It is hoped that the work will be begun in a couple of months. The contract was accepted for Bundoran; but, unfortunately, the contractor threw it up, and new tenders had to be called for. Probably, the general figures which my hon. Friend desires can be best given in the Report of the Fishery Piers and Harbours Commissioners.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE INCOME TAX ON TENANT FARMERS.

MR. BIRKBECK asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he has given consideration to the request, made during the debate on Customs and Inland Revenue Bill last Session, as to placing the tenant farmers of England on the same footing as Scotch and Irish in respect of the charges under Schedule (B) of Income Tax?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): In reply to the Question of the hon. Member, I may assure him that I have, since last Session, given great attention to this subject, which is one of much complexity, as he, doubtless, is aware. In my Financial Statement I hope to deal with it in a manner of which the hon. Member will possibly approve.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—DISTRICT OF GWEEDORE, CO. DONEGAL.

MR. LEWIS asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Government are in possession of information regarding the existence of a state of extreme lawlessness in the district of Gweedore, county Donegal; whether special magisterial reports from the districts have been received; and, what steps the Government are taking to put down intimidation and boycotting, and to enforce the Queen's writ?

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that Question, I would wish to ask him, whether the district referred to in the Question has not, for a long series of years, been the scene of excessive rack-renting, extreme poverty, and many cruel evictions; and, whether the Government intend to take any steps to put an end to so intolerable a state of things?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Perhaps the hon. Member will give Notice of that Question. In answer to the Question on the Paper, I have to say that there has been a good deal of excitement in this district, and it has been the subject of report and inquiry on the spot. The means adopted by the Government with the view of preventing the Boycotting and intimidation are the same as those used in other parts of the country; and the necessity has been impressed on the local police of making every endeavour to render amenable any persons guilty of these practices. Due protection will be given to the officers of the law in the execution of their duties.

MR. SEXTON: Is it not a fact that a great many evictions have taken place in the district, and that the Inspector of the Local Government Board reported that men, women, and children were lying for days and nights together in the ditches under the rain?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I must ask for Notice of the Question.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—SKIBBEREEN UNION, CO. CORK—ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

MR. DEASY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the Local Government Board have received a communication from a guardian of the Skibbereen Union, objecting to the recent elections of chairman, vice-chairman, and deputy vice-chairman, respectively, on the ground that the elections were irregularly carried out; and, whether the Local Government Board will order new elections for the above officers?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It appears that the voting at the first election was equal; and that by unanimous consent the election was postponed to a later date, when the then chairmen were chosen. Two Guardians have since complained of the course pursued; but the Local Government Board see no reason whatever to interfere.

MR. DEASY: Was not the election conducted contrary to the regulations of the Local Government Board?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No; I think not.

MR. DEASY said, he would ask another Question on the subject.

FISHERIES (IRELAND)—THE HERRING FISHERY.

MR. DEASY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been drawn to a meeting of fishermen, fishbuyers, and boat owners held in the Kinsale Court House on Monday 20th instant, when it was unanimously resolved to ask the herring fishermen (who are mostly from Scotland) not to commence herring fishing until May 11th, on the ground that, if carried on earlier, it would materially injure the mackerel fishing; and, whether, in view of the large and representative character of the said meeting, and largeness of the interest involved, he will direct the Inspectors of Fisheries to hold an inquiry into the matter as soon as possible?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I think it would be desirable to have an inquiry into this subject, and the Inspectors inform me they are quite ready to hold one. They point out, however, that a bye-law, fixing the 11th of May for the commencement of the herring fishing, even if it should be determined upon, could not come into operation for this season; and that the result of an inquiry held now could not bind the fishermen this year, though, perhaps, they might of themselves acquiesce in any arrangement that might be come to at the inquiry. I do not know that this is very likely; but I will leave it to the Inspectors themselves to fix a date, having regard to their other engagements.

NAVY—H.M.S. "AGAMEMNON."

ADMIRAL EGERTON asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, What is the latest report of the steering qualities of Her Majesty's ship *Agamemnon?*

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: The last Report from Captain Long on the steer-

ing of the *Agamemnon* is satisfactory. It is stated that on the voyage from Colombo to Singapore the ship, as a rule, steered very steadily. In the Straits of Malacca the difficulties at first experienced had been so completely overcome, that the ship never deviated more than two degrees from her course. It is believed that, with more experience, the gallant captain of the *Agamemnon* will be able to still further improve the steerage of his ship.

MR. W. H. SMITH asked, whether the good and steady steering referred to in the Report mentioned was at full speed, or was limited only to eight or nine knots?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY said, that the exact speed at which the vessel was steering was not stated in the Report; but he had given as succinctly as he could the general effect of the Report.

SIR JOHN HAY asked, if the hon. Gentleman would ascertain the speed at which the vessel steered well?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY replied in the affirmative.

MR. GORST asked, if the hon. Gentleman would instruct that in future Reports the speed would be stated?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: Yes.

SOUTH AFRICA—AFFAIRS OF BECHUANALAND.

MR. R. N. FOWLER (LORD MAYOR) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is true that Sir Charles Warren, Special Commissioner in Bechuanaland, has been blamed for asking President Krüger to enter into the question of the cattle stealing which has taken place in Bechuanaland from the Transvaal frontier since May last, without first consulting Sir Hercules Robinson, the High Commissioner; whether it has since been ascertained that Sir C. Warren, before addressing Mr. Krüger on the subject of the cattle stealing in question, had been urged by Sir H. Robinson to take that step; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will, by firm and conciliatory action, prevent any further conflict of authority in Bechuanaland?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: I think, Sir, there is some public disadvantage in entering by way of Question and answer into small past misunderstandings between the two distinguished public servants who are now serving their country in South Africa. But I may shortly say, as to the point raised in the right hon. Member's Question, that Sir Charles Warren, construing a former communication from the High Commissioner as an instruction to make certain formal representations to the Transvaal Government, acted on that view, and sent a direct communication to President Krüger, at Pretoria, in reference to cattle stealing in Bechuanaland. It was then pointed out to him that the High Commissioner should be the channel by which communications should be made to the Transvaal Executive in all matters involving policy and political considerations. The Government hoped, by their action, that they have cleared up any difference between these two gentlemen on the matter. As to any conflict of authority in Bechuanaland, there simply has not been any, the only authority recognized there being British authority.

ARMY—THE BRIGADE OF GUARDS.

MR. PERCY WYNDHAM asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the Brigade of Guards left with less than the usual complement of Subaltern Officers per Company; whether some who embarked as Company Officers at the time held Staff appointments; whether others have been so appointed since, while more have been invalided home; and, whether it is intended to send out reinforcements?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The Brigade of Guards embarked with its full strength of subaltern officers—namely, two per company. No officer who embarked as a company officer held a Staff appointment; one officer has been killed, and one was appointed to the Staff, but has since been invalided. The question of sending reinforcements is under consideration.

EGYPT (THE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE)—THE TROOPS AT KORTI.

MR. WARTON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is intended to keep the Troops now at Korti there during the Summer; if so, is it known what the degree of heat is there during the Summer; and, if he can form any estimate of the percentage of men who will probably die or be invalided through the heat during the Summer?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: There are no troops actually at Korti. It is not intended to keep troops in that neighbourhood during the summer. Under these circumstances, it is not necessary to form the estimate asked for by the hon. and learned Member.

EGYPT AND FRANCE—THE SEIZURE OF THE "BOSPHORE EGYPTIEN"—THE NEGOTIATIONS.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can now inform the House of the details of the settlement of the difficulties between the French and Egyptian Governments relative to the suppression of *The Bosphore Egyptien?*

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I am not in a position to make any addition to the statement I have already made on this subject.

CIVIL SERVICE (PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATURE)—MR. W. JOHNSTON, INSPECTOR OF FISHERIES.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Has Mr. William Johnston, Inspector of Fisheries, been called on to admit or deny that he wrote to the Orange Grand Master (Rev. R. R. Kane)—

"Expressing his readiness, if called upon, to contest one of the divisions of Belfast at the General Election;"

will the Government inquire if he is in a position to deny that he is the author of the following letter in *The Belfast Evening Telegraph*:—

"The 12th of July is being prepared for all over Ulster. In view of the approaching General Election it will be of unusual importance. On that occasion I hope to take my place with my Orange brethren. No more loyal addresses will be presented to the Princess and Princess of Wales than the Orange ones, and I hope to be able hereafter to give emphasis to them when I am Member for South Belfast;"

and, do such declarations by a Civil Servant of his intention to seek a seat in Parliament constitute a breach of the Treasury Rule of November 12th 1884 (since made an Order in Council), which requires that any Civil Servant who, by an election address or "in any other manner, announces himself as a candidate," should resign his position under the Crown?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Mr. Johnston admits that he wrote a private letter to Mr. Kane to the effect quoted, and he also admits the authorship of the letter in *The Evening Telegraph;* but he explains that he intended the passage quoted from the letter to have reference to a future time, when, having resigned his office, he should again be able to take part in political affairs. He repeats that he had no intention of infringing the Treasury Minute; but it appears questionable, so far as I can see at present, whether he may not technically have done so.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked whether this case was not analogous to the case of Sir William Gurdon, who——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: Who three times announced himself——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: Who three times announced himself as an intending candidate for Norfolk, and is still allowed to retain his place?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. That Question does not fairly arise out of the Question on the Paper.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: I beg to give Notice——

MR. SPEAKER: I rule that the Question is out of Order. If the hon. Member wishes to give Notice, he is at liberty to do so.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: That is what I intend to do. I beg to give Notice that I will ask the Prime Minister a Question on Monday.

MR. HEALY: As the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. Gladstone) is responsible for the issue of this Order, I would ask him whether his special attention has been called to the case in which one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Fisheries expressed his intention to contest one of the divisions of Belfast at the General Election, and this matter is published in Belfast newspapers, and that he intended to give emphasis to his views on a certain state of things when Member for South Belfast; and whether, on the 12th of November, 1884, a Treasury Minute was issued, which was made an Order in Council, that—

"If a Civil servant issued an election address, or otherwise announced himself as a candidate, he must resign his position;"

and, whether the right hon. Gentleman will assist the Irish Government in coming to a conclusion on this matter?

MR. GLADSTONE said, he was sorry to confess himself unacquainted with any facts connected with the Public Service; but really he was not competent to judge of the matters embraced in this Question. He was unable to make any addition to the answer given by his right hon. Friend.

MR. HEALY: I will put a Question to the right hon. Gentleman on the Paper, as he is the person who is responsible for this matter.

MR. SEXTON also gave Notice to ask, whether, notwithstanding the fact that Mr. Johnston gave a public pledge that he would bridle his tongue, he recently condemned energetically in a public manner the "errors of the Church of Rome?"

ECCLESIASTICAL AFFAIRS (IRELAND)—THE CATHOLIC ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN—MR. ERRINGTON'S MISSION.

MR. SEXTON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Foreign Secretary has caused representations to be made by Mr. George Errington, M.P. to the Sovereign Pontiff, with the object of preventing the appointment by His Holiness of the Very Reverend Dr. Walsh, Vicar Capitular of the Catholic See of Dublin, to be the Archbishop of that See?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE; I am requested by Lord Granville to state that he has given no such instructions to Mr. Errington to favour or press the claims of any Prelate as successor to the late Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin.

MR. LEAMY: Will the noble Lord be good enough to say what Mr. Errington is doing at Rome?

[No reply.]

Subsequently—

MR. W. J. CORBET said: In reference to this matter, I would ask the noble Lord, whether he has seen the following passage in *The Times* of this day:—

"Our Correspondent in Rome informs us that if the Vatican proceed and persists in nominating to the Archiepiscopal See of Dublin Dr. Walsh, rather than Dr. Donnelly, who is patronized by the English Government, Mr. Errington, who is officially intrusted with the duty of settling with the Holy See ecclesiastical questions connected with England, will immediately leave Rome."

I wish, Sir, to ask whether Mr. Errington has been intrusted with any instructions on this subject?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I have not seen the passage the hon. Member refers to. The Question must be put on the Paper.

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN: Surely the noble Lord can answer the simple Question as to whether Mr. Errington has any official mission at Rome?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I explained last year—no, the year before last—the circumstances relating to Mr. Errington's visit to Rome. If the hon. Member will refer to the answer I gave then, I think it was on the 11th of June, of which I shall be very glad to send him a copy, he will be able to see what were the circumstances to which I have referred.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Does the noble Lord mean to say that, at any rate with regard to Mr. Errington's mission, the policy of Her Majesty's Government has for a period of 12 months undergone no change?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I stand entirely stand by the statement I then made.

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS—RECREATION GROUNDS.

MR. BRYCE asked the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, Whether the Board have considered the desirability of making on the small piece of land which they propose to acquire, fronting the River Thames, in the Isle of Dogs, for the purposes of their contemplated steam ferries, a recreation ground available for the inhabitants of that district, having regard to the fact that there is a great want of open spaces available for the recreation of the poorer classes in that part of London, and also to the fact that a society is willing to bear the expense of laying out the ground as a place of recreation if the Board will allow it to remain unbuilt on?

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG: In reply to my hon. and learned Friend, I beg to state that the Board has considered the matter referred to in his Question; but, in the first place, the Bill which now stands referred to a Select Committee

does not empower the Board to appropriate the land in question for the formation of a recreation ground; and, in the second place, the proposition to devote it to that purpose appears to assume that the Board will purchase the whole of the land up to the limits of deviation, which is extremely doubtful. Moreover, the area would be very small even if the Board's proposed powers were exercised to the utmost, and would only amount to a little over an acre, divided into two portions by the approach to the steamboat pier. Under these circumstances, the Board has not felt itself in a position to entertain the suggestion made to it by the society alluded to by my hon. and learned Friend; but I can assure him that any fresh representation on so important a subject shall be fully considered.

THE WESTERN PACIFIC—ISLAND OF COREA—OCCUPATION OF PORT HAMILTON.

MR. O'KELLY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Russian Government has made any representations to Her Majesty's Government about the occupation of Port Hamilton; whether the Russian Government regards the occupation of Port Hamilton as a menace to the Russian settlement in Eastern Siberia; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will consider the expediency of withdrawing from Port Hamilton in order to facilitate the restoration of friendly relations between Russia and England?

MR. GLADSTONE: No representation has been received from the Russian Government by Her Majesty's Government on the subject.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—RUSSIAN OCCUPATION OF HERAT.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Russian Government have withdrawn from their undertaking not to occupy Herat?

MR. GLADSTONE: The Russian Government have not withdrawn from any engagement they have entered into with regard to the subject of this Question.

CENTRAL ASIA—THE AFGHAN BOUNDARY COMMISSION—MR. STEPHEN AND SIR PETER LUMSDEN'S DESPATCH.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, When Mr. Stephen, who had been sent by Sir Peter Lumsden with despatches to the Foreign Secretary, was likely to arrive in this country?

MR. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, that he was informed that he was expected in about three weeks from the date of starting. He was presumed to have started on Friday last.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE VOTE OF CREDIT.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I beg to ask the Prime Minister, What day the Government propose to fix for taking the Report of Supply upon the Vote of Credit? In his powerful speech of the previous night, the Prime Minister appealed to the House not to allow any delay, and there was but one desire, to agree to that suggestion; but I hope we may be allowed a proper time for discussion on the Report. I therefore ask, if the right hon. Gentleman will consent, if possible, to the Report being taken on Thursday, after the Budget?

MR. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, he thought that the request of the right hon. Gentleman was perfectly reasonable and convenient, and the Government would make arrangements accordingly.

DOMINION OF CANADA—THE INSURRECTION IN THE NORTH-WEST TERRITORY.

MR. INDERWICK asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Government had received any information as to the reported fighting in Canada; and, whether there was any reason to believe that the rebel forces had been defeated with considerable loss?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY, in reply, said, that the Government had received two telegrams from the Governor General—one on Monday, which the Secretary of State had read in the House of Lords, and it virtually corroborated what the newspapers stated. That morning the Government had received another

telegram, which was as follows:—"There has been no fighting since Friday." Evidently that answered the Question of the hon. and learned Gentleman, as, according to the telegram, it was certain that there had not been a defeat of the rebels on Sunday. The telegrams confirmed the severity of the action, and increased the number of casualties. They further stated that the rebels had disappeared; but the General's advance was delayed by the care of the wounded and by having to wait for supplies. The General intended to push on to Prince Albert as soon as possible.

MR. HEALY asked, if the hon. Gentleman would say whether any Papers would be laid on the Table, more especially with reference to the grievances of the half-breeds?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY said, that it would be premature to say at present. The Government had no Papers on the subject in their possession.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—REPORTED BATTLE.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I will ask a Question of which I have given Notice to the Prime Minister—namely, Whether the Government have received any information as to the reported engagement between the Russians and the Afghans mentioned in this morning's newspapers?

MR. GLADSTONE: We have received no confirmation of the statements in the newspapers, and we have, indeed, no information on the subject, excepting what we have gathered from them.

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND) BILL.

MR. BRODRICK gave Notice to ask, Whether the Government intended to include in the Financial Estimates this year the cost of Irish registration, in pursuance of the recent vote of the House?

MR. SEXTON asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, whether the same Instructions to officials as were in the Registration of Voters (England) Bill could be inserted in the Irish Bill?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER), in reply, said, he would have a look at the Instructions and see what they were.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION) BILL.—[BILL 134.]

(*Mr. Gladstone, The Marquess of Hartington, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Attorney General, The Lord Advocate, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

CONSIDERATION. [FIRST NIGHT.]

Bill, as amended, *considered.*

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE, in moving the insertion of a new clause relating to Pembroke, said, that the effect of the Amendment was to adhere to the original provision of the Bill. Since the question of Pembrokeshire had been discussed, he had considered the matter; and the feeling which he had then expressed with regard to the Bill as it stood had not been removed by the further consideration which he had given to the subject. The proposal which had been made by the noble Viscount the Member for Carmarthenshire (Viscount Emlyn), to turn one of the boroughs into the county, and keep another as it was, had been put forward by him chiefly on the grounds of distances and convenience. But the Bill, as it stood, equalized the population as between the county and the borough better than the noble Viscount's proposal. The Haverfordwest boroughs were comparatively small, whereas Weston had a very large area. The boroughs of the county were completely mixed up; and, so far as geographical features went, there was a strong case in favour of the proposal in the Bill. The noble Viscount had argued in Committee that some of the boroughs of the proposed group were situated at a great distance from one another. No doubt the extreme distance of any one borough from another was in the case of Fishguard and Tenby, which were 24 miles apart; but in the case of boroughs in some of the other Welsh counties the distances were greater still, being in one case 32 miles, and in another 36. Under the circumstances of the case, he did not see his way to change the proposal of the Bill with regard to the grouping of these boroughs. According to promise, he had now placed on the Paper as a clause what had formerly appeared as a Note to the Schedule. The clause was to the effect that the law relating to the elec-

tion for the boroughs of Pembroke should also include the present Parliamentary borough of Haverfordwest. He would, therefore, move the second reading of the clause.

Clause :—

(Provision as to Pembroke.)

"The law relating to the Elections for the Parliamentary borough of Pembroke shall apply as if the places comprised in the area of the present Parliamentary borough of Haverfordwest were named in the Act of the Session of the second and third years of the reign of King William the Fourth, chapter forty-five, as places sharing in the election of a Member for Pembroke, and the borough shall be called Pembroke and Haverfordwest,"—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke,*)

—*brought up,* and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be now read a second time."

VISCOUNT EMLYN said, that his argument against the change proposed by the Bill rested chiefly on this ground—that it violated the principle laid down by the Government with respect to grouped boroughs. What case did the right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Charles W. Dilke) make for breaking through a principle which he had declared to apply to the whole of the United Kingdom—namely, that there should be no grouping of boroughs? He took a scattered group of seven boroughs, one of which was purely agricultural, and because of the position of that one borough between two others, he argued that the principle of the Bill should be departed from. In the Pembroke district of boroughs were included towns of an electorate respectively of 16,300, 4,750, 3,812, and 717. Because of the position of the small town of 717 persons, the right hon. Gentleman claimed to apply a different rule to these boroughs than he applied to other parts of the country. If the small borough of Weston ought not to be in the group, let it be taken out; but there could be no doubt that Pembroke, having a population of over 25,000, was absolutely entitled, according to the principles of the Bill, to its own Representative. The Government had no right to try and equalize the population, because it happened to suit their purpose. There were numbers of cases where gross anomalies took place, and no attempt was made to equalize the population. There was no reason why the Haverfordwest boroughs should not be amalgamated with the county of Pembroke. The population of the latter, 57,000, was by no means excessive, as compared with many other counties. With regard to local feeling, he might say that while Pembroke did not desire to be connected with Haverfordwest, the latter was in favour of the proposal. Seeing that the people of Pembroke strongly objected to the proposal, he should certainly divide the House upon it.

LORD KENSINGTON, in supporting the insertion of the clause, said, he would ask whether the noble Viscount opposite (Viscount Emlyn) possessed any evidence to show that the people of Pembroke were opposed to the Government proposals? Yesterday he (Lord Kensington) presented a Petition from the Corporation of Haverfordwest in their favour. He denied that there was any Party spirit whatever involved in the matter; and it was the desire of both political Parties in the borough that the arrangement proposed should be made.

MR. MORGAN LLOYD said, he strongly supported the scheme in the Bill, which commended itself to his judgment, distinct from Party, as better than the proposal of the noble Viscount opposite the Member for Carmarthenshire (Viscount Emlyn). The noble Viscount objected to the provision now in question as a departure from the principle of the Bill. That was a mistake, for the principle of the Bill was to equalize electoral districts so far as could be done without undue interference with the existing system. The rule applied to England that disfranchised boroughs should be merged in the counties involved no principle, but was found a convenient rule to adopt so far as regarded England, where grouping of boroughs was unknown. In Wales all their boroughs were grouped, and it was but natural to join a disfranchised group to another in the same county when that was found to be a convenient arrangement. The county of Pembroke had already a population of 57,000, whilst the Pembroke boroughs had only about 30,000. It was, therefore, in accordance with the principle of the Bill to add Haverfordwest to the boroughs and not to the county.

MR. GORST said, the scheme of the Government in this matter was in shock-

ing bad taste. The Welsh boroughs generally, and the case of Haverfordwest in particular, formed the great blot on the Bill. It was ridiculous to say that the Bill was one to equalize population; for if that was the principle of the Bill the principle was violated in every line, and it was only invoked in this particular case of Haverfordwest, which, being a Welsh town, it was no doubt convenient should be forced into the borough of Pembroke. A little trick was being played in the case of Haverfordwest. The great towns of Wales, such as Pembroke, were really not Welsh, but English towns; the people who lived in them were English; they were, in fact, a little England in Wales. What was done by the clause was to destroy this little English element, by importing into the Dockyard constituency a number of small Welsh agricultural villages. In this case, Haverfordwest was Welsh, and there was no reason why it should be merged into Pembroke, except that it was hoped thereby to insure the return of a Radical candidate. ["Oh, oh!"] Of course, it was no use talking. The noble Lord opposite (Lord Kensington) had his big battalion down on this occasion. After the experience of Friday, the Government Whips would be more careful, particularly on an occasion like the present. He repeated that the proposal was in shocking bad taste. It was an entire violation of the whole principle of the Bill to save Haverfordwest by adding it to the Pembroke group. It had no affinity with the Pembroke boroughs; and though the noble Lord opposite (Lord Kensington) had quoted local feeling in favour of the proposal, he would ask in what other instance had local feeling been allowed to prevail in the arrangements of this Bill? The Government had a shocking bad case, and he should certainly vote against it.

MR. W. DAVIES said, as Member for the county of Pembroke, he trusted he might be permitted to say a word on this subject. He was very much amused by the observation of the hon. and learned Member who had just spoken (Mr. Gorst) that Haverfordwest was a Welsh town. That showed what he knew about it. Haverfordwest was a purely English town. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members laughed. Why, he was born in it—was educated in it—had resided in it; but he could not speak a word of Welsh. It was a very extensive town—it was a large town with a small population. He did know something about Haverfordwest and about the county of Pembroke, and a little more about them than the noble Viscount opposite (Viscount Emlyn). It was so much on a par with Pembroke Dock and Denbigh that scarcely any distinction could be drawn between them, all being English places. If the noble Viscount had gone into the matter, he would have found that nearly the whole of Pembroke Dock was in favour of the scheme proposed by the Government. [*Laughter.*] That was true, because he had inquired into it. It had actually been proposed to him that a Petition should be presented to that House on the subject; but he had discountenanced the proposal, but strong representations had been made in favour of grouping these towns. The noble Viscount was attempting to convert Haverfordwest from town into county. Haverfordwest was one of the ancient boroughs of the Kingdom, and sent Members to Parliament before Wales sent any at all. Why, therefore, should it now be extinguished and merged in a county—a proceeding which its inhabitants strongly objected to? Moreover, if the proposal of the noble Viscount were adopted, between 200 and 300 electors of Haverfordwest would be disfranchised. [An hon. MEMBER: Why?] That showed that hon. Members opposite had not investigated the thing. At present, they voted for the borough as occupiers, and they also voted for the county as freeholders; but if the town was merged in the county they would only have their county vote. That ought to weigh with the House. The population of Pembrokeshire was now 57,000; why, therefore, should it be increased to 64,000? To increase it to that extent would be to add to the expense of standing for his county, although he had no doubt that it would also add to his majority. Upon that ground the increase would be most objectionable, and he ventured to hope that the Amendment would not be carried.

MR. WARTON, in opposing the insertion of the clause, said that there were two or three jobs in the Bill, but that this was the greatest. [*Cries of*

"Divide!"] He could well understand the impatience of the Liberal Party. Hon. Members opposite were so ashamed of this job that they wanted to hurry it through without any discussion.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that it was perfectly true that he had received a letter from Haverfordwest, asking the reason for the vote he had given in respect of this matter on a former occasion; and as he intended to repeat that vote he desired to give his reason for doing so. There were two principles in the Bill which ought to be adhered to—one was that, as far as England and Wales were concerned, the grouping of towns was not allowed; and the other was that boroughs of less than 1,400 electors were to be merged in their counties. In his opinion, no satisfactory grounds had been shown for departing from those two recognized principles in the present case; and he should, therefore, vote against the proposal.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 206; Noes 117: Majority 89.—(Div. List, No. 133.)

VISCOUNT EMLYN said, he hoped the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) would not persist in adding to this borough two places, one of 1,100, and the other of only 15 population. He, therefore, moved an Amendment, with a view of excluding from the borough Fishguard and Narberth, to the effect that the municipal borough (and not the present Parliamentary borough) of Haverfordwest should be included in the new Parliamentary borough of Pembroke and Haverfordwest.

Amendment proposed,

In line 2, to leave out the words "the places comprised in the area of the present Parliamentary," and insert the word "Municipal,"—(*Viscount Emlyn,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he could not accept the Amendment, which would break up the town in a perfectly artificial fashion.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 196; Noes 108: Majority 88.—(Div. List, No. 134.)

Clause *added.*

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES), in moving, as an Amendment, to leave out Clause 27, (dealing with the disqualification of voters for corrupt practices), and to insert the following clause:—

(Repeal of Acts in Eighth Schedule respecting corrupt practices.)

"The Acts mentioned in the First Part of the Eighth Schedule to this Act, whereby certain persons reported guilty of corrupt practices are declared not to have certain rights of voting, are hereby repealed to the extent in the third column of that Schedule mentioned,"

said, the House was, no doubt, aware of the object of the new clause which he now moved. When the House was in Committee on the Bill, and while discussing the clause, he thought that the general feeling of the Committee was that the penalty with respect to defaulting voters as having been guilty of corrupt practices in 1880 should be mitigated to seven years' disqualification. He understood the opinion of the House to be strongly expressed in favour of that mitigated penalty; and, therefore, the clause was amended in that respect. It, therefore, became necessary that the punishment inflicted on corrupt voters should be equalized, and the object of this clause was to deal with the voters disqualified by previous legislation. There were, he believed, 10 boroughs which had been disqualified, among them being Beverley, Bridgwater, Totnes, Reigate, Norwich, Great Yarmouth, Sligo, and Cashel. Inasmuch as it had been agreed that the voters who were disqualified on account of corrupt practices in 1880 were to suffer only seven years' disqualification, it was impossible to maintain an inequality of punishment in respect of the disqualified voters of those boroughs, and to allow the disqualifications to remain as they were. The disqualified voters in those boroughs had suffered disqualification for a period not less than 14 years, and some had gone considerably beyond that period. With the object, therefore, of imposing equal punishment on all disqualified voters, he now proposed this clause, with the object of bringing those voters to life again, and to allow them to vote at elections. The number of voters thus restored would be practically very small. Probably one-third

of the persons who had originally been disqualified only remained to be registered. These being the circumstances of the case, he hoped the House would accept the new clause. If the clause were agreed to, it would be necessary to omit Clause 27, and he should move to do so at a later stage.

Clause (Repeal of Acts in Eighth Schedule respecting corrupt practices,)—(*Mr. Attorney General,*)—*brought up*, and read the first and second time.

Question proposed, "That the Clause be added to the Bill."

MR. BIRKBECK, who had two new clauses on the Paper for the removal of the disqualification of certain voters in Norwich and Great Yarmouth, said, that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General, in moving the clause under notice as he had, had accepted the principle of the two new clauses which stood in his (Mr. Birkbeck's) name, and had been on the Notice Paper some days prior to the Attorney General's new clause. This Amendment on the part of the Government would be greatly appreciated by the disqualified voters of Norwich and Great Yarmouth. There would now be no necessity for his moving the new clauses which stood in his name, and he should consequently withdraw them.

MR. HEALY asked, with regard to the freemen of Dublin, by what means they could get again upon the Roll; and whether they would have to go through all the formalities which they would have to go through when coming on as new men? They were an extremely corrupt class, and were generally taken out of the workhouses, given a new suit of clothes, in order to go to the poll, and after having spent the sovereign which they got for the vote went back again to the workhouse. Under ordinary circumstances, the freemen of Dublin had to pay something like 10*s.* as a fee to the Town Clerk. He wished to know whether the freemen would be, by this clause, entitled to be put back *in globo* on the voters' lists? It would be a very unfortunate state of affairs if they were. Frightful corruption had been proved against them; and it had been proved in the case of Lord Ardilaun, formerly Sir Arthur Guinness, that whole oceans of beer, as well as money, had been spent in corrupting them. For the purpose of giving the Government an opportunity of considering the matter, he would move that this clause do not apply to the freemen of Dublin.

Amendment proposed,

To add at end of Clause the words, "Provided, That this clause do not apply to the freemen of the City of Dublin."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he would consider the matter. He would, however, point out that the object of the hon. and learned Member could be attained better by his moving the Amendment in a later part of the Bill.

MR. HEALY said, he would accept the suggestion of the hon. and learned Gentleman, and withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause *added.*

MR. HEALY, in moving as an Amendment, in page 2, after Clause 8, to insert the following Clause:—

(Corporation or town commissioners may revise ward boundaries.)

"Within twelve months after the passing of this Act it shall be lawful for the corporation or town commissioners of any town, city, or borough in Ireland to rearrange the ward boundaries of such city, town, or borough, provided that in no case shall the number of wards in any constituency be increased or diminished,"

said, the clause was necessary in consequence of the manner in which the wards were cut up by the Boundary Commissioners. It was absolutely necessary that there should be some provision to enable the voters' lists to be properly prepared. The ward was the unit of municipal life, and the voters' lists were prepared by wards; and unless the boundaries of the wards were not co-terminous with the boundaries of the Parliamentary division, great confusion, trouble, and expense would be created. In both Dublin and Belfast the wards had been divided. He hoped the Government would accept the clause, or insert some equivalent proposition.

Clause (Corporation or town commissioners may revise ward boundaries,)—(*Mr. Healy,*)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be now read a second time."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he agreed in substance with the desire of the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Healy), but not with the mode in which he sought to give effect to it. It was a hardship that the municipalities in Ireland could not alter their wards without an Act of Parliament, as they did in England; but the present proposal was not germane to the Bill. Perhaps, however, some measure would be brought in—it might be in this Session—dealing with that subject.

MR. HEALY said, he was willing to withdraw his clause; but he would point out to the right hon. Baronet that unless the Government attended speedily to the matter it would be too late. He supposed the Revision Courts could sit a month earlier this year, and the Town Councils were now preparing the lists.

Motion and Clause, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 26, to leave out the words "end of."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question, "That the words 'end of' stand part of the Bill," put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 27, to leave out the words "cease to be entitled to," in order to insert the word "not,"—(*Mr. Warton,*)

—instead thereof.

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill," put, and *agreed to.*

MR. ALDERMAN COTTON, in moving an Amendment giving the City of London four Members instead of two, said, he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman who had charge of the Bill would now see his way to accepting the Amendment, when it would no longer interfere with the main principle of the Bill. There was one point upon which he wished to make some remarks—that was, the subject of the Livery vote in the City. It was not the case that the Livery vote gave a citizen of London two votes, as seemed to have been supposed. After the full discussion which the question of the City representation had received, he would not go into the matter at greater length, but would ask the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board to waive the objection which he had on a former occasion taken to his proposal.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 2, to leave out the word "two," in order to insert the word "four,"—(*Mr. Alderman Cotton,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the word 'two' stand part of the Bill."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that the question had been decided in a very large House; and, considering the way in which the Committee had decided it, he thought that it was not desirable that he should re-open on the present occasion the arguments which he had used before. The hon. Member had remarked that the question of the Livery vote ought not to have been made so much of, because it did not give two votes. Of course, it did not give two votes for the same constituency; but it increased the voting constituency. He must ask the House to re-affirm its former decision.

MR. ALDERMAN W. LAWRENCE said, he wished to protest, although he knew it would be unavailing, against the taking away of two Members from the City. He was aware that it was only a protest, because they all knew that all these matters had been settled before they had been brought under the notice of the House. They were even deprived of the Court of Appeal, which they might have found in the House of Lords, since the arrangements come to between the Leaders of the two Parties were binding there also. The defence made by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition (Sir Stafford Northcote) on this point was utterly invalid; he had maintained that by giving up, or rather throwing over, the City of London, he had gained advantages for his Party which he would not otherwise have obtained. For his own part, he (Mr. Alderman W. Lawrence) protested against the mode in which this matter had been settled, and the manner in which the City had been treated. The citizens of London felt that they had been unjustly dealt with by the Bill, and that there had been a want of appreciation and a want of knowledge of the commerce, the trade, and the exceptional circumstances of the City. He should not be doing his duty unless he protested in the strongest possible manner against the conduct of the Leaders of the two sides in settling this question

behind the backs of the City of London—it ought to have been left to the decision of both Houses of Parliament. A great deal had been made of the sleeping population in the City; but there was a day and night population of the City which was not a sleeping population. The arguments drawn from the Census population were of the most fallacious kind. The history of the City of London was a glorious history, and he was astonished that it should have been disregarded by the persons who had prepared the Bill. There was once a Cecil who had appealed to the City for assistance in the Plantation of Ulster, at a time when the Crown found it impossible to obtain Colonists on the proposals placed before the public. The City responded to that appeal; the flourishing Cities of Londonderry and Coleraine were evidences of the success of that arrangement. From that time to the present there had been the most intimate relations between the Cecils and the City of London. He regretted that a Cecil should now have joined in a scheme to deprive the City of half its Members. Those who had arranged the clause had shown their incompetence to deal with the matter.

MR. ALDERMAN COTTON said, that although he felt bound to reiterate his opinion that taking away two Members from the City of London was a great blot on the Bill, he would ask permission to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

On the Motion of Mr. WARTON, the following Amendment made:—In page 2, line 3, leave out "borough," and insert "boroughs."

On the Motion of Sir CHARLES W. DILKE, the following Amendment made:—In page 2, line 16, leave out "comprised," and insert "or as regards the greater part thereof in extent comprised within the Metropolis, and."

On the Motion of Mr. WARTON, page 2, line 18, at end, add "as a borough."

On the Motion of Sir CHARLES W. DILKE, the following Amendment made:—In page 2, line 23, at end of line, insert—

"And shall not include the places which are either therein specified and described as excluded, or are included by this Act in any other Parliamentary borough."

Mr. Alderman W. Lawrence

MR. HEALY, in moving the following Amendment to Clause 8, which provides that boroughs in the Sixth Schedule should be divided into divisions:—

"Provided, That this section, so far as it applies to the city of Dublin, shall only remain in force until the thirty-first day of December, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-seven, and no longer,"

said, he should be content to leave it to the future Lord Lieutenant to find out what the boundaries should be. They all knew that Dublin was jerrymandered in the interests of the Tory Party; and, of course, if under the jerrymandered scheme the Tories got one seat, no objection would be made. But if, at the General Election, the Nationalists were able to carry all the four seats, there could be no necessity for maintaining the present ridiculous and absurd boundaries.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 36, after the word "Schedule," to insert the words "Provided, That this section, so far as it applies to the city of Dublin, shall only remain in force until the thirty-first day of December, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-seven, and no longer."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he was sorry that he could not accept the Amendment any more than he could accept the one made at an earlier stage of the proceedings. It would place the alteration of the boundaries in the hands of a body of persons other than Parliament, and that could not be agreed to. The arrangement proposed by the Bill was, upon the whole, a satisfactory one, and ought not to be open to disturbance.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he must express his regret that the Amendment was not accepted.

MR. GIBSON said, he thought the boundaries of the City of Dublin were very fairly drawn; and in saying that he happened to have the advantage, which was not possessed by the two previous speakers, of being a Dublin man.

MR. HEALY: I live there too, and pay taxes there as well.

MR. GIBSON said, he was born in Dublin and knew the locality, and he was convinced the boundaries in the Bill were fair, reasonable, and convenient. The Amendment proposed to give to the

Corporation of Dublin the power to upset the arrangements with regard to the boundaries of Dublin which Parliament in its wisdom had laid down; but he (Mr. Gibson) was sure that Parliament would never allow any power other than itself to interfere with the boundaries. Besides, it would be inconvenient in the highest degree to declare in an Act of Parliament that the arrangements were of a temporary character.

Question put, and *negatived.*

MR. WARTON moved, as an Amendment, to leave out Sub-section 3 of Clause 8, which provides that in the boroughs to be divided a man shall not vote in more than one division. The property qualification, he contended, ought not to be infringed.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 37, to leave out sub-section (3) of Clause 8.—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE, in opposing the Amendment, said, it was contrary to the principle of the Bill. The sub-section did not apply to counties; and in the case of large towns he did not see why, for instance, a man with a number of shops in all the leading thoroughfares should have the right to vote in all the divisions. The clause in no way interfered with the property qualification which did not exist in boroughs.

MR. HEALY said, he thought the principle of one man one vote, as applied to the boroughs, ought to be extended to the counties. He could understand it if it were so extended.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he did not see why a man with the necessary qualification should not have votes in the various divisions of a large town; but, while he sympathized with the object of the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Warton), as the matter had been practically settled by what had occurred previously, he hoped his hon. and learned Friend would not press his Amendment.

MR. HICKS said, he was sorry that, for one, he could not accept the advice of the right hon. Baronet (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach). He objected most strongly to the disfranchisement of property proposed by this provision—a disfranchisement totally at variance with the provisions of all previous alterations of the franchise; and he thought the House ought to go to a division on the question. He did not know whether this particular point was included within the terms of the celebrated agreement of which they had heard so much; but, if it was, he trusted that the right hon. Members on the Front Opposition Bench would for once have the courage of their convictions, and vote for that which in their hearts they must feel to be right.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

MR. HEALY, in moving to amend the clause by the insertion of the following words:—

"A person shall not be registered as entitled to vote and shall not vote in any Parliamentary borough who is registered as a voter in any county constituency conterminous with such borough,"

said, he would point out that people living in Rathmines, and having places of business in Dublin, had a dual power of voting. The Boundary Commissioners had so jerrymandered the county and City of Dublin that these people would have power to vote in the South-Western Division of Dublin City, and had also a neat little paddock in the county to prance in. He found that the chief of that Commission (Mr. Piers White) had already been preconized as successor to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland when that Gentleman would become Attorney General, on the promotion of Mr. Naish to the Lord Chancellorship, so that his reward had followed quickly on his services to the Government in this respect.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 39, after the word "division," to insert the words "A person shall not be registered as entitled to vote and shall not vote in any Parliamentary borough who is registered as a voter in any county constituency conterminous with such borough."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he could not assent to the proposition, which had been fully discussed on previous occasions. The hon. and learned Member had done, on the present occasion, what

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he did when this question was last before the House—he had treated it as if Dublin had a greater grievance than existed elsewhere. But the case of Dublin was precisely the same as the case of London and Glasgow.

MR. GRAY said, the argument of the right hon. Baronet amounted to this—that two wrongs made a right. But there was a special grievance, because of the artificial character of the boundaries of the City.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR supported the Amendment.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 17; Noes 107: Majority 90.—(Div. List, No. 135.)

MR. HEALY, in moving to amend the same clause by the insertion of the following words:—

"A person shall not be registered to vote and shall not vote in any borough where a university is situate who is registered as a voter for such university,"

said, that his Amendment embodied the one man one vote principle, which Liberals professed in theory. Universities were, he thought, sufficiently represented already, without giving those resident in them votes outside those given for University Members. In Dublin they had 200 persons out of Trinity College on the Electoral Roll of the City as lodgers; and he doubted whether the same thing existed in the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, and Edinburgh. It was bad enough to have such voters on the Roll; but matters were made worse when the Commissioners put them into the South-Western or jerrymandered Division. In addition to the borough representation, those gentlemen at present had also the advantage of representation by the two Members on the Front Opposition Bench for Dublin University. He thought that two Members were representation enough for them. If the Government could not accept his Amendment, he contended that they, at least, should accept an Amendment to the effect that a person should not qualify as an elector outside of University premises. To allow him to so qualify was to inflict a great hardship on the permanent voters of Dublin.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 39, after the word "division," to insert the words "A person shall not be registered to vote and shall not vote in any borough where a university is situate who is registered as a voter for such university."—(*Mr Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he would point out that the hon. and learned Member's speech covered a great deal more than his Amendment. He (Sir Charles W. Dilke) thought it was unnecessary to repeat to the hon. and learned Member what he had already said on a previous occasion with respect to his individual opinion on the question of the double vote. As it had been found necessary, however, to concede something on this head for the purpose of carrying the measure through Parliament, the question of the double qualification had been agreed to as a matter of arrangement between the two Parties. He could not accept the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member. He did not believe that the double voting power was possessed by those who voted for University Members; but he would promise to look very closely into the matter.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, that the point raised by his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Healy) was that persons having votes for University Members within the walls of a University had also votes for Members of Parliament out of chambers in the University in the division in which those chambers were situate. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) was confident of the existence of the double qualification. It was a monstrous injustice that a man should have a vote as a graduate of the University of Dublin, and should, at the same time, be at liberty to go outside the gates of the University to another polling booth, and record a vote for one of the Members for a division of the City. That was one of the greatest and most grievous absurdities in the whole Bill.

MR. BIGGAR supported the Amendment.

MR. PLUNKET said, that if the Dublin University students were deprived of the right to exercise the franchise in virtue of their occupation holdings, they would be the only persons in the community who were debarred their right of doing so.

MR. GRAY said, that the Amendment on the Paper raised a very important question as to whether students

of a University were, owing to the accident of being within the walls of a College for two or three years, really the persons intended by Parliament to come within the designation of lodgers at all? However, the effect of the Amendment made the issue a very much narrower one. It was a question as to whether persons in a College or University should be entitled to two votes, one for the University, and another for the constituency in which the University happened to be situate? In the case of Dublin City, the question was whether the graduates should vote for the Members who represented that University, and also for other Members of the House. He would ask whether the lodger franchise had been ever intended to cover the case of students whose fees, &c. were paid by their parents while they were inmates of a College?

MR. THOMAS RUSSELL said, the difficulties suggested by the hon. and learned Member opposite (Mr. Healy) applied to the Scottish Universities as well as to the Dublin University; but the remedy was not to be found in the restriction proposed by the hon. Member. What they wanted to do was to abolish the University representation altogether.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 16; Noes 88: Majority 72.—(Div. List, No. 136.)

MR. HEALY moved an Amendment standing in his name on the Paper to the effect that, in cases where a candidate was stated to have already voted owing to the mischance that he had received voting papers for two districts, the Returning Officer should be allowed to ask the question—"Have you already voted for this division," and to administer the oath.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 39, after the word "division," to insert the words "and if by any neglect or accident the same person should be registered as a voter for more than one division, and the attention of the returning officer or his deputy is called to the fact on or before the day of polling, such returning officer or deputy shall administer to such voter on oath the question prescribed by section twelve, sub-section four, of this Act."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that this was a matter which should be settled before the Election. The matter had been very carefully considered by the Boundary Commissioners for England; and he thought that the hon. and learned Member had better not interfere in any way until the discussion on the English Registration Bill.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. HEALY, in moving an Amendment to omit from the clause the subsection which provides that the polls in a divided borough shall take place on the same day, said, he would point out that no similar provision was made in regard to counties, and that to impose this obligation on Returning Officers was needlessly to increase the expense. He saw no reason why the same staff should not be employed where possible upon different days in the different divisions in the same boroughs, in order to lessen the expense.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2 line 40, to leave out from the word "at" to the word "borough," in line 42.—(*Mr. Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he could not accept the Amendment, because he believed, if it were agreed to, that it would lead to great inconvenience, especially in the large boroughs of England and Scotland—such, for instance, as Liverpool, with nine divisions. He thought the advantage in saving would be counteracted by the facility which it would give to organizations of a formidable kind to go round the town with money or other inducements to voters. He did not, however, attach much importance to either of these arguments; but he thought that a town would be considerably disturbed if different days were taken up in polling.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. HEALY, in moving an Amendment to the effect that nothing in Subsection 4 of the clause, which enables the Returning Officer to fix the polls in a divided borough for the same day, should be taken to enlarge or extend the discretion vested in the Returning Officer by the Ballot Act of 1872 as to fixing the day of poll, said, he thought that in order

to prevent any Returning Officer exceeding his powers the day should be fixed in accordance with the provisions of the Ballot Act of 1872.

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 42, at end, insert "but nothing in this sub-section shall be taken to extend the discretion vested in him by the Ballot Act of 1872, as to fixing the day of poll."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that a difficulty of the kind suggested by the hon. and learned Member might arise in the case of some Returning Officers; and the Government would, therefore, accept the Amendment.

Question put, and *agreed to;* words *inserted* accordingly.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 42, after the word "borough," to insert the words, "who shall not be entitled to charge for his expenses to all the candidates, in all the Divisions collectively, a greater sum than he would have been able to obtain if this Act had not passed, the expenses for each candidate to be ascertained by dividing the number of candidates for the borough, as a whole, into the amount now allowed by law."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he agreed that it would be necessary to pass a clause on the subject brought forward by the hon. and learned Member; but the proper place to do so would be in the Returning Officers' Expenses Bill. On the part of the Government, he would undertake to have the matter looked into.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 9 (Division of counties).

MR. HEALY said, he had been requested by his hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) to move an Amendment in regard to the dividing of Irish counties into divisions. Except, perhaps, in the case of the Ulster counties and the county of Dublin, the Amendment, if carried, would make no great change. Why should a county like Longford be divided into divisions, when there was no increase whatever in the representation? No political effect could arise in the case of the counties referred to. Nothing would be gained but the casting of extra expense on the Parnellite Party, who would gain their seats all the same. It was only another instance of the error of applying English ideas to an Irish situation. Where counties returned an increased number of Members he could understand why the division was made, because a new political situation would be created; but why counties having the same complement of Members as of yore should be divided he could not understand. He regarded the single-Member constituency principle with aversion, and believed it would ultimately break down. But for that the National Party would have 90 seats instead of 80, and something like 17 or 18 seats in England. The single-Member principle applied to Ireland would give the Tory Party votes they would not otherwise gain, depriving the National Party of the majority they were entitled to. Thus, in Donegal the Tories would gain one seat, in Tyrone two, in Derry two, in Armagh two; whereas in all these cases, except Armagh, the Catholic National Party were in the majority. Then take the converse case—in Antrim, and any other instance, except Down, would the Nationalists gain thereby? He saw no reason for interfering with a constituency which the Bill did not benefit.

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 6, after the word "shall," to insert the words "except in the case of the county of Dublin and the counties in the province of Ulster."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. TREVELYAN, in opposing the Amendment, said, the hon. and learned Member opposite (Mr. Healy) advocated a departure, in the case of only a part of Ireland, from the general principle upon which the Bill was framed as regarded all counties. It was impossible, in a matter of this sort, to have regard to local circumstances, or to the bearings which the division or the non-division of counties would have on any political Party, and he should be sorry to believe that in any part of the Kingdom there should continue to be no political stir whatever. An advantage of small constituencies was that it gave variety of representation, and 50,000 was a

better number of constituents to represent than 100,000 in a double constituency, say, for instance, such as Newcastle-upon-Tyne. It admitted of exactly that mixture of political and personal relations between constituents and Members which produced the most healthy representation. The Bill applied the general principle all around, irrespective of local political circumstances. That principle had been argued over and over again, and it was impossible on this occasion to depart from it; indeed, he almost thought the Amendment was only moved as a final protest.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR, in supporting the Amendment, said, he disapproved entirely of the system of single-Member districts. He also objected to the general principle and description of the Bill just given. There was no arrangement of political life in America against which politicians protested more than the single-Member constituency. Through its operation a large number of eminent men were excluded from the National Councils, because they had no home in a constituency they might otherwise represent. The very fact of a man having personal connection with a locality was often the best reason why he was not returned. A prophet was not always regarded in his own country. The Bill, however, presented several exceptions to the rule, and the right hon. Gentleman had alluded to one, for instance, Newcastle, as a double constituency. Why not apply the exception to Ireland? To secure variety of representation he granted an advantage; but the advantage in Ireland gained by dividing the Ulster counties, would be purchased at the cost of giving the minority an excess of representation far beyond their fair claim.

MR. PLUNKET said, he felt himself in some confusion as to what was the object of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) when he placed the Amendment on the Paper, if it was not with the object of gaining a political advantage. At first, he thought the Amendment must be misprinted. The arguments by the hon. Members who had supported the Amendment were ingenious, and directed against the whole principle of single-Member constituencies; but the Amendment of the hon. Member for the City of Cork would apply this obnoxious principle to all Ireland except the Province of Ulster. The fact was, the only possible object was a most unblushing, audacious attempt as far as possible to extinguish the minority in the only place where that minority had a chance of being represented.

MR. BIGGAR said, he thought the principal point in the controversy was the question of convenience and reduction of the Returning Officer's expenses, and he should not think the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) could be fairly accused of political selfishness. There need not be a great anxiety for consistency in the Bill. No Bill ever passed that did not contain some anomalies. On the considerations he had mentioned, he supported the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that in order to meet the case of certain Irish counties, and that of the alternative names of county divisions, he would move to amend the clause by the insertion of the following words:—

"And any name placed before the description of a division shall be the name of the division, and where the names of the divisions are in the alternative, the division may be designated by both or either of such names."

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 11, to insert the words—

"And any name placed before the description of a division shall be the name of the division, and where the names of the divisions are in the alternative, the division may be designated by both or either of such names."—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

MR. WARTON, in proposing the omission from the Amendment of the words "and any name placed before the description of a division shall be the name of the division," said, he would refer more especially to Birr and Tullamore, as names which could not stand alone.

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment, to leave out the words—

"And any name placed before the description of a division shall be the name of the division, and."—(*Mr Warton.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the said proposed Amendment."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he had been no party to prolonging discussion on names, which he thought unimportant, and, while he was disposed to agree with the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Warton) as to the names mentioned, the objection to them would not, in his opinion, be met by the Amendment.

LORD JOHN MANNERS said, he would point out that some confusion might arise by one authority using one name and another another in referring to these divisions. In that case, who was to be the authority to exercise the discretion given by the right hon. Gentleman in the selection of a name?

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Original Question again proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES), in reply to the noble Lord opposite (Lord John Manners), said, the overseer would select the name. It might be possible to create uniformity when they came to the Schedules; but he should point out that it was the House in Committee, and not the Government, who had pushed forward this matter of alternative designations.

LORD JOHN MANNERS said, that different overseers might select different names, and that would lead to confusion. The Quarter Sessions might be a fit authority.

MR. WARTON proposed to amend the Amendment, by rendering it obligatory that where there were two names both should be used.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "may," and insert the word "shall," — (*Mr. Warton,*) — instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the word 'may' stand part of the said proposed Amendment."

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that the Registration Bill was to come into operation within seven days. He was afraid that in connection with the retention of alternative names there might be difficulty with respect to the names under the Registration Bill, which might come into operation before this Bill.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that he had already pressed the same view on the House. He should have preferred that there was no alternative name; but the Committee on the Bill had decided otherwise. The matter would, however, have to be reconsidered when the Schedules were reached, and he would meanwhile give attention to the subject.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: said, on the whole, he thought it might be the better course to get rid of the alternative names, especially as in some cases both the alternative names were taken from localities. Before that was done, however, the subject would require serious consideration.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that, no doubt, as he had just said, the subject would have to be reconsidered on another occasion.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to;* words *inserted* accordingly.

On the Motion of MR. GREGORY, Amendment *amended,* by adding the words "thereof for all purposes."

Amendment, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 10 (Qualification by occupation of premises in immediate succession in divided borough).

MR. HEALY, in moving an Amendment in the clause, the effect of which would be to make the law uniform for boroughs and counties with regard to qualification by successive occupation, said, he did not see why qualification by successive occupation should be confined to the boroughs alone.

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 22, to leave out the words "situate within any division of a Parliamentary borough shall."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'situate within any' stand part of the Bill."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the matter had been fully discussed on an Amendment of his hon. and learned Colleague (Mr. Firth), and he did not now wish to re-open the question. He thought the House would be more inclined to move in the direction of short-

ening the qualifying periods than of extending the application of the principle of qualification by successive occupation.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 22, to leave out the word "division," in order to insert the word "part," —(*Sir Charles W. Dilke,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the word 'division' stand part of the Bill."

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 11 (Returning officers in new boroughs).

On the Motion of Sir CHARLES W. DILKE, the following Amendments made:—In page 4, lines 12 to 27, leave out sub-sections (4.) and (5.); line 33, leave out from "case" to "the," in line 34; and in line 36, after "boroughs," insert—

"To the mayor of which the writ has before the passing of this Act been directed, or if it has not been directed to any such mayor, then to the mayor of that one of the municipal boroughs."

MR. HEALY, in moving the insertion of an Amendment, constituting in the boroughs of Newry and Galway the Chairman of Town Commissioners the Returning Officer instead of the Sheriff, said, he made this proposal on no political grounds whatever, but simply to uphold the dignity of the office of the Chairman of Town Commissioners. In Ireland there were very few boroughs now left. He believed that in Belfast and one or two other places, the Mayor was the Returning Officer; while in Cork, Kilkenny, and one or two other places, the Sheriff was the Returning Officer. He had also reason to believe that the Chairman of the Newry Town Commissioners was a Conservative, so that no one could imagine that his (Mr. Healy's) object in moving the adoption of the Amendment was in any sense a political one. Up to the time of James I. Newry had a Charter. James repealed all the old Charters, and gave Newry a new one; but when William III. came in he abolished all James's Charters. Only for that, Newry would now be a corporate town, and, of course, entitled to its Mayor, who would be the Returning Officer.

Amendment proposed,

In page 4, line 44, to insert the words,—"In Ireland, in the boroughs of Newry and Galway, the chairman of town commissioners shall be the returning officer instead of the sheriff."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he had followed the case of the hon. and learned Member with regard to Newry, and although he knew very little about that place, he thought the case was a good one, and that there was something in what had been said. As to Galway, however, he could not follow the hon. and learned Gentleman so well, for that was a county of a town, and to pass over the Sheriff of a county of a town would be to create an anomaly. He must, therefore, oppose the Amendment.

MR. LEWIS said, he also opposed the Amendment, contending that the House was now asked to introduce a new thing in the history of elections, and to create a precedent. It was quite true the Chairman of the Town Commissioners answered all the purposes of the Mayor; but, after all, the Mayor was an officer of long standing, whose position and duties were well understood. He thought the House should be careful how they created precedents in these matters, and he hoped the Government would not consent to make an exception in the case of these boroughs. They recognized the Mayor and Sheriff as Returning Officers; but he knew of no case in England in which the Chairman of a Local Board was made the Returning Officer.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that, as far as he knew, there was no instance of such a creation of a Returning Officer by legislation as was now proposed. In no case he knew of was the Chairman of a Local Board a Returning Officer. They were asked in this case to create new Returning Officers, and he must confess that his instinct was against it. On that account, he could not agree to the hon. and learned Member's proposal.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS said, he supported the Amendment with regard to Newry. He believed that Newry was altogether in an anomalous position, as it was difficult to ascertain who was really the chief man in the borough.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, the Returning Officer for Newry, under the Bill, would be the Sheriff of the County Down, who would have the same duties to perform for the whole of the divisions in the county. He was already the Returning Officer for the four divisions of the county, and also for the four divisions of the city of Belfast, and if the borough of Newry were added, there would, in fact, be only one Returning Officer for nine divisions, which he (Mr. O'Connor) considered to be a very anomalous position. It was, therefore, he contended, a case where a separate Returning Officer was required. He therefore asked the House to make a special provision for this case. He did not think the case of Galway was as strong as that of Newry, and they had a Sheriff there.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he thought the Sheriff of the County Down need not be frightened at having to act for nine constituencies, seeing that the High Sheriff of Lancashire would be Returning Officer for 23 constituencies.

MR. SEXTON said, he thought that the proposal of his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Healy) should be adopted if for no other reason than because it would establish uniformity in eight of the nine boroughs left in Ireland, in all of which they had a local urban Returning Officer. The local officer in authority for the time being would be the Returning Officer, and he wanted to know why Newry should be made an exception? The Chairman of the Town Commissioners was a most suitable officer for the position of Returning Officer; and he was sure the Conservative Town Commissioners of the town of Newry would not be very thankful to the Conservative Member for Derry (Mr. Lewis) when they found that he was the man who was particularly opposed to their obtaining this simple act of justice and convenience.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he would point out that the Sheriff of County Down had always acted as Returning Officer for Newry.

LORD JOHN MANNERS said, the remedy appeared to be rather to give a Corporation to the town of Newry.

MR. BIGGAR said, he thought it was obvious that Newry was entitled to have the Chairman of the Town Commissioners as the Returning Officer at elections. It was a very ancient town, for it was mentioned by Dean Swift, who said it was—

> "High Church, low steeple,
> Dirty streets, proud people."

So that it was an important town in Dean Swift's time, and he really saw no reason why it should be treated in the exceptional manner proposed under the Bill. If it were the county town, the case might be different; but it was situated at the very extremity of the county; in fact, part of the town was in the county of Armagh, and the county town was a long way off, so that the Sheriff would have to travel a long way to perform his duties. The Chairman of the Town Commissioners was thoroughly competent to perform the duties, and he certainly ought to have the position of Returning Officer.

MR. HEALY said, he should like to have the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Charles W. Dilke) on the matter?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that, no doubt, Newry would be the exception in Ireland; but if the Amendment was passed, it would be an exception also to the general rule in the United Kingdom, and consequently exceptions would also have to be made in other instances.

MR. LEAMY supported the Amendment, and asked if the right hon. Gentleman who had charge of the Bill could point out any reason for treating Newry in an exceptional manner? He thought the Conservatives of Newry would be very much surprised to find that the only Irish Member who opposed the Resolution was the hon. Member for Derry, and after all he was an Englishman.

MR. ARCHDALE said, he fully agreed with the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis). He thought it quite immaterial where the Returning Officer was located; but he looked with great suspicion upon anything brought forward by the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan, because it was generally against the Irish Church.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 29; Noes 109: Majority 80.—(Div. List, No. 137.)

Other Amendments made.

Clause, as amended, *agreed to*.

Clause 12 (As to boroughs divided into divisions).

Amendment proposed,

In page 5, line 3, after the word "may," to insert the words "in and for any one or more of such divisions."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

In page 5, line 15, after the word "voter," to insert the words "except non-resident freemen in Dublin."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *negatived.*

MR. HEALY moved, in page 5, line 23, to insert an Amendment, the object of which was to compel the townships of Pembroke and Blackrock to repay the Corporation of Dublin the expense incurred in the preparation of the lists of Parliamentary voters in those townships.

Amendment proposed,

In page 5, line 23, after the word "series," to insert the words,—"For the preparation of the lists in the city of Dublin, the Commissioners of the townships of Pembroke and Blackrock shall repay to the Treasurer of the Corporation of Dublin the expense of making out the lists for such portion of these townships as are situate within the Parliamentary borough of Dublin."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. SEXTON said, he would invite the right hon. Baronet to give his serious attention to this matter. It would be unfair to throw the expense on Dublin.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he would admit that this was an anomaly, and he thought it would be properly dealt with in the Registration Bill.

MR. HEALY: Will you introduce a clause to that effect in the Registration Bill?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he would do so.

MR. HEALY remarked that a Registration Bill was introduced, and yet the Government without pressure would not remedy this injustice to the ratepayers of the City of Dublin.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Another Amendment made.

Clause 15 (As to place of election).

MR. HEALY (for Mr. SMALL) moved, as an Amendment, in page 6, line 35, to leave out the words "county at large," in order to insert "division." He thought it unfair that the Sheriff, who in Ireland was almost always opposed to the popular Party, should have it in his power to appoint a place for nominating the candidates and counting of the votes which might not be in the division for which the election was held. Perhaps the best way of dealing with the matter would be to give any candidate power to serve the Sheriff with a notice requiring him to name a place within the division.

Amendment proposed,

In page 6, line 35, to leave out the words "county at large," and insert the word "division,"—(*Mr. Healy,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words 'county at large' stand part of the Bill."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he must oppose the Amendment on the ground that in some county divisions in Ireland there were no towns containing adequate accommodation for the officers conducting nomination proceedings and those connected with the counting of votes.

MR. SEXTON said, he would ask the House to consider the importance of this question in the case of Ireland. Although there might not be a town in some of the divisions, he believed there were none in which there was not to be found a pretty considerable village which would be available. There was no division without a Petty Sessional Court or a police barrack. His hon. and learned Friend proposed that a candidate should have the power to compel the Returning Officer to conduct the nomination in some town or village in the very division which contained the constituency. It was not likely that a candidate would propose that the proceedings should take place in a town inconveniently situated.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) explained that in many counties there were central places to which it would be specially easy to bring the ballot-boxes in consequence of the facilities of railway communication. It was reasonable that such a

place should, in certain cases, be looked upon as the centre of more than one Division.

MR. O'DONNELL said, that in every division in Ireland sufficient accommodation could be found for the officials engaged in an election. At the same time, there were some Irish districts where the same facilities in the way of railway communication did not exist as in others. He would instance the cases of Cork, Donegal, Mayo, Sligo, and many other parts of Ireland, where great difficulty would in some cases be found in reaching the place selected, if something was not done to meet their requirements.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he was afraid that if the Amendment were not agreed to, Sheriffs in Ireland might disregard the convenience of constituencies in fixing the places of nomination.

MR. LEWIS said, that while he generally approved of the objects of the Amendment, its scope was too large. He held that it was not desirable that a polling place should be outside the limits of the county, which was the *locus* of the election.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he would point out the disadvantages there would be in cases where a county town was adjoining the division, were such an Amendment enforced. A city adjoining a county could only be fixed as the polling-place in cases where the city was geographically, although not technically, within the county.

MR. GRAY said, that the assumptions of the Government had been made upon the understanding apparently that the Returning Officers would be desirous of holding elections at places which would best suit the majority of the electors. Now, he believed that there were some places in Ireland where the opposite course would be taken by Returning Officers, who would throw every obstacle in the way of the electors.

MR. ARCHDALE interposing, said, he felt bound to protest against these statements. He knew several Returning Officers who were quite incapable of such action.

MR. GRAY said, that the hon. Member must be very fortunate in his acquaintances. He (Mr. Gray) had, however, the misfortune to have had quite a contrary experience. He would ask the House to consider in the case of Cork County, in which there were seven divisions, the difficulty which might be cast in the way of the electors by an injudicious selection of a place by the Returning Officer.

MR. DEASY said, that some portions of Cork were 80 miles distant from the City of Cork, and there being great lack of railway communication, the poor people would be put to great expense and inconvenience if their case was not considered.

MR. ARCHDALE said, it was preposterous to imagine that any High Sheriff would bring voters from a distance of 80 miles. As regarded the High Sheriff of the county of Cork, there was no more honourable man in the county.

MR. O'SULLIVAN said, he hoped the Government would accept the Amendment. It would do away with a possible hardship.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said, there was nothing more fatal to the cause of good government in Ireland than the opposition of the Government to the wishes of the Irish Representatives even on such small points. The great majority of the Returning Officers in Ireland were men—["Hear, hear!"] He was glad to see that his remarks elicited applause; and he would be glad to extend his remarks for the benefit of those who applauded him. Perhaps, however, before he concluded them those who interrupted him would be the worse for their interruption.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member must continue his speech without making any threat to hon. Members of this House.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said, he hoped the Speaker would save him from interruptions. The great majority of the Returning Officers in Ireland were men who, by their character and position, were distinctly opposed to the wishes and aspirations of the people. In the case of a bye-election in one division of a county, it would be absurd and unwise to carry the turmoil of the election into another division.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, it was possible that, for some reason unknown to him, the arrangements made under this clause might be expedient and convenient in the English counties. He only contended that they were not expedient in Ireland. In England there

was no great dispute between Parties; but in Ireland there was a lasting dispute between two great Parties. The great objection, however, to the clause was that an election might take place in a division of a county which was in no way concerned in it. The passing of a clause like that as applied to Ireland could only produce inconvenience and dissatisfaction, and might also create mischief without being attended with any advantage whatever.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, there was a practical difficulty in the working of the clause in Ireland as it stood at present, and it would prove adverse to the true and free expression of the opinion of voters at elections. The hours of nomination as fixed were generally between 12 and 3, and if the nominators and assentors were brought 30 or 40 miles to the nomination in case there was any defect in the nomination paper a serious difficulty might arise. He suggested that it might be retained for the case of England, to the circumstances of which it might be better adapted, but that it was totally unsuitable for Ireland.

MR. KENNY said, he thought it was unfortunate that the President of the Local Government Board had not seen his way to accept the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for the county of Monaghan (Mr. Healy). He hoped, however, that the Government would reconsider the matter which had been placed before them. Every argument could be used in favour of the Amendment; and if the Government did not accept it, they would be obliged to press the matter to a division.

MR. MARUM said, that it would undoubtedly be a very great inconvenience in large counties, if the electors were to be compelled to travel great distances. He would urge upon the Government the necessity for considering the matter.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that the Government would consider the matter, and confer with the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Healy) on the subject.

MR. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY asked if there was any precedent for the result of an election being declared outside the constituency in which the contest took place?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that in cases where there was a large county town adjoining, it had been taken as being in the county for such purposes.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 164; Noes 35: Majority 129.—(Div. List, No. 138.)

MR. HEALY moved a further Amendment standing in the name of the hon. Member for the county of Wexford (Mr. Small), to substitute, in page 6, line 36, "division" for "county at large." He explained that the object of the Amendment was to provide that the place of election in the case of a county at large should be in such town situate in the division as the Local Authority having power to divide the division into polling districts, or Returning Officer, might from time to time determine as being most convenient for the purposes of the election. He regretted the strong opposition which had been manifested by the right hon. Baronet to every proposal put forward by the Irish Party. When they were discussing the boundaries, the right hon. Gentleman defended his action by the necessity of abiding by the decisions of the Boundary Commissioners; but now they had returned to the provisions of the Bill, the right hon. Baronet was quite as adamantine. The expereince he (Mr. Healy) had gained of the proceedings of that House convinced him that it was only by weariness and iteration that the Irish Members had any chance whatever of inducing the Government to make the slightest concession to their opinions. So far as he was concerned, he was determined not to allow it to be in the power of any High Sheriff in Ireland to inflict an unnecessary hardship upon the voter, and especially the poor voters, in regard to the election arrangements in the baronies. He had gone carefully into this matter, and the only ground adduced by the Government for adhering to the proposal in the Bill was the personal convenience of the Sheriff. Was the convenience of the voter to be set aside altogether? The Sheriff was a well-paid official, who received an exorbitant fee for everything he did. His convenience was to be carefully studied; whereas that of the voter, who discharged his duty without fee or reward, was not to be consulted in the slightest respect. He was to be subjected to the highest inconvenience, in order that a well-paid official should sus-

tain none whatever. The right hon. Gentleman suggested that the nomination should be held in one of the divided districts; but that was not a suggestion which could be accepted as satisfactory, and for this reason—that the candidate ought to have some voice in the matter. The candidate would know whether there was going to be a contest or not, and he ought to have the power of serving a notice upon the Sheriff requiring him to hold the election in any part of the division he thought proper. As a matter of fact, the Sub-Commissioners, under the Land Act, found themselves obliged to hold their Courts in some of the poorest and most out-of-the-way villages in Ireland; but they found no difficulty in discharging their duties. There were always little school-rooms which were available, in which they were able to hear counsel on both sides, and give their decisions. No difficulty had ever been experienced in these poor and remote areas in finding suitable buildings in which to carry on the work. And yet they were told that they were bound to study the convenience of a Sheriff, who might have to sit for an hour or two in order to receive nomination papers, and perhaps for five or six hours in casting up the votes. The contention of the Government was that the convenience of these officials was so important that it was impossible for them to spend two or three hours in such places as they might be able to find in the county of Mayo or Donegal, or some other out-of-the-way place. The result might be that, when it became necessary to count the votes, the ballot boxes might have to be brought from long distances, and, in a keenly-contested election, they might be besieged and some of them destroyed, and thus the whole election might be rendered void, in consequence of the failure to provide some central place in the division for conducting the elections. It would not be so much in the power of any political Party to tamper with the ballot boxes if the Sheriff were required to sit in a polling-booth in the centre of the division, surrounded by the agents of every Party, determined to see fair play in the counting of the voting papers. If the provision in the Bill were allowed to remain, the Sheriff would undoubtedly hold the election in the place most convenient, not to the county or to the candidate, but to himself, and he would not hesitate to put everybody else to unnecessary expense in bringing up scrutineers. That was a state of affairs to which he, for one, could not assent; and he must say that the Government, in the way in which they had acted in the matter, had exhibited an amount of mulishness which he had hardly anticipated after the extravagant compliments which had been showered upon the right hon. Baronet for his courtesy. As the old poet said—

> "If she be not fair to me,
> What care I how fair she be?"

He had noticed, notwithstanding the lavish way in which the right hon. Gentleman had been complimented for his courtesy, that whenever an opportunity was afforded for doing an act of real courtesy to the Irish Party, the right hon. Gentleman declined to take advantage of it.

Amendment proposed,

In page 6, line 36, to leave out the words "county at large," and insert the word "division."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'county at large' stand part of the Bill."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he was afraid that the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), having accused him of mulishness, would now accuse him of pusillanimity and weakness, for he was about to surrender at discretion.

MR. HEALY: I beg to withdraw "mulishness."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he would consider what he could do in the matter, and he would move a Proviso at the end of the clause to provide that it should not apply to Scotland or Ireland.

MR. HEALY said, that, in asking leave to withdraw the Amendment, he must be permitted to say that this was another instance of the value of Parliamentary pressure.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

CAPTAIN AYLMER moved an Amendment, in the same clause, after the word "borough," to insert the words "or division as the case may be." His object was to provide that the Returning Officer should have power to determine the most convenient place of election in

the case of a Parliamentary borough or "division" of a borough.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he had an Amendment to propose which would come before that of the hon. and gallant Member—namely, in line 41, to move the insertion of the words "Provided, That this sub-section shall not apply to Scotland or Ireland."

Amendment proposed,

In page 6, line 41, to insert the words "Provided, That this sub-section shall not apply to Scotland or Ireland."—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. DEASY asked what the effect would be in reference to Ireland and Scotland?

MR. EDWARD CLARKE suggested that it would be better for the right hon. Baronet to surrender the sub-section altogether. He had voted in the minority in the division which took place a short time ago, and he could not himself conceive any valid reason for taking the conduct of an election out of the division in which the Member was to be elected. He certainly knew of no division in which it would not be possible to provide a suitable building for conducting the election. It was not likely that any large number of persons would assemble.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Edward Clarke) was returning to a subject which had already been disposed of. This was simply a matter of convenience. The Government had received representations from several localities asking for this clause. The right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) would be aware that Exeter was a central place for the whole of Devonshire, and was convenient for counting the votes in the case of more divisions than one. The same might be said of Oxford, and several other counties; York, for instance, was very central, and most convenient on account of its railway communication. It was in consequence of the representations which had been made that the clause had been inserted.

MR. ACKERS said, he hoped the Government would not yield upon this point in regard to England as they had consented to do in the case of Ireland. Although it might be a propor mode of dealing with that part of the United Kingdom, there were a considerable number of English constituencies in regard to which it would be a grievance, if they were not able to conduct the business of the election in some places outside a particular county division to which the ballot boxes could be readily conveyed. He would instance Cheltenham, which, for all practical purposes, was the meeting place for the great Cotswold Division, although it was situated outside the division. He earnestly hoped that the convenience of the English constituencies would be consulted as well as those of Ireland.

MR. SEXTON asked whether, as the sub-section was not to apply to Ireland or Scotland, the Returning Officer would be obliged to perform his functions within the division?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Yes.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE remarked, that, so far as the English constituencies were concerned, Exeter was a case in point. It was a county and a city in itself, and therefore was not included within any division of the county of Devon; but it was unquestionably the most convenient place for holding proceedings in connection with the county elections.

MR. HEALY inquired whether, in order to make the matter perfectly clear to the Sheriffs in Ireland, there would be any objection to add at the end of the clause words to provide that all election proceedings in connection with Ireland and Scotland should be conducted within the division affected?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, it would not be necessary to do that, as it was the law now, and must be the case.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

CAPTAIN AYLMER then moved, in line 44, after "borough," to insert "or division as the case may be." His object was to insure that the election proceedings in connection with the division of a Parliamentary borough should take place within the division. He thought that was even a more important object in boroughs than in counties. In counties it might be convenient sometimes that the election should take place outside the division; but in boroughs that would be very objectionable, especially in bye-elections, where, from the excited state

of public feeling, or some other cause, it would be most undesirable to take persons into another part of the borough in order to hear the poll declared. He thought it would be better to confine the election altogether to the division of the borough to which it belonged.

Amendment proposed,

In page 6, line 44, after the word "borough," to insert the words "or division as the case may be."—(*Captain Aylmer.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE opposed the Amendment, and remarked that, as a general rule, the convenience of the candidates would be consulted.

MR. EDWARD CLARKE said, that if his hon. and gallant Friend went to a division, he would vote with him. He thought it would be a most mischievous thing to take the election proceedings out of the limits of the district to which they naturally belonged. He saw no difficulty in the Returning Officer finding within the limits of the division some place in which to conduct the election proceedings.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 17 (Detached parts of parishes).

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE moved an Amendment to substitute the 26th of March, 1885, for the 25th, as the date for determining the constitution of new or detached parts of parishes.

Amendment *agreed to;* word *substituted* accordingly.

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 22 (Effect of Schedules).

On the Motion of Sir CHARLES W. DILKE, the following Amendment made: —In page 8, line 23, leave out "and the notes thereto."

MR. WARTON moved an Amendment to leave out the clause, on the ground that it was unnecessary, mere surplusage, and probably a simple freak on the part of the draftsman. Originally, there were notes appended to one or two of the Schedules; but there were none now.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Clause 22 be struck out of the Bill."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Captain Aylmer

Question proposed, "That Clause 22 stand part of the Bill."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the clause was not very material, and he thought the hon. and learned Gentleman might be allowed to have his way in the matter.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Clause *struck out* accordingly.

Clause 23 (Definitions in Schedules).

Amendment proposed, in page 9, line 3, to leave out from beginning of line to "such," in line 13, and insert the words,—

"Where a parish, townland, or other place with a definite boundary, whether larger or smaller than a parish or townland, is situate in a county or borough divided into Parliamentary divisions, and such parish, townland, or other place is not, in the Schedules to this Act, included in any of the Parliamentary divisions of the county or borough in which it is situate, such parish or townland shall be considered as included in that one of those Parliamentary divisions which it adjoins, or if it adjoins more than one of such divisions, then in that one of the said divisions with which it has the longest common boundary.

Where a Parliamentary division of a county or borough is described in any Schedule to this Act as containing the whole of a sessional division, barony, or other area, with the exception of the portion comprised in another Parliamentary division of the same county or borough, and by reason of such description includes a parish, townland, or ward, or part of a ward, separated from the rest of the first-mentioned Parliamentary division by the said portion comprised in the other Parliamentary division, such parish, townland, ward, or part of a ward, shall, notwithstanding the said description, form part of the other Parliamentary division, as if it had been included in the said exception.

If any doubt arises as to the Parliamentary division of a county or borough in which any parish, townland, ward, or other place, whether larger or smaller than a parish, townland, or ward, is intended by the Schedules to this Act to be included,"—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke,*)

—instead thereof.

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill," put, and *negatived.*

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment, to leave out from the words "Where a Parliamentary division," in line 10, to the word "exception," in line 19."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the proposed Amendment," put, and *agreed to.*

And the Question, "That the words,—

'Where a parish, townland, or other place with a definite boundary, whether larger or smaller than a parish or townland, is situate in a county or borough divided into Parliamentary divisions, and such parish, townland, or other place is not, in the Schedules to this Act, included in any of the Parliamentary divisions of the county or borough in which it is situate, such parish or townland shall be considered as included in that one of those Parliamentary divisions which it adjoins, or if it adjoins more than one of such divisions, then in that one of the said divisions with which it has the longest common boundary.

Where a Parliamentary division of a county or borough is described in any Schedule to this Act as containing the whole of a sessional division, barony, or other area, with the exception of the portion comprised in another Parliamentary division of the same county or borough, and by reason of such description includes a parish, townland, or ward, or part of a ward, separated from the rest of the first-mentioned Parliamentary division by the said portion comprised in the other Parliamentary division, such parish, townland, ward, or part of a ward, shall, notwithstanding the said description, form part of the other Parliamentary division, as if it had been included in the said exception.

If any doubt arises as to the Parliamentary division of a county or borough in which any parish, townland, ward, or other place, whether larger or smaller than a parish, townland, or ward, is intended by the Schedules to this Act to be included,' be there inserted,"

—put, and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 27 (Adaptation of certain enactments as to disqualification of voters for corrupt practices).

On the Motion of Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL, Clause *struck out* of the Bill.

Clause 28 (Disqualification of certain voters for corrupt practices).

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS said, the Amendment which he should endeavour to induce the Government to accept in this clause was to leave out the words "in the year one thousand eight hundred and eighty." His object in moving the omission of those words was to prevent the infliction of what he considered would be a very great injustice on the Conservative portion of the electors in the city of Canterbury. The House would be aware that after the last General Election of 1880, an inquiry was instituted into the practices which took place at Canterbury during that Election, the result being that certain persons were scheduled as bribers and bribees, both in respect of the Election of 1880 and in respect of the Election of 1879. Now, he wished to point out that if the Bill remained as it was, without alteration, the persons scheduled for corrupt practices committed during the Election of 1879 would get off scot free, while those scheduled in respect of the Election of 1880 were disqualified for seven years. The effect of that would be very much in favour of the Liberal Party, by which the corrupt practices ascertained at the inquiry had been committed. The House would perceive that there were 140 persons scheduled in respect of the 1879 Election—all Liberals who, unless the Government agreed to adopt his Amendment, would be entitled to vote at the next Election. Under the circumstances, he trusted the Government would see their way to accepting his proposal, which would do an act of justice to the Conservative Party, and, at the same time, save him from the necessity of moving the rejection of the clause itself when the proper time arrived. Before he sat down, he might point out to the Government that no other constituency would be affected by the alteration which he proposed to make in the Bill.

Amendment proposed,

In page 12, line 14, to leave out the words "in the year one thousand eight hundred and eighty."—(*Mr. Akers-Douglas.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'in the year one thousand eight hundred and eighty,' stand part of the Bill."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he certainly did not feel any merciful consideration in dealing with persons guilty of corrupt practices at elections; but in this case there was a reason for not accepting the Amendment proposed by the hon. Member for East Kent (Mr. Akers-Douglas), the effect of which would be to disqualify persons who had never yet been disqualified. He thought that, in dealing with political matters, it was safer, if it could be done, to apply precedents to every case as it arose. He had searched for every precedent bearing on the matter, and there was not one single instance of any punishment having been

inflicted, except in respect of the offences committed at the last Election before the inquiry was held, which, in the present instance, would be the Election of 1880, and he thought the hon. Member for East Kent would be aware that such was the case. Now, at the inquiries at Bristol, Chester, and Gloucester, the Commissioners went back to the last Elections but one, and although they found that, in respect of those Elections, some persons had been guilty of corrupt practices, they did not include them in the Schedule, because the practice, as he had pointed out, had always been to deal with the corruption at the last Election only. He was aware that the case of the hon. Member was more acute than those to which he had referred, because the last Election but one at Canterbury only occurred a year before the last—that was to say, in 1879; but the principle laid down was equally applicable. If they went back beyond the Election inquired into, there was no reason why they should not go back six years, instead of one. He pointed out that the persons reported as guilty of corrupt practices at the Election of 1879 were really punished in the immediate Election under consideration; and it might be assumed that they were repentant. If this Amendment were adopted, it would be the introduction of a new principle entirely, and thinking it safer to adhere to the practice that had hitherto obtained, he certainly preferred the clause as it stood in the Bill; and, therefore, as far as he was concerned, he could not assent to the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman.

MR. RAIKES said, he was sorry to differ from the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General on this question. The hon. and learned Gentleman had told them, and he thought it was his only argument against the Amendment of the hon. Member for East Kent (Mr. Akers-Douglas), that in these cases they could not depart from precedent. But an ounce of common sense might sometimes be worth a bushel of precedent; and he put it to the House whether there would not be at least an apparent injustice if, with respect to persons included in the same Report, they were to punish those guilty of corruption in 1880, and let go scot free those who were guilty of the same offence in 1879? Therefore, although he should be glad to accept precedent as a general guide, he thought the House might follow it too far. He hoped to hear that they were not to be guided strictly by the legal view that the Amendment was only directed to the case of those persons who were guilty of corrupt practices in 1879. It would meet as well the cases dealt with by any of the Commissioners who sat in 1880. If the Bill remained unaltered, this case would be left in glaring contrast with other cases. All the persons scheduled in 1880 would be punished under this clause, and all those who committed corrupt practices at an earlier date would escape punishment altogether, because the seven years' disqualification did not touch their case.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir FARRER HERSCHELL) said, he could not agree with one of the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Raikes). The objection of his hon. and learned Friend (the Attorney General) to the admission of this Amendment did not rest entirely upon precedent. He ventured to suggest that there was a very sound reason for making a distinction between the members of this constituency guilty of corrupt practices in 1880, and those guilty of the offence in 1879—namely, that between the present time and the latter year, an Election had intervened, and the electors had shown that they were capable of passing through a subsequent Election without being guilty of corrupt practices. He apprehended that it was not merely punishment that they desired to inflict, they desired to see constituencies purified; and, therefore, he thought that the persons scheduled in respect of 1879 having passed purely through an intervening Election, might be trusted to act purely again.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, that some attention ought to be paid to the circumstances which incapacitated a person from voting during seven years. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General had said that if they had regard to 1880, the point was clear, because that was the date of the last Election; but if they went behind the last Election, they might go back to 1874. But in this case it was only to 1879.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): Seven years from the date of the Report in the clause.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Exactly; the Report being in 1880. The other Report——

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): The two Reports were in 1880, and the Amendment refers to persons reported in 1880, but guilty in 1879.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, the hon. and learned Gentleman said a little while ago that if they went back to 1879, they might just as well go back to 1874. But they would preclude themselves from doing that by taking the period of seven years as the time for which the disqualification was to exist. If they went back to 1874, and stipulated that persons who were then convicted or scheduled should be disqualified, they would only be disqualified for seven years; and, therefore, that time would now have expired.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): But the right hon. Baronet will see that the words used are "seven years from the date of the Report."

MR. WARTON said, they must take the Amendment as a whole, and if they did that, no one knew better than the hon. and learned Attorney General that it had no reference to the Reports made in 1880 only. If they looked at the clause as moralists, what did they find? What was the preamble of the clause? That—

> "Whereas Commissioners appointed by Her Majesty in pursuance of Addresses from both Houses of Parliament in the year one thousand eight hundred and eighty reported that at parliamentary elections for the borough named in the second part of the Eighth Schedule to this Act the persons named in the schedules to the said reports had been guilty of corrupt practices, be it therefore enacted."

What was the result of this glorious preamble? That they would punish some guilty persons and not others. The clause was so framed as to prevent the seven years' punishment being applied to Liberals who were corrupt in 1879. It was exceedingly unfair not to treat one party as they treated the other.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

MR. THOROLD ROGERS said, in the Amendment he was about to move he ventured to again ask the House to prevent a person who had been found guilty of bribing from sitting in the House for the space of seven years. He was led to take that course partly by the fact that in Committee his Amendment was only defeated by a majority of 13, and that he had good reason to believe that had the Committee known what the particular scope of his Amendment was, and what the limited character of the punishment inflicted was, there would have been a majority, instead of a minority, in favour of his proposal. He had been told by many hon. Members that they were under the impression he had proposed to prevent a guilty person from ever sitting in the House; that they did not know he was following on the lines of an Amendment which had been accepted by the House. Furthermore, it was notorious that the Amendment he proposed was supported strongly by hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House, and, therefore, he had reason to believe that he did appeal to a sense of morality and justice. It appeared to him quite illogical that the Bill should contain clauses which declared that certain individuals should not have the power to vote in certain constituencies in which they never had or ever would have a vote. If this Bill went out to the public at large containing a penalty on the lower classes of society, while it allowed the opulent classes to go scot free, a most unfavourable impression would be created. In the interest of common justice and public morality, it was essential that the Amendment he suggested should be adopted. It had been said that the Amendment would act as a precedent, and that there was no precedent for the action he proposed. He had been told also that this would be a retrospective Act. Allow him to observe that retrospective action had been adopted by the Committee with regard to voters. If the malpractices of voters had been recognized by existing Statutes, it would not have been necessary for his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General to introduce disqualifications; the fact that certain voters vere not disqualified by previous Statutes was the reason why they were disqualified by the clauses of the Bill. As regarded the general principle, he thought it was high time the House should show it was prepared to mete out equal justice to persons who committed an offence, as well as to persons who became the victims of the offence. He had no wish, on the present occasion, to dwell upon the malpractices of particular indi-

viduals; neither did he know—he had not been at the pains of investigating, for he was not at all concerned in the question—whether this just action on the part of the House would inflict more injury on the individuals who nominally belonged to the Party he belonged to, or to the other Party. He held that the persons against whom his Amendment was directed had been guilty of a great offence against the Constitution; that they had been exposed and declared guilty of a high crime and misdemeanour against Parliament; and that the time had come when this House should vindicate public morality in the matter. When he moved the Amendment in Committee, the malpractices of one or two persons were fully dwelt upon on both sides of the House. He did not, he repeated, wish to deal with those particular cases. He only wanted to appeal to what he thought was the sense of justice in the House towards persons who had been guilty of Parliamentary malpractices. He appealed to the House to determine, in the exercise of righteous judgment, that such offences should no longer go unpunished; he appealed to the House to punish such offences in the only way in which they could be punished—namely, by the exclusion of the guilty persons from a seat in the future Parliament.

Amendment proposed,

In page 12, after line 25, after the word "borough," to insert the words,—"(c.) Of being a candidate, or of being elected to, and sitting in, the House of Commons, for the space of seven years next after the presentation of the said reports respectively, and, if he shall be elected, his election shall be void."—(*Mr. Thorold Rogers.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he felt that the arguments and motives of his hon. Friend (Mr. Thorold Rogers) would appeal very strongly to a great many Members of the House. But however much they might wish to remedy a particular evil by severe measures, the House would agree with him (the Attorney General) that it was undesirable to inflict a punishment at the expense of a principle of much greater importance than that of seeing even a guilty person receive his just reward. His hon. Friend dwelt in Committee very strongly upon a particular case. The hon. Gentleman pointed out what the effect would be if the person in the case alluded to obtained a seat in the House. He (the Attorney General) said nothing about the argument the hon. Gentleman used in respect of a particular offender who had, he (the Attorney General) quite admitted, received virtually no punishment at all. He asked the House not to be led away by the faults of one or more particular persons, and say—"We will, in order to punish them, do that which on reflection we ought not to support." In this matter they were not dealing with one person, but with 8,970, for that was the number of persons scheduled. If this clause were added to the Bill, it would affect all those persons, and it would inflict this *ex post facto* penalty upon all of them. Since the Corrupt Practices Act was passed, Parliament had accepted, without any exception, one punishment as the proper punishment to impose upon persons who had been reported. In 1880, when these offences were committed, no other punishment was known. In 1883, when the Corrupt Practices Act was passed, Parliament thought it necessary to increase the previous punishment, by imposing on the person who had been guilty the very penalty his hon. Friend sought to impose now. But what did they do then? They refused to impose the penalty, unless before the punishment was inflicted the person was allowed to be heard in his own defence. In 1883 they went further and provided a second safeguard—namely, that not only should the man be summoned, and have the right to cross-examine witnesses, but he should also have the right to go, by way of appeal, to the Court of Assize. It was now proposed to inflict punishment upon a man who might never be heard—that was, in 1885, punishment was proposed without the safeguards that were thought necessary in 1883. A still further important principle remained. The persons who committed these offences in 1880 knew what Parliament always regarded as the punishment, and now, five years after the offences had been committed, it was proposed to impose by Statute this statutory penalty upon the offenders. The principle involved in the Amendment was such that he asked the House to hesitate before they accepted it. If once,

by legislating after an offence had been committed, they imposed a penalty upon the offender, they would, in his opinion, form a precedent of the most dangerous character. The matter was entirely in the hands of the House; but he hoped they would not sanction the retrospective legislation which was now proposed.

MR. EDWARD CLARKE said, that before the House divided, he would like to add a few words in support of the Amendment. He supported it on a previous occasion, and he hoped the House would accept it. He was extremely sorry to hear his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General ask the House to accept what seemed to be quite an artificial statement of a principle, and so keep up an anomaly which was disgraceful to the House. By this section of the Bill they were dealing with those persons who were scheduled as guilty of bribery in 1880, and if this Amendment were rejected, the effect would be that they said by this Statute that certain persons were unfit to be allowed to vote for Members of Parliament, yet they were fit to sit as Members of Parliament. That really was making a farce of the whole thing. It was all very well to say that it had been the habit of Parliament in past times to impose a particular penalty. He did not know that Parliament contemplated before what it unhappily was forced to contemplate now—namely, the probability of persons who had committed these offences succeeding in making their way within the walls of the House of Commons. If Parliament had contemplated such a state of things before, he did not think it would have hesitated to protect itself by giving the punishment the area and effect proposed by this Amendment. It seemed to him that the objections to it were somewhat technical in their character. Whatever the Party effect of the Amendment might be, he did not care one jot; but he did care for a certain principle which the House desired to assert, not only against poor men, who had some of them suffered in other ways and in other penalties for the offences they had committed, but also against those men who were far worse than they, being the instruments and means of corruption.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 40; Noes 87: Majority 47.—(Div. List, No. 139.)

MR. MONK said, that if the House had adopted the Amendment of the hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers), he certainly should not have stood up to move the rejection of the clause; but the House was generally so very fair and just towards all persons whose cases were brought before it, that he must ask for its attention for one moment, while he pointed out—though he could not do it more forcibly than it had been done by the hon. and learned Gentlemen the Member for Plymouth (Mr. Edward Clarke)—the injustice done to the unfortunate householder who was corrupted, while the House allowed those who had corrupted him to go scot free. There was a penalty of disfranchisement for seven years against all voters who had been scheduled. He (Mr. Monk) had challenged the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General in Committee — a challenge which was not accepted—to state to the House whether it was not the case that on several Election Commissions the Commissioners had made very imperfect inquiries concerning the corruption which had taken place. As soon as these gentlemen had discovered what the amount of money was that had been expended, they had thought it not worth their while to spend their time in discovering the names of those who had taken bribes, and the consequence was that, in some cases, they admitted that at least 1,000 or more voters had taken payment for their votes who had not been scheduled, as they had not been called before them for examination. In other cases, every person who had received a bribe had been scheduled. The result was that, in the first class of cases to which he referred, the thousands of persons who had been bribed would go free through not having been scheduled; whereas, in the other class of cases, thousands of persons would be disfranchised for seven years under this clause. He would put it to the House whether it did not show something like a vindictive act on the part of Parliament to inflict this penalty on these unfortunate voters, while it allowed those who had found the money and paid the voters to go free? The question had been raised by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes), who had moved an Amendment. He (Mr. Monk),

for his own part, had accepted the Amendment at that time, because the penalty under it was much less severe than that first inserted in the Bill. It had been first proposed to disfranchise those voters for life; but, when he saw the leniency which had just been shown by Members on both sides of the House towards those who had been guilty of corruption and had been scheduled by the Commissioners, and who were notwithstanding eligible for a seat in that House, he trusted the House would now extend the same leniency towards those unfortunate voters whom it was proposed to punish by the Bill. He begged to move the omission of the clause.

Amendment proposed, in page 12, line 5, to leave out Clause 28.—(*Mr. Monk.*)

Question proposed, "That Clause 28 stand part of the Bill."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the House would recollect that they had discussed this matter very fully in Committee, he having, at the time, been prepared to leave the matter entirely in the hands of the Committee. Having passed the most lenient sentence that had ever been passed by any Legislature on corrupt electors—having reduced the period of disfranchisement in the Bill from life to seven years from the date of the Report of the Commissioners—the right hon. Gentleman now proposed to go further, and declare that there should be no punishment at all. The effect of the Amendment would be to say that the scheduled voters should receive no punishment at all; and of these persons, he believed there were no fewer than 2,400 in Gloucester. The hon. Member asked immunity from punishment for these persons, who were almost as guilty as the persons who had given the bribes and received punishment. Did the hon. Member mean to say that while they allowed the persons who were bribed to go without punishment, they should impose this penalty on the persons who bribed?

MR. MONK said, he was sure the hon. and learned Gentleman did not wish to misrepresent him. He had alluded to the vote the House had just passed, giving immunity to those scheduled as bribers, and who were to be allowed to come forward as candidates for seats in that House.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that the House, under circumstances of hope for the future, had declared that it would make the disfranchisement of persons bribed seven years instead of for life; and they were now asked to go further and tell the new constituencies—constituencies in some places taking the old borough voters into the counties—for the first time, that bribery was no offence at all, and was not to be punished. They might make the punishment in the future as light as it had been in the past; but would they not be incurring a grave danger if they told the new electors that this Parliament, which had passed an Act for the prevention of corrupt practices, was of opinion that no punishment for the offence in question should be given at all? He thought that the seven years' disability—the penalty fixed by the clause—was a lenient one.

MR. LYULPH STANLEY said, he felt great disappointment at the alternative moods of severity and indulgence of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General. He regretted the decision the House had come to in the last division, and he was of opinion that there was great inconvenience in their now proceeding to attach a penalty of seven years' disfranchisement upon the ordinary person bribed—which was the only penalty which could be attached to him—whilst they refused to attach any penalty to the other class—namely, the bribers. He could not help thinking that when they considered that the persons guilty of paying bribes generally belonged to the class who sought admission into the House, the public outside would comment rather severely upon the different measures of justice they meted out to those who sat with themselves and the wretched people who accepted the bribes that those bribers offered to them. To say to a man who went into a town with money in his pocket, and used that money at an election for the purpose of bribery—to say to him—"Because you have been guilty of bribery, you shall not have a vote, but you shall be eligible for election," was really no punishment at all. The proper penalty to mete out to the man who bribed was to deprive him of any political advan-

tage which he might get in connection with it. That the House had refused to do; and he (Mr. Lyulph Stanley) should not like to stand before any assembly and say that he would punish those who had taken bribes by disfranchisement for seven years without punishing the persons who bribed. If they were to let bygones be bygones in the case of the rich bribers, they should do the same in the case of the poor voters who had accepted bribes.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he thought his hon. Friend (Mr. Monk) was taking a very singular course in desiring to inflict a greater penalty than that contained in the Amendment of the hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers). The House did not accept that Amendment, although there was a great deal to be said for the severer penalty on the briber than on the bribed. They inflicted in this clause exactly the same punishment upon the briber as the bribed. The hon. Member for Oldham (Mr. Lyulph Stanley) said that it was no punishment at all—that, as everybody knew, the men who gave the bribes were often strangers, and contrived to avoid detection; whereas those who received the bribes were poor voters who were more readily got at. What his hon. Friend really wanted was to inflict a greater punishment upon the briber than the bribed; and as he had been disappointed in obtaining that, he chose to turn round and say that he would not punish anybody at all. Was that a very wise course? He could quite understand that his hon. Friend was disappointed at the result of the last division; but because the House refused to go to a greater length of severity, he turned suddenly round and said—"Because we cannot do that, we must say to all the constituencies—'Neither the briber nor the bribed shall have any punishment at all.'" He could sympathize with his hon. Friend the Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk) with the compassion he must feel for a number of these unfortunate people. He could quite understand that, but he could not understand the severer virtue of his hon. Friend the Member for Oldham, who could not have the same inducement for entertaining a similar feeling. This was, no doubt, a moderate penalty, but it was a penalty applied to the briber and the bribed alike; and he hoped the House would not, on account of the last division, give these offenders a clean bill of health and allow them to enjoy absolute immunity.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS said, he should support the Motion of the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk). He had always voted in favour of the remission of these penalties, and his object in moving his Amendment was to carry out the principle that what was sauce for the goose should be sauce for the gander. The House had not accepted his Amendment, and had he been successful he would still have supported the omission of the clause. He thought that these unfortunate people had already been sufficiently punished, and he should have been glad to see all the electors placed on the same footing and able to vote at the next Election. He had been anxious, in his Amendment, to amend the clause by simply putting the penalty upon the scheduled persons from the time of the commission of the offence, and not from the date of the Report of the Commission. If the hon. Member for Gloucester went to a division he should certainly support him.

MR. GILES said, he had also supported the Amendment moved by the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk), in the earlier stage of the Bill, to strike out Clause 3. He had done so on the ground that, as this Bill was a new departure, there should be no retrospective punishment. Surely the Act of 1883 provided ample punishment enough for anything that might happen in the future, and it ought to be sufficient to keep everybody straight—candidate as well as voter. He therefore hoped that the House would accept the Amendment, and wipe out the stigma which the Report of the Commissioners some years ago had inflicted upon a certain class of voters.

MR. EDWARD CLARKE said, he would like to say that it was not in consequence of the defeat of the previous Amendment that he should vote in support of leaving out the clause. The choice was between inflicting no punishment at all, or of inflicting it as it was laid down in this clause. If it were passed as it stood it would certainly be a discreditable clause; because, notwithstanding the two divisions which had been taken against it, it established inequalities in the application of punishment. It purported to punish persons for seven

years who had been found guilty of corruption. Those who had committed the same offence within the seven years were excluded, while those who were reported by the Commission of 1880 were included. There was also a second inequality, because the House did not venture to apply the same penalty to some 10 or 11 persons who had personal influence on both sides of the House as their victims got. It was all very well to say that all were equally treated, but that was only a phrase; because those who had been equally guilty since the Report of the Commission of 1880 received no punishment whatever under the Bill. If, then, they could not have fair and equal administration of punishment, they ought to say that, starting from the Corrupt Practices Act of 1882, there should be a clear slate.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, that he had voted against the Amendment of the hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers); but he should vote in favour of the Amendment which had been moved by the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk). It was not because he had any sympathy with bribery; but he failed to see that anything could be said in favour of a law which only reached a small portion of those who had been found guilty of the offence. He would certainly be in favour of a stringent Bribery Law if he thought it would be applied impartially to the bribers as well as the bribed. Anybody who had paid any attention to the Bribery Law of this country must be aware that it only reached a few scandalous examples, and that more by luck and accident than anything else; while it left unpunished a large number of men who were just as flagrantly guilty, but had had the good luck not to have determined opponents who insisted upon putting the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act in force against them. There was really a good deal of cant and humbug about the method of dealing with this question. He wished that, for a few minutes, the House could be transformed into a Palace of Truth, in order that hon. Members, including some of the occupants of the Treasury Bench, might relate their electoral experiences. If such a phenomenon were ever likely to occur, he should wish that two of the first Gentlemen subjected to the influence of it should be the hon. and learned Attorney General and the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) rose to Order. If the hon. Member opposite (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) meant to impute that he (the Attorney General) had been guilty of bribery, he hoped the hon. Gentleman would have the candour to say so directly. All he would say was that he had neither directly nor indirectly sanctioned or allowed corrupt practices on his behalf.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, that what he had stated was that he should be glad if all the Members of that House were to relate their electoral experiences, and that among the first to do so might be the Attorney General and the Secretary of State for the Home Department.

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member intends, either directly or indirectly, to impute any conduct of the kind to the hon. and learned Gentleman (the Attorney General) and the right hon. Gentleman (Sir William Harcourt), he is clearly out of Order, and he must withdraw the imputation.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I certainly had no knowledge of any practices of the kind.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he would at once withdraw the expression. He was only connecting his statement with a general remark that he would be in favour of a stringent Bribery Law if he thought it would be impartially administered, and that it would reach the bribers as well as the bribed. One of the reasons why he was in favour of allowing bygones to be bygones was that in Ireland there were a large number of persons who had been allowed to reach the highest positions in the country, who, it was perfectly notorious, had obtained their seats in the House of Commons by gross and extensive bribery. He presumed that the Speaker would rule him out of Order if he were to make any statement with regard to any existing Members of the Irish Judicial Bench, and therefore he would not do so; but he could name three eminent Judges in Ireland, one of whom was no longer on the Judicial Bench, who had gained their seats by notorious and open bribery. Judge Keogh, for instance, became Member for Athlone

by open, extensive, and flagrant bribery; and yet he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had been present at an election inquiry in Dublin, in which that same individual delivered a most edifying homily against the wickedness of electoral corruption. He had been so much struck by the unblushing hypocrisy manifested on that occasion that he determined to make a protest against it if ever he had the opportunity. For these reasons he should support the Amendment of the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk), and he should continue to vote in the same direction, until he saw a stringent Bribery Law established which would punish all offenders equally, whether high or low.

MR. BRYCE said, he had voted for the Amendment of the hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers), and he regretted the decision which the House had arrived at. He should regret it still more if it were made the excuse for the perpetration of another folly and another injustice. He could not support the argument used by some hon. Members, and especially by the hon. Member for Oldham (Mr. Lyulph Stanley)—namely, that because they had not done complete justice, they should do a piece of injustice; and because the House had had not punished, as it ought to have punished, the briber, therefore they ought not to punish the bribed. The hon. Member for Southampton talked of "these poor people," meaning those who had been scheduled for corruption; but those who received bribes were the most degraded class of the electors, and were persons entitled to no sympathy or indulgence from the House, and, as far as in them lay, had done everything they could to degrade and demoralize our electoral system; and if the House was particularly bound to select any moment for showing its condemnation of corrupt practices, it was a moment like this when they were largely extending the franchise.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 82; Noes 18: Majority 64.—(Div. List, No. 140.)

Further Consideration of Bill *adjourned* till *To-morrow*.

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Resolutions [27th April] *reported*.

First Resolution *postponed*.

Second Resolution *agreed to*.

Third Resolution read a first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Resolution be read a second time."

MR. SEXTON said, that amongst the questions raised on this Vote in Committee there was one which he had stated that he should have to refer to again on the Report. On examining the details of the Vote, he had been surprised to find that, while a residence for the senior Clerk of the House was provided, the second Clerk was without that accommodation. It appeared to him that the second Clerk of the House required such accommodation as much as the senior Clerk, inasmuch as he had quite as long hours and as much work to get through; indeed, as far as his experience went, he had rather more. It had been pointed out that one officer of the House of Lords had 16 rooms at his disposal. For those reasons, he asked the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury if he could hold out any hope that the gentleman he alluded to would be furnished with a residence?

MR. HIBBERT said, that unfortunately there was but too little space for the Business that had to be performed in respect of the House of Commons. With respect to the question raised to-night on that Vote by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), he had stated in Committee that the accommodation that had been referred to in the case of Clerks of the House would be a matter to be considered by those who had to deal with those questions. He wished, in reply to a question put to him yesterday, on the subject of the accommodation required by Members and their secretaries, the latter having been turned out of the Tea Room, in consequence of the new arrangements made by Mr. Speaker at the commencement of the Session, to state that he was desired by Mr. Speaker to say that he was desirous of providing, if possible, accommodation of the kind asked for, and that he was in communication with the authorities of the House of Lords with the object of obtaining suitable rooms to be used for the purpose indicated. Mr. Speaker would also consider whether tables and other appliances for writing should not be placed in the

Central Lobby as requested, or in some other convenient position.

MR. SEXTON said, he could assure the hon. Gentleman that Members would be generally obliged by the steps that had been taken.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he had drawn the attention of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury to a matter that he hoped would not be lost sight of—namely, the difficulty of intercommunication between the different parts of the House, which was a source of considerable inconvenience to Members. He had stated before that it was easier to learn in a newspaper office in Fleet Street what was going on in the House of Commons than in the Smoking Room, or any other department of the House. He had learned privately and with great satisfaction that some steps had been taken in regard to that matter, and he trusted that the inconvenience referred to would be as soon as possible removed. There was another point to which he would ask the attention of the Secretary to the Treasury, by whom he hoped it would be brought before the authorities of the House. He believed his hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had mentioned it on one occasion; and he would now ask the hon. Gentleman whether, in the accommodation now being provided for writing purposes for Members, he would endeavour to see his way to placing typewriters at their disposal? Now, many hon. Members were obliged to do a great deal of writing, and some of them were in the habit of using those machines, and the habit made it rather laborious to write in the usual way. He understood that when this subject was brought forward on a previous occasion, a promise had been given by the Secretary to the Treasury that it should be considered. He trusted the hon. Gentleman would take the matter seriously into consideration, because there were five or six Members of the House of Commons who had a very large amount of writing to get through, for whom these type-writers would effect a considerable saving of time.

MR. HIBBERT: The matter shall be brought before the proper authorities.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolution *agreed to.*

Mr. Hibbert

Subsequent Resolutions *agreed to.*

Postponed Resolution to be taken into Consideration upon *Thursday.*

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND) [PAYMENT OF ADDITIONAL REVISING BARRISTERS].

Resolution [April 27] *reported.*

"That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the Salaries of any Additional Revising Barristers, and of any person temporarily acting as assistant to a Clerk of the Peace, who may be appointed under the provisions of any Act of the present Session for amending the Law relating to the Registration of Parliamentary Voters in Ireland."

Resolution *agreed to.*

POST OFFICE SITES [PURCHASE OF LAND AND EXPENSES].

Resolution [April 27] *reported.*

"That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of sums required for the purchase of lands, and for the costs and expenses which may be incurred by the Postmaster General in carrying into effect the provisions of any Act of the present Session to enable Her Majesty's Postmaster General to acquire lands for the public service."

Resolution *agreed to.*

INDUSTRIES (IRELAND).

NOMINATION OF SELECT COMMITTEE. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question, "That the Select Committee on Industries (Ireland) do consist of Twenty-four Members."—(*Sir Eardley Wilmot.*)

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

MR. SHEIL said, it would not be necessary for him to detain the House at any length in stating the object of the Amendment standing in his name on the Paper, because the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had already stated the reason which could be adduced against the proposed construction of this Committee. But perhaps he might be allowed to point out that the real and main objection to the Committee was, that the number of its Members which represented the Irish Party on those Benches was not in proportion to the remainder of the Committee. He might also say that the hon. Baronet

(Sir Eardley Wilmot), who moved the appointment of the Committee, was entitled to the thanks of hon. Gentlemen on those Benches for the great care and interest taken by him in Irish matters; it was owing to the hon. Baronet that the hon. Member for the City of Cork had been appointed, with a number of other Members representing the Irish Party, to sit on that Committee. He understood that the Government would not agree to the number of Members representing that Party exceeding six, which, in his opinion, was insufficient for effective representation of their views on the subject of inquiry. He rose, therefore, to say that if the Government were not prepared to agree to that number being increased, it would be the duty of himself and those with whom he was associated to oppose the appointment of the Committee on the proposed basis. He begged to move the Amendment standing in his name.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "Twenty-four," in order to insert the words "Twenty-five,"—(*Mr. Sheil,*) —instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words 'Twenty-four' stand part of the Question."

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he had rather understood the other night that the feeling on the part of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) was that the Committee was not to go on, and that his objection was based on the constitution of the Committee rather than the number of its Members. However that might be, he (Sir William Harcourt) was unable to agree to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Meath (Mr. Sheil). It seemed to him that the Committee was very fairly constituted—in other words, he could not accept the argument that one particular section of Irish Members should represent an undue proportion of the number of Members of that Committee. It was necessary, in the construction of a Committee, to consider the resources of Ireland generally; they should have regard to information on the subject from whatever quarter it might come, and not in connection with any particular section of the House. Therefore, he thought the constitution of the Committee must remain as proposed. Without desiring to show the least disrespect to any particular section of the Representatives of Ireland, he said that, in a matter of this kind, the Government ought to have a general regard to the Representatives of the country.

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT said, notwithstanding what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department, he would make an appeal to the generosity of the Government to allow the Committee to be appointed in a form that would be satisfactory to hon. Gentlemen on those Benches; and, with that object in view, he asked the Government to allow another Member of the Nationalist Party to serve upon it. The number of the Committee proposed by the Government was 24, of whom the proportion of the Nationalist Party was six. He urged upon the right hon. Gentleman that there was no political question involved in the matter, and they wanted to enter upon the work with reference only to the prosperity of Ireland; and certainly he thought that even if the Government consented to the proposal of the hon. Member for Meath, the 18 Members of the Committee who were not of the Nationalist Party would be well able, in respect of numbers, to prevent any Members of the Nationalist Party turning the Committee into a piece of political machinery. There was the strongest interest felt in this matter, which persons of all political opinions regarded as a step in the direction of increasing the prosperity and welfare of Ireland, and it was most desirable that the labours of the Committee should proceed; because, although they might not get through their work this year, as he had pointed out on the last occasion when this matter was before the House, they had three months before them in which a great deal might be done. There was a large body of evidence to be taken, and to avoid delay he strongly urged upon the Government to accede to the proposal of the hon. Member for Meath (Mr. Sheil). He repeated that the greatest concern was felt in this matter. He had received letters from all parts of the country, beseeching him not to give way, to show his courage and perseverance, not to allow the opposition to dishearten him, to go on with what he had undertaken, to appeal to the Government, and to throw upon them the whole responsibility, if they

declined, for the sake of adding another Member to the Committee, to allow it to go to work. If they did that, he said it would go forth to the country and Ireland that they had not any sincere desire to assist, promote, or encourage those who had for their object the material prosperity of the Irish people.

DR. LYONS said, he would also appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department to assent to the Amendment. He asked him not, for the sake of a single additional Member who could not really alter the constitution of the Committee, to jeopardize the attainment of the object in view. They wanted a Committee capable of getting through a great deal of work; and he would point out that the Gentleman whom it was desired to add to the Committee was one of the most hard-working men in the House; he knew that he was a man willing effectively to do any amount of work in connection with this inquiry. The matter was almost settled, and he would urge the right hon. Gentleman not to risk the loss of their object by resisting the proposal of the hon. Member for Meath, which would cause in Ireland a very great amount of disappointment. He had received letters which showed that the most intense regret would be felt if the Committee fell through. If this one name were added, the Committee would probably be in a position to go to work in a very short time.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department had not met the Amendment of the hon. Member for Meath (Mr. Sheil) in at all a satisfactory way. He was obliged to say that the Government had placed every obstacle possible in the way of this Committee, with the result that the settlement of it had been postponed from time to time, and week after week. [SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Why did you move the adjournment?] It was not he who moved the adjournment of the debate. The Committee was appointed on the 10th of March, and the adjournment was moved for the first time by an Irish Member on Friday last, the 24th of April, so that the Government had very nearly six weeks' delay to account for. That time had been wasted by the Government; and the effect of it would be that the Committee, if it went on at all, would be driven off to a time when it would have very little chance of going to work. He wished to say that the hon. Baronet (Sir Eardley Wilmot) who introduced this matter had recommended himself to the affection and confidence of the Irish people by his exertions on their behalf; and he was sure that those exertions would always be remembered by them with feelings of gratitude. But the hon. Baronet had that night renewed his exertions on their behalf, and had, moreover, truly expressed the feeling of the people of Ireland, when he declared, with reference to the attitude taken up by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, that the whole responsibility in this matter rested upon Her Majesty's Government. There was not a single claim that the Irish Members had made that had not been strongly resisted by the Government. The hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), first of all, asked the noble Lord the Member for Flintshire (Lord Richard Grosvenor) when this Committee was going to be appointed. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) did not attach any bad motive to the noble Lord; but whether the noble Lord's actions were deliberate and intentional or not, the fact remained that the Committee was postponed day after day, in spite of the questions upon the subject which were almost daily addressed from the Irish Benches. Then they came to the composition of the Committee. This was a Committee which was for the sole examination of the industrial resources of Ireland. Surely it was a Committee which should consist exclusively of Irish Members; or, at all events, it was a Committee on which, unquestionably, the large predominating influence should be Irish. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir William Harcourt) objected to the Members of the Irish Party claiming an undue share of representation upon the Committee. The right hon. Gentleman had denied their right to speak as the Representatives of the majority of the Irish people. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) did not think the right hon. Gentleman would do that after the month of next November. He thought that a General Election would be quite sufficient to prove even to the right hon. Gentleman that the Members of the Party led by

the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) did represent the overwhelming majority of the Irish people. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) thought that the Committee should largely consist of Members drawn from the Irish Party. It was quite evident that the right hon. Gentleman would much rather prefer that Ireland should be deprived of the benefit of this Committee, than that the Representatives of the Irish people should have their due share of the Members of the Committee. The hon. Baronet (Sir Eardley Wilmot) must not be daunted by the attitude taken up by the Government. The Irish Members heartily echoed the frank and incontestible statement of the hon. Baronet, that all responsibility for the failure of this Committee would lie in the hands of the Government.

LORD RICHARD GROSVENOR said, he wished to say a few words on the subject of the delay which the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had said occurred in the constitution of this Committee. The nomination of a Committee of this importance necessarily occupied a considerable time. Hon. Members had to be seen personally, and asked if they would serve. That there was some delay he freely admitted; but he maintained that there was no more delay than occurred in the nomination of every Committee of this kind. He was anxious to secure a thoroughly representative Committee, and he used his best endeavours to secure that end. It must be borne in mind that the nomination of the Committee was on the Paper for the 30th March, and that since that time the delay had not been occasioned by Members of the Government, but by Members of the Irish Party themselves. He hoped hon. Members would be good enough to remember that only last night the main argument of the speech of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) against this Committee was that there was not sufficient time this year to deal with the subject. The hon. Gentleman did not rely on the question of the constitution of the Committee. As regarded the addition of this name, hon. Members would also remember that, to meet their views, the Government did agree to add another Member of their Party, and also, in accordance with the wishes of the Members of the Irish Party, the Committee was strengthened by the addition of two right hon. Gentlemen—one from each of the Front Benches. As a matter of fact, the Committee was constituted as far as possible to meet the views of hon. Members; and he thought that anybody, looking at the Committee, would confess that its constitution was extremely fair, and that the Party to which hon. Members opposite belonged was very fully represented. The Government had raised no objection to the appointment of the Committee; but, on the contrary, had done their best to secure its appointment. He did not think that any blame whatever attached to the Government in the matter.

CAPTAIN AYLMER said, he was sure that no one who had had to deal with the noble Lord opposite (Lord Richard Grosvenor) would blame him in any way. The hon. Baronet (Sir Eardley Wilmot) and himself (Captain Aylmer) had found the noble Lord most courteous in his dealings in this matter. But the noble Lord could not say that the Government were not to blame. The Government had done their best all through to kill this Committee. Four years ago the Prime Minister refused to grant a Committee of this kind, although he (Captain Aylmer) got up a Petition, signed by three-fourths of the Irish Members, in favour of an inquiry such as it was now proposed to hold by this Committee. The Government had only assented to the appointment of the Committee now because it gave the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) an opportunity of saying there was no time in which to make the investigation. He (Captain Aylmer) knew it never would be passed this Session, and that it never was the intention of the Government that it should pass. If the Government had intended that a Committee of this kind should be appointed, they would have appointed one when they were asked in writing, four years ago, by three-fourths of the Irish Members.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he wished to supplement the information given by the noble Lord the Member for Flintshire (Lord Richard Grosvenor). When this Committee was being nominated, the hon. Baronet (Sir Eardley Wilmot) consulted the Party to which he (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) belonged, and

the hon. Baronet's own suggestion was that seven Members of the Irish Party should be appointed upon the Committee. To that proposal the Party assented; and to save the Government the trouble of making the selection, a list of seven Members of the Party was sent to the noble Lord (Lord Richard Grosvenor).

LORD RICHARD GROSVENOR: The hon. Gentleman is not quite accurate. A list of six Members was supplied to me.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, that certainly seven was the number suggested by the hon. Baronet (Sir Eardley Wilmot); and he (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) had supposed that a list of seven names was sent to the noble Lord. When the nomination of the Committee, however, appeared on the Paper, they found a totally different Committee from that which they were prepared to find. There were only four of their Party, and these were swamped by a large number of Members from all parts of House. He did not object to the appointment of English Members on the Committee. There were many English Members whose assistance the Irish Party would be glad to have, because they knew that those Gentlemen would come on the Committee with a serious intention of promoting its object. But everyone would see that the Irish Members were now merely swamped by hon. Members who cared nothing whatever about Irish industries. Let him remind the noble Lord of a precedent of only two or three years' standing. It would be in the recollection of the noble Lord that two or three years ago a Committee was appointed, under the Chairmanship of the junior Member for Leeds (Mr. Herbert Gladstone), to deal with a question mainly connected with Irish interests. On that occasion the hon. Gentleman nominated a Committee consisting almost exclusively of Irish Members; and the hon. Gentleman expressed a hope that that would be the beginning of such a practice in the House. The practice, however, had not been followed since; and there was a striking deviation from this principle in the case of this very Committee, which was concerned exclusively with the interests of the Irish people.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said, it was a most extraordinary thing that the Government would not accept the extra name which the Irish Members desired to have placed on this Committee. He thought it would be generally admitted that the Committee was one which concerned Ireland alone, and that, therefore, the wishes of the Irish Members on the matter should be respected. If the right hon. Gentleman (Sir William Harcourt), who now represented the Government, was as anxious as the Irish Members that this Committee should be appointed, and do some good work, he would not object to the name which they proposed to have placed on the Committee. Certainly, the number of Members from Ireland whose names were already upon the Committee did not appear to him to be at all sufficient for the requirements of the case; and, after mature deliberation, he and his hon. Friends had arrived at the conclusion that the appointment of six Members of their Party would be much more calculated to insure the success of the objects for which the Committee was formed than five Members would be. If the right hon. Gentleman killed this Committee, because he would not allow this extra name to be put upon it, his action would be viewed in Ireland with a great deal of disapprobation; and certainly the verdict of the Irish people would be that the Government were not in earnest in their desire to promote this Committee, or else they would not have endangered its existence by refusing to allow this one other name to be put upon it. He could not understand why the Government should refuse to assent to this extra name; surely it could not be a matter which concerned them very much. On the other hand, it was a matter which concerned Ireland and the people he and his hon. Friends represented very much indeed. Therefore, they appealed to the Government to give them six Members upon the Committee instead of five Members.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said, he wished to support the appeal which had been made by hon. Members opposite—namely, that the Government should assent to this very modest and very just proposition. He did not think the Secretary of State for the Home Department could really have looked into the matter himself, or else he would have seen the reasonableness of the position assumed

by hon. Members opposite. It was proposed that this Committee should consist of twenty-five Members, and all that the Irish Members asked was that they should have six Members upon it. The hon. Members opposite might not be numerically strong in the House; but, undoubtedly, they had a very large body of the people behind them in Ireland; and he thought that anybody who considered the facts would admit that the request of those hon. Gentlemen was a very moderate one. He thought that this was just one of the instances in which the Government did themselves very much harm. It was quite clear that however much the Government might be anxious to obtain this Committee, it would be said that by the original delay which took place, and by their refusal to grant the addition of this one Member, they did not desire the Committee should be appointed at all; and he could not help expressing the opinion that this would be said with some justice. Unless a Committee of this sort was entirely representative of all sections of the people, he agreed with the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) that its appointment would serve no good purpose. He thought there was time, even this Session, for a certain amount of good work to be done; or, at all events, for the foundation to be laid for a future Committee in some future Session of Parliament; and, therefore, he appealed to the Government to make this simple concession, which would smooth the way for the appointment of the Committee, and which would show that they really desired that the Committee should be held, but which, if they refused, would do them a great deal of harm in Ireland.

MR. SEXTON said, it seemed that the Government had made up their minds that they would not say any more on this subject.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: We cannot say any more.

MR. SEXTON said, that the suggestion of the Government was that the Committee should consist of twenty-four Members, and out of that number twelve should be English Members. If a similar Committee were appointed on a corresponding English subject, how many of its Members would be Irishmen? They had an example lately, when the Committee, on the Registration (Occupation Voters) Bill was appointed. There was not a solitary Irish Member on that Committee. Where the subject was English, Irish Members usually did not press for representation, unless the matter to be taken in hand had some bearing or other on the interests of their country. Even then they were satisfied with a nominal representation. There were twelve Irish Members nominally on this Committee; but the Government proposed that only five should belong to the Party led by the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell.) The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir William Harcourt) called that a section of the Irish Party. They considered themselves to be the only Irish Party in the House. The other Members for Ireland were the obedient followers of the two English Parties in the House. They had no separate existence; they had no soul, no conscience, nor line of action of their own. That being the case, he declined to recognize them as representative; and if the House waited until next January, when hon. Members came back to Parliament, those who said that the Irish Party were a "section" would see whether they were so or not. He could tell the right hon. Gentleman that the return of the Irish Party to that House, not as a section, or as a fraction, but as the acknowledged and overwhelming majority of the people of Ireland, was a much more certain thing than the return of the right hon. Gentleman's Government, or the return of the right hon. Gentleman himself. What were the Government afraid of? What horrible possibilities did they see in the addition of this one Member? The Committee would consist of twenty-five Members, only six of whom would belong to the Irish Party. Did not the right hon. Gentleman know perfectly well that, in connection with any proposal brought before the Committee, he could rely upon the solid vote of nineteen? What, then, was the right hon. Gentleman afraid of? The hon. Member for the City of Cork was naturally unwilling to enter upon laborious and long proceedings in this Committee with only four of his Colleagues, and was of opinion that five was the least number he could accept. The hon. Member believed that without six Members of his Party they could not hope to elicit the

proper kind of evidence. He (Mr. Sexton) could come to no other conclusion, from the obstinate resistance of the Government on this question of one Member, infinitesimal to them, but of the greatest importance to Ireland, than that, whatever the professions of the Government might be, they were desirous in their hearts that the Committee should not be appointed. Let the House consider the delay which had occurred. The Committee was assented to by the Government last year. Since then, more than half a-year had elapsed. If the Government had allowed the Irish Members to have the representation they desired, the Committee would have been appointed. Even if they had allowed the Irish Members to have six Members, it would have been appointed any time within the last six weeks; but day after day had passed away, and the appointment of the Committee had been staved off, and now the House found itself asked to enter upon a grave and weighty inquisition on a most important question in what he might call the last hours of a dying Parliament. What could be done between now and the end of the Session? It was true that the hon. Member for the City of Cork had objected to the number of Representatives allowed him; but the delay had been so great that another objection had arisen. There were only twenty-four Members proposed; but what assurance had the House that these Members would come back to Parliament in the General Election? He might not err on the score of rashness if he said that at least half of them might not return. Was the hon. Member for the City of Dublin, with all his chances of life, and with all the vicissitudes of politics upon him—was he ready to commit himself to an inquiry of this kind, when the Tories might come with their shears and cut the web of his intentions? Suppose the House rose in July or August, and Parliament died immediately, the Committee could not ask Parliament to reappoint it; and the result would be that the whole thing would have to be taken again *de novo* next year, and in the absence of a number of men who had lost their seats, and would not be able to give the new Committee the advantage of the study and investigation they had given to the question. The Committee would then be burdened with a number of hon. Members who had not had an opportunity of considering the question. He thought the hon. Member for the City of Cork had come to a right conclusion, when he asserted that more harm than good would result from a hasty consideration of this subject. He believed the investigation would be much better begun in the favouring atmosphere of a reformed Parliament, and under circumstances which would render the right hon. Gentleman opposite politically more genial and arithmetically less rigorous.

Mr. MOLLOY said, that the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir William Harcourt) could not reply to the hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. Sexton); and, in order to give him an opportunity of doing so, the best thing that could be done would be to move the adjournment of the debate. The right hon. Gentleman would then be able to state, on behalf of the Government, whether he intended to accede to the demand of the Irish Party.

Colonel NOLAN: Do not move it.

Mr. MOLLOY said, he was anxious to put an end to a debate which seemed to be useless, and which was keeping them out of bed for no reason.

Colonel NOLAN: Do not move it.

Mr. MOLLOY: I move that the debate be now adjourned.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Molloy.*)

Mr. LEAMY said, he hoped his hon. Friend (Mr. Molloy) would withdraw that Motion. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir William Harcourt) had stated that the Government had already spoken; but the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) was present, and he would be able to give them the answer they wanted. He (Mr. Leamy) would ask the hon. and learned Gentleman what harm it could do anyone to give this additional Member? Could he find a satisfactory answer to that? It was an extraordinary thing to say that the Committee should be refused because the Irish Members wanted to have this extra name added to it. What objection could there be to this proposal, and would the Government tell them why it was they would not accept it? If it were accepted, the Com-

mittee might be at once formed, and could proceed to business in a day or two.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, that of course he could not refuse the invitation of the hon. Member who had moved the adjournment (Mr. Molloy). He did not know what further explanation there was to give—he did not know whether the hon. Gentleman had heard the speech of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) or some other hon. Gentleman who had spoken opposite; but he had said that his distinct view was that the Gentlemen who belonged to the Party that sat on these Benches were the only Gentlemen who represented Ireland, and who ought to represent Ireland on the Committee. [Mr. SEXTON: The only Irish Party.] That was their view; he did not know whether it was the view of his hon. Friend the Member for Peterborough (Mr. Sydney Buxton); he did not think that hon. Member would accept the statement. It was exactly because this Motion was made from that point of view that the Government could not assent to it. The Government were dealing with the present Parliament; they had not powers of prediction as to the future Parliament; they were dealing with the present; and it would not be decent for them to accept, as the foundation of the appointment of a Committee on Irish Industries, the proposition that a number of Gentlemen, whom he had no doubt were very influential as Irish Representatives, were the sole Representatives of Ireland in respect to those industries. He, therefore, hoped the hon. Gentleman the Member for Peterborough would reconsider the observations he had addressed to the Government in the light of that statement. They must consider the constitution of the Committee, he did not say in reference to a "section" of a Party—he would not use that word, and if he had used it he had not intended it in any disparaging sense. The Government were obliged to consider the matter not from the point of view of hon. Gentlemen opposite, but as a whole. They had come to an agreement, and this was really the foundation of the whole thing; they were anxious that the Committee should be appointed, and they had come to an agreement with the hon. Baronet who proposed the Committee (Sir Eardley Wilmot) and the hon. Member who, in these matters, acted as the Representative of hon. Members opposite, as to the basis of the Committee, and the Government were prepared last Friday to pass it through. The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), however, got up and opposed the appointment to some extent on the grounds of its constitution, but mainly on the ground that it would have no good result, but, on the contrary, would be rather injurious. Everyone who remembered the speech of the hon. Member for the City of Cork would remember that that was the position he took up. The hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had repeated that argument with great emphasis, and had said that to appoint a Committee at the fag end of a Parliament would be a useless and injurious operation. In the face of that, what was the use of hon. Members endeavouring to force upon the Government the responsibility for the Committee having fallen through? The hon. Member for the City of Cork had moved the adjournment of the debate the other night—he had not proposed to add another Member, or to take any course of that kind. The hon. Member had told the House that he thought the Committee would do no good, and that had led to its being postponed to Tuesday. On Tuesday this proposal was made, which was, in fact, a departure from and an overthrowing of an agreement which had been come to by all the Parties on the subject. It would be utterly impossible to do the Business of the House if, when Committees were appointed by regular agreement between all the Parties, they should be thrown over at the pleasure of one Party, as this Committee had been, by the hon. Member for the City of Cork, first in his Motion for Adjournment, and now in this Motion for an alteration of the constitution of the Committee. It was from no desire on the part of the Government to prevent the constitution and appointment of this Committee, but rather for the purpose of standing by the agreement all Parties had come to, that the Government resisted the proposal of hon. Members opposite. The whole history of the attitude of the Government showed that their desire had been to abide by the agreement arrived at between their own Representatives, the right hon. Baronet who had moved the Committee, and the

Representatives of hon. Members opposite. If that agreement had been carried out the Committee would have been appointed last Friday; and he (Sir William Harcourt) could not, on the part of the Government, accept any responsibility for any failure which might have resulted from a departure from the original agreement.

MR. MARUM said, he did not think the arguments which the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir William Harcourt) had addressed to the House were at all sound. A Member returned to this House by any constituency was the Representative of that constituency only; he was presumed by the law to be simply a Member of Parliament; and therefore it was not open to a Minister of the Crown to say that the addition of a Member like the hon. Member for Ennis was objectionable, for the reason that he represented a particular Party in the House. So far as that statement was concerned the right hon. Gentleman ought to withdraw it.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I was not the author of that argument; the hon. Member is distinctly proposed as a Member of the Party opposite. He is not proposed by me, but by his political Friends.

MR. MARUM said, he thought, however, that there had been a precedent set that night which was very inconvenient. On previous occasions the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) had brought forward questions of this kind; and, after a great deal of argument and delay, concessions were obtained from the Government. As concession was, therefore, to be expected in the end, it was to be regretted that the Government had not expedited matters by acquiescing in the proposal made, or by coming to some arrangement as to this Committee. He could assure the Government that the falling through of the Committee would be a very serious matter. The name of the hon. Baronet (Sir Eardley Wilmot) was revered in Ireland for the manner in which he had brought forward this question, the question being one which had very closely and earnestly engaged the attention of the Irish people. He (Mr. Marum) did not desire to detain the House any length of time, and he would, therefore, merely urge upon the right hon. Gentleman opposite not to allow the Committee to fall through. If he did, upon the Government must rest the responsibility. The matter had been before the Irish people for some time, and they should not be told now that the whole thing was a sham.

MR. O'SHEA said, he hoped the Government would think twice before they allowed the Irish people to suppose that they had, by reason of an arrangement of the Whips, thrown over such a Committee as this. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman (Sir William Harcourt) that if the Committee fell through it would be considered in Ireland, whatever the real reason might be, that the Government were opposed to an inquiry into this very important subject. What on earth could it matter whether there was an additional Member on one side or on the other on a question which would really be a test question to the Irish people as to the feeling of the Government towards Ireland on this question of Irish industries? He thought the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) should get up and say that he accepted the proposal of the Irish Members. He trusted the Government would not take such a suicidal step as to allow the Committee to fall through.

MR. WOODALL said, he thought that the House generally sympathized with the appointment of this Committee, and believed in the possibility of great good to Ireland resulting from it. Indeed, he was sure that all of them must have been conscious that hopes had been encouraged and much interest stimulated in the question already. Well, he was sorry that the Government did not see their way to assenting to the proposal to add another Member. On the other hand, he could not feel that the whole responsibility for the lapse of the Committee would rest on the Government if it fell through that night. He hoped he might be permitted to appeal to hon. Gentlemen opposite to consider whether they were not accepting very grave responsibility in allowing a matter of this kind to fall through, after the negotiations which had taken place, on such a small point as the addition of another Member. He had already served upon a Commission which had inquired very fully, and had presented to the House a mass of evidence and information bearing upon the subject. He

was desirous to see it proceed, as he was confident it would bring about important results in developing the industries of the Sister Country, which had been so long neglected; and he earnestly hoped that the Committee would be appointed, and would set to work to collect material which any other Committee appointed by the next Parliament would be able to take in hand and make valuable use of. Though many Members appointed on the Committee might have no connection with Ireland, they would be Gentlemen engaged in the various industries of this country, the influence of which they would like to carry to Ireland. He, therefore, begged most earnestly —whilst, on the one hand, expressing his surprise that they could not arrange this difficulty by adding another Member to the Committee — to urge hon. Members opposite not to accept the responsibility of defeating the appointment of the Committee for the mere sake of getting added to it another Member to represent their political views. Political questions really should not arise in an inquiry of this kind.

MR. MOLLOY intimated that he had no wish to press the Motion for the adjournment.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. STEVENSON said, he would join in the appeal to the Government to allow this additional Member to be appointed to the Committee. He thought it desirable that the Committee should be appointed, and for that purpose that it should be constituted in such a way as to satisfy the desire of hon. Gentlemen opposite. He should certainly vote for the nomination of an additional Member.

Original Question put, "That the words 'Twenty-four' stand part of the Question."

The House *divided:*—Ayes 6; Noes 24: Majority 18.—(Div. List, No. 141.)

And it appearing on the Report of the Division that 40 Members were not present,

House adjourned at a quarter before Three o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 29th April, 1885.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS — *Second Reading* — Metropolis Management Elections (Ballot) * [46].
Report — Oyster and Mussel Fisheries Provisional Order * [134].
Further Considered as amended—Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) [134] [*Second Night*], *further proceeding deferred*
Withdrawn—Pollution of Rivers * [34].

QUESTION.

CENTRAL ASIA — RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN — RUSSIAN ADVANCE— OCCUPATION OF MARUCHAK.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish to ask the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he has received any information which he can communicate to the House with regard to the movements of the Russians on the Afghan Frontier?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: There is a telegram from Tirpul, dated April 23, which was received at the Foreign Office on April 26, in which Sir Peter Lumsden mentions a Report having been received by the Governor of Herat, and forwarded by him, that the Russians had advanced 30 miles south of Pul-i-Khisti and occupied Maruchak; and in a telegram dated the 25th, and received to-day, Sir Peter Lumsden, among other things, alludes incidentally to the "recent occupation of Maruchak" by the Russians.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION) BILL.—[BILL 134.]

(*Mr. Gladstone, The Marquess of Hartington, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Attorney General, The Lord Advocate, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

CONSIDERATION. [SECOND NIGHT.]

Bill, as amended, *further considered.*

MR. RITCHIE, in moving, in page 13, line 22, column 2, after the word "Petersfield," to insert the word "Pontefract," said, he made the proposal for the purpose of finding an additional Member for Westminster. He thought that if an additional Member was to be

given to Westminster he ought not to be taken from the Tower Hamlets, but from such a borough as Pontefract, which barely came up to the limit of population.

Amendment proposed, in page 13, line 22, column 2, after the word "Petersfield," to insert the word "Pontefract."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'Pontefract' be there inserted."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE pointed out that the Committee had decided not to interfere with the 15,000 limit, and it would be unfortunate to pick out one borough in the way proposed by the hon. Member.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL hoped that, as the right hon. Baronet had attached so great importance to the decision of the Committee not to interfere with the limit of 15,000, he would attach the same importance to the other decisions of the Committee.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. LEWIS said, he rose to move the insertion of "Warwick" in the Schedule of boroughs to be disfranchised. He did not intend to press the Amendment, but simply moved it by way of renewing his protest against the course adopted by the Government in making this borough the single exception to the 15,000 rule.

Amendment, proposed, in page 13, column 2, after line 40, insert "Warwick."—(*Mr. Lewis.*)

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

On Motion of THE LORD ADVOCATE, the following Amendment made:—

In page 14, column 1, lines 3 to 8, leave out,—

Ayr (District of Burghs)	Ayr and Argyll.
Elgin (District of Burghs)	Elgin, Banff, and Aberdeen.
Falkirk (District of Burghs)	Stirling, Linlithgow, and Lanark.

Schedule *agreed to.*

Schedule 2 (Boroughs to lose one Member) *agreed to.*

Schedule 3 (Boroughs to have additional Members).

MR. RITCHIE said, he moved to insert "The Tower Hamlets, 7," in order to restore the borough to the position it originally occupied in the Bill. He did not in the least challenge the right of Westminster to have four Members; but what he did object to was the proposal to take away one Member from the Tower Hamlets in order to give it to Westminster. Even with seven Members the borough would be considerably under-represented compared with some of the large boroughs in the Provinces. Birmingham, with a population of 400,000, was to have seven Members; but the Tower Hamlets, with 439,000, was only to have six. Further, it having originally been intended to give the Tower Hamlets seven Members it would be an invidious thing to take one away.

Amendment proposed, in page 15, line 41, after "Swansea," insert "Tower Hamlets—Seven."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. BRYCE said, that the Amendment which he had proposed, to give the Tower Hamlets seven Members, was really a re-enactment of the original proposal of the Bill, put on the basis of the suggestion of the right hon. Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes), that the old London boroughs, or some of them, should not be cut up into new boroughs, but only into divisions, the name of the old borough being retained. His proposal differed from that put on the Paper by his hon. Colleague only in its keeping Poplar and Bow in the old borough of the Tower Hamlets. This was the decided wish of the people of Poplar and Bow, who valued their connection with the old borough, and desired to form a part of it. The average for London, excluding the City, was one Member to every 65,000; including the City, one Member to every 63,000. If the Tower Hamlets received only six Members it would have one Member to every 73,000; if it had seven Members it would have exactly the average—one Member to every 63,000. The Tower Hamlets was amply entitled to its due share of representation on other other grounds as well as that of numerical equality. It was inhabited by an enormous population of poor people, who had much to hope from legislative reform, and whose voice ought to be adequately heard in the National Councils. It included an

immense variety of industries, both manufacturing and commercial. Speaking from his own experience of the last five years, he could assure the House that the task of representing these interests, and endeavouring to state the needs and express the wishes of this vast population (nearly 500,000) would not be a light one even for seven Members. He earnestly hoped the Government would assent to the Amendment.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the Opposition having objected to the proposed re-arrangement in Westminster, under which four Members were to be given to it, the Government felt released from their undertaking with regard to it. He thought there was a strong case for giving the Tower Hamlets seven Members, and the Government would be prepared to accept the Amendment unless the Members of the Front Opposition Bench withdrew their opposition to the proposed boundaries of Westminster.

MR. FIRTH remarked, that the Tower Hamlets would not be an over-represented constituency even with seven Members. He hoped, however, the proposals of the Boundary Commissioners with respect to Westminster would be adhered to.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL wished to draw attention to the extraordinary inconvenience which had arisen in consequence of the negotiations which had been entered into between the two Front Benches in reference to this Bill. The agreement which had been arrived at between those Benches should not be pushed too far; and, in his opinion, the time had now arrived when the House of Commons should take the matter out of the hands of the two Parties and into its own control. The question of the apportionment of Members among the different constituencies should be decided, not by the terms of a bargain, but according to right and justice. He asked the House to decide this question of the right of the Tower Hamlets to a seventh Member wholly irrespective of the claim of Westminster to a fourth Member, which ought to be considered independently. The proposition of the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) came to this—that if the Leaders of the Opposition, whoever they might be, were willing to adhere to the decision of the House when in Committee, the Government would be willing to accept the decision of the Commissioners as regarded Westminster, and they would adhere to the arrangement come to; and upon that was to depend the rights of the Tower Hamlets and Westminster; but would that House agree to be bound by what had been done? There appeared to be a consensus of opinion in that House that the Tower Hamlets should have a seventh Member; but in arriving at that conclusion he trusted that the House would regard itself as perfectly free to deal with the case of Westminster upon its merits, and not be fettered or cramped by any arrangement come to by the Leaders on both sides.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, that he was as anxious as the noble Lord that when the House came to consider the case of Westminster they should regard themselves as having a perfect right to exercise their freedom of judgment in the matter. As the House was aware, at the end of the Autumn Session communications were entered into between the Representatives—he would not venture to call them Leaders in the presence of the noble Lord—of both sides of the House, with the view of securing the introduction of a Redistribution Bill which should be drawn upon lines which were fairly satisfactory to all Parties in that House. After several conferences and a full explanation had been given on the subject, the Representatives of the Opposition agreed to the introduction of the Bill in the form in which it came before the House. It was also arranged that the boundaries of many of the new constituencies should be settled by the Boundary Commissioners, and that the decisions of the latter were to be—he would not say sacred, but left undisturbed, except by mutual consent, and were to have very high authority. It was arranged that Westminster was to have four Members; but when the scheme came to be examined the inhabitants of Westminster were of opinion that they should practically have only three and not four Members. It was then suggested that Westminster should obtain an additional Member from the Tower Hamlets. He was not, however, disposed to offer any objection to the present proposal to retain the seventh Member for the Tower Hamlets; but that would not preclude the case of Westminster being discussed

upon its merits when it came before the House.

MR. GORST said, he felt bound to protest against the hands of the House being tied in reference to this subject by any agreement that those who sat upon the Front Benches might have entered into. The noble Lord had appealed to the sense of the House on that occasion; but had the noble Lord been present throughout all the discussions upon this Bill, he would have found that there was no sense of the House with regard to it at all. Therefore, without asking the House to listen to him, he begged to appeal to the Government, and to ask them to keep their minds open with regard to the claim of Westminster, and not to prejudge the case by what was about to be done in the present instance.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he would remind the House that there was no fund of free Members upon which they could draw; and that if the seventh Member were given to the Tower Hamlets it might be difficult to obtain the fourth for Westminster. If the House would revert to the old arrangement of three Members for Westminster, he was willing to accept the Amendment.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS remarked, that his objection had been to the boundary of Westminster as fixed by the Boundary Commissioners.

MR. RAIKES said, he hoped that the House would not regard itself as bound by any arrangement which had been entered into between the two Front Benches. He thought that the Tower Hamlets, when joined to Poplar, were entitled to a seventh Member.

MR. LEWIS observed that the House was in a position of great difficulty in having to discuss this question with the Speaker in the Chair.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE rose to move that the number of Members allotted to Westminster should be reduced from four to three. Now that the House had unanimously decided to give seven Members to the Tower Hamlets, there was no possibility of getting another Member from any other part of London, and it was impossible to make the number for Westminster up to four. It was therefore necessary to revert to the original proposition to give only three Members to Westminster. He admitted that with only three Members Westminster would be slightly under-represented. On the other hand, with four Members it would be over-represented.

Amendment proposed,

In page 15, line 42, after the word "Westminster," to leave out the word "four," in order to insert the word "three,"—(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the word 'four' stand part of the Bill."

LORD ALGERNON PERCY said, he hoped the House would not consent to upset the decision deliberately arrived at in Committee, when it was arranged that Westminster was to have four Members. Nothing was then heard of taking away one Member from the Tower Hamlets in order to give an additional Member to those provided in the Bill for Westminster.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE was understood to say that he had distinctly stated in Committee on the Bill that it was possible, in the final result, that the additional Member for Westminster would have to be taken from the East End of London. The Opposition Front Bench had been consulted on the subject.

LORD ALGERNON PERCY said, if the House was now of opinion that Westminster should have four Members, there was nothing to prevent the House from restoring the number originally proposed in the Bill. The Bill was drawn on the basis of the representation of population, and its principle was, as far as was practicable, to give a Member, at least in the Metropolis, to every 50,000 inhabitants. Westminster had a population of 229,784, so that with three Members that proportion of population would not be preserved. St. Pancras was far more liberally treated by the Bill, notwithstanding its ratable value was only £1,506,616, compared with the £3,816,000 of Westminster. The fact that three Members only were given to Westminster had caused a great deal of discussion and dissatisfaction both in the House and the newspapers. Where the fourth Member was to come from was an entirely secondary question, and stood apart from the justice of the matter. The objection made to the division of

Westminster was that they unnecessarily interfered with the ancient boundaries and parishes, and he contended that the Commissioners acted contrary to their Instructions. Their scheme was objected to by every single person who appeared before the Commissioners, and by all the public bodies within the borough, with the exception of the representatives of one particular political organization and the Vestry of St. George's, Hanover Square, and he had since received a letter in explanation of the action of the latter body. The practical effect of the attitude of the right hon. Baronet in regard to the acknowledged injustice done to Westminster was this. He said—"Westminster has been unjustly treated. I will remedy the injustice; but if you do not choose to accept a particular division, contrary to every principle, and objected to by all the inhabitants, I will go back to the original injustice I did you." The Postmaster General said that the Government would now return to the original proposition with regard to Westminster; but the original proposition was to divide Westminster into three boroughs, and in those three boroughs the Liberty of the Rolls was included. Now the Liberty of the Rolls was excluded. He trusted, however, the House would do justice in this matter by restoring to Westminster the four Members to which upon every consideration of justice and equity it was entitled.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the Commissioners could not put into their scheme a place that was not within the City of Westminster, and the Liberty of the Rolls was not in Westminster. In the original plan the borough of the Strand was created, and did not belong to the City of Westminster at all; but the desire of the House was to reconstitute the old City of Westminster, and it was reconstituted. If, however, the noble Lord wished to revert to the proposal of the original Bill, he was willing to do so. But he repeated that the Commissioners were unable to put something into the City of Westminster which was not in it, and the Liberty of the Rolls was never part of the City of Westminster. He denied that he had acknowledged, on a former occasion, that injustice had been done to the City of Westminster in giving it only three Members. What he did say was that he thought a fair case had been made out for giving it four Members, and that was the utmost limit to which he could go. The whole of the large towns, as the Committee was aware, were under-represented. There were at least 150 cases of injustice of that kind which could be made out. Westminster, as compared with the central portions of the East End, had a good case if they took the Census of 1881; but its grievance was not exceptional as compared with the other parts of the Metropolis. Kensington and Chelsea, for instance, had 251,000 inhabitants, and it was proposed to give them only three Members; while Westminster had only 229,000 inhabitants, and it was proposed to give it three Members also. Then, if they went behind the Census of 1881, it would be found that Westminster was a decreasing constituency.

MR. ECROYD said, that in discussing the case of Wigan they were not allowed to go behind the Census of 1881.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that the noble Lord had made an attack on the Boundary Commissioners; but it was not the case that the arrangements they proposed were objected to by all the inhabitants. The Government referred the matter to two gentlemen, one a Conservative and the other a Liberal, and they, acting in concert and without seeing or hearing anyone, decided that the Instructions to the Boundary Commissioners would not justify them in creating divided districts of the sort contained in the first draft scheme.

MR. RITCHIE said, that the question they had to consider was whether Westminster was entitled to three or four Members; how it was to be divided would be considered at a subsequent stage of the Bill. As a Metropolitan Member he was as ready to stand up for one part of the Metropolis as for another. As it had been admitted by the Government that Westminster was entitled to four Members, they ought to abide by the admission. He entirely dissented from the statement of the Postmaster General that if a fourth Member was to be given to Westminster it should be at the expense of some other part of the Metropolis, and he protested against the assumption that because a Member was not to be taken from any other part of the Metropolis, Westminster was to be under-repre-

sented. The average representation was one Member to 55,000 people. Even with an additional Member given to Westminster the average in that borough would be one Member to 57,000. The present average of representation in the large towns was one Member to 62,000; but in Westminster the average was one Member to 77,000, the average of all London being one Member to 65,000 inhabitants. These figures would show the justice of the demand that Westminster should have four Members. He considered that to take away the fourth Member from Westminster would be doing an injustice to the whole of the Metropolis. He appealed to the entire House to uphold the arrangement which was agreed to by the Government when the Bill was in Committee to give Westminster an additional Member.

MR. RYLANDS said, he happened to be interested in this question, because he was an elector of the City of Westminster. He quite agreed that the real question before them was not what should be the boundaries of the divisions, but whether the City should have three or four Members. The question of justice did not enter into this matter at all, as the Bill was brought forward on the grounds of expediency and compromise; therefore he felt obliged to dismiss from his mind the calculations as to population which had been given to justify the arrangement that Westminster should have four Members. They ought, he thought, to consider where the fourth Member was to come from. He had the very greatest objection to any further increase in the number of Members of that House; and unless it was decided from what part of London or the country a seat was to be taken he could not vote for Westminster having more than three Members. The proposal to give four seats was supported strictly on the condition that an arrangement would be made between the two Front Benches by which an additional Member was to be provided. It seemed that that arrangement had not been carried out, and, as far as he was concerned, he should support the Government.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he ventured to interfere in the debate because he had some connection with Westminster, having been placed in a position of some importance by a society of working men in that borough, which he might say had nothing whatever to do with electoral wire-pulling. The hon. Member who had just sat down had certainly not contributed much information to the discussion. He had certainly informed the House that he was a voter in Westminster, and that he had perfect confidence in the Conservative Party. He hoped, as he was an elector, that on the next occasion when he had an opportunity of exercising his vote he would not forget to give it to the Party in which he felt so much confidence. The question as to where the fourth Member was to come from was, no doubt, an important one, but it was not the point before the House. What they were discussing was whether Westminster should have three or four Members, and that question should be considered apart from any other. The fourth Member might be taken from several places, and he was not at all clear whether Burnley ought not to give up a seat. In bringing the Amendment before the House, the Postmaster General (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had made a very short and abrupt speech, and had not adduced any reason why the arrangement entered into by the Government should be departed from beyond the fact that because the Tower Hamlets wanted another Member, Westminster should be prepared to lose one. But justice should be done to Westminster, and to all other places, irrespective of such considerations. The boundaries of the divisions were not now under consideration, and what might have taken place with regard to that matter since the Bill was in Committee ought not to influence the House of Commons in deciding the question whether Westminster should have three or four seats. The President of the Local Government Board had made a very fair speech on the whole subject, and he gathered from the general tone of that speech that the right hon. Baronet was in favour of giving the fourth Member if the other differences and disputes could be arranged. Those other differences and disputes were of a petty, contemptible character, and ought not to be taken into consideration at all. He asked the House to adhere to the decision arrived at by the Government in Committee, and then to consider the divisions as laid down by Sir John Lambert and Sir Francis Sandford. If

the divisions were bad, they might be altered; but if good, then let the House adopt them. Westminster was a very ancient borough—it was full of historical associations and landmarks; it had a great population, and was entitled in whatever way its claims were viewed to more than three Representatives in Parliament.

MR. INDERWICK said, he occupied a position in one of the political associations of Westminster similar to that held by the noble Lord who had just spoken in connection with another association in the borough, and he wished to state that those who were associated with him were in no way divided upon the question of principle that, according to the population of Westminster, the City was entitled to four Members.

MR. CUBITT said, he thought that in dealing with this subject political feeling should not be taken into account. There was a great deal to be said with regard to the unfortunate divisions which the Boundary Commissioners had made in Westminster. They were greatly indebted to the Commissioners for the important work done by them, for, on the whole, they had performed their difficult duties with great fairness and ability; but still when there was a serious objection to divisions formed by them, such as existed in the case of the Westminster divisions, it was the duty of Members interested in the matter to bring it under the notice of the Government. He hoped the President of the Local Government Board would not further oppose the proposal to give four Members to Westminster, and that he would leave it to the wisdom of the House to decide where the fourth Member should be taken from.

MR. TREVELYAN said, the Government had been asked whether they had not changed their opinions upon this subject. He was bound to say that if the House went to a division the Government would consider this as a matter of importance. They had not changed their opinions with regard to it. The noble Lord opposite begged the Government not to reverse the decision of the Committee. The Government could hardly be said to be in that position. What were the decisions of the Committee upon the point? They were two—one was to keep the old City of Westminster, and the other to reduce the number of Members for the Tower Hamlets.

MR. RITCHIE: There was no such decision.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, his right hon. Friend was quite right. They had not passed the point in the Bill; but words relating to the component parts of the Tower Hamlets were struck out in order to pave the way for a reduction in the representation of that part of the Metropolis.

MR. TREVELYAN said, that in consequence of the apparent wish of the Committee to increase the number of Members for Westminster his right hon. Friend made a statement of a very definite nature, and all the parts of that statement hung together. It was proposed by his right hon. Friend to increase the number of Members for Westminster, to take a Member from the Tower Hamlets, and to refer the question of boundaries to Sir John Lambert and Sir Francis Sandford for their authoritative decision. Nothing could be detached from that statement without making the whole of it fall together. Could anyone in the House say that the Government had gone out of its way to reverse the decision to take a Member from the Tower Hamlets? He had never seen a question on which so great a unanimity was exercised by the House as the desire to leave the Tower Hamlets with its seven Members. The House itself had reversed the intentions of the Committee to take a Member away from that borough, and by doing so it had destroyed the keystone of his right hon. Friend's plan for giving Westminster a fourth Member. He might say, incidentally, that one very strong reason why the Government were prepared to acquiesce in the evident wish of the House to retain the seven Members for the Tower Hamlets was the unwillingness declared by the noble Lord the Member for Westminster (Lord Algernon Percy) and by persons outside the House to take the boundaries which the Commissioners had determined upon. That was a point on which the Government could not give way. The one mainstay of the discussions in the House had been the determination of the Government, backed up by the Members, to abide by the decisions of the Commissioners, and not to alter them at the request of any poli-

tical Party. These were the circumstances under which the Government were obliged to refuse their assent to the proposal to give Westminster another Member. It was no use for any hon. Member to say that they were not to consider the question as to where the seat was to be taken from; they must consider it. The Government could see no other place than the Tower Hamlets; the House had shown its determination not to take a Member from that borough, and the Government had no alternative except to ask the House not to vote the fourth Member.

MR. LEWIS said, he did not think that the question of giving another Member to Westminster was dependent upon the question of taking a Member from the Tower Hamlets. Sheffield, with a population of 284,000, was to have five Members, while Westminster, with 229,000, was only to have three Members. Again, the favoured borough of Wolverhampton had 164,000 population, or 65,000 less than the City of Westminster, and yet it was to have three Members. The unfairness shown towards Westminster was the more marked when it was remembered that in two of the three cases in which the Government had broken through the rules laid down by the Prime Minister himself—the cases of Wolverhampton and Haverfordwest—both of those constituencies happened to be represented by Members of the Government. It was impossible to extract from the Government any reason for the infringement of their own principle; and it would be difficult for them to convince the electors of Westminster that they ought to be treated worse than the electors of Wolverhampton. The Government had the courage to increase the Members of the House by 12, but apparently they had not the courage to increase them by 13. They could, however, do justice to Westminster, without increasing the numbers of the House, by simply doing full justice, and nothing more than justice, to Wolverhampton.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he rose to make a further appeal to the sense of justice of the Government on behalf of Westminster. As the House had unanimously rejected the diminution of the representation proposed for the Tower Hamlets, why, he asked, should they not go to Wolverhampton or Sheffield for the fourth Member wanted for Westminster? By placing Wolverhampton on the same level as other boroughs they might give Westminster the representation to which it was entitled both by its population and its wealth. There must, he thought, be some motive on the part of the Government for their refusal to deal fairly with Westminster; and probably they feared that if that City received four Members it would not return supporters of the present Ministry.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he thought that the principle laid down by the Prime Minister in regard to distance from the seat of the Legislature ought to be recognized in some degree in connection with those matters. Manchester was to have one Member for every 70,000 of its population, and Liverpool one for every 66,000. If Westminster—the very seat of the Legislature—received four Members, it would have one Member for every 57,000 of its population—an undue proportion relatively to the numbers assigned to other places. He considered that London was immensely indebted to the President of the Local Government Board for the greatly increased number of Members which it would obtain under the Bill.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, he could not help feeling that the position in which they were placed in regard to that Amendment was illustrative of the difficulty of the position in which the House was placed. It was as if they had ordered their dinner and were disputing who was to pay for it. The House had decided to retain seven Members for the Tower Hamlets, and now the question was whether Westminster should have four Members, or whether the Government must revert to the original proposal they made, that it should have three Members. When the matter came on in Committee appeals were made to the Government to give four Members to Westminster, and they said that they would be willing to do so provided that on the Report another Member for Westminster could be obtained from some other constituency, and they thought that that other Member might be taken from the East End of London. A strong and very general feeling had been expressed in the House in favour of retaining the larger number for the Tower Hamlets. What, then, was the position of the

House with regard to Westminster? Having decided that the number of Members for the Tower Hamlets should not be reduced, and having before them a proposal which involved giving an additional Member to Westminster above what was given according to the basis upon which the Bill was founded, it was a question whether they should retain a fourth Member for Westminster without seeing how the number was to be made up. There was, no doubt, a strong case for giving four Members to Westminster, if the Government could see their way to providing an addditional Member; but it was necessary that they should do that, and under the circumstances he did not see that the Government could do anything but revert to their original proposal.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH said, he was glad that the Government had put their foot down, and had reverted to their original scheme. It was impossible to settle this question on arithmetical lines. The secret of the hardness of the measure as affecting large constituencies, including many besides Westminster, was to be found in the tender dealing of the House with small constituencies of between 15,000 and 20,000 inhabitants. It seemed to him that some Members of the Opposition were now seeking to obtain particular advantages for particular places. He was glad to hear that the Leader of the Opposition had supported the decision of the Government, and he believed the House generally wished the conditions of the agreement to be honourably observed and distinctly adhered to.

Mr. RAIKES said, he must express his surprise at hearing such sentiments coming from an hon. Member who represented a borough which would be considerably over-represented when compared with Westminster. For his own part, he thought that there seemed to be some confusion as to what might be open to the Government to do. There was a difference between what the Government might consider their duty and what the duty of the House might be. The Government might have come to the conclusion that they had been wrong in the course which they had taken; but he thought that the House had some right to look for a better explanation for their change of attitude than anything they had yet heard. He had listened attentively to the speeches made on behalf of the Government, and especially that of the Postmaster General, to hear the real reasons which had actuated the Government in this matter. He could not see that, because the Government had changed their views with regard to the Tower Hamlets, the House was therefore to be asked to change its views with respect to Westminster. Although they had heard a good deal from the Treasury Bench and from the Front Opposition Bench as to excuses for the attitude of the Government, they had not heard one particle of argument in favour of the proposal before the House. Westminster was a place of immense antiquity, as far as that House was concerned, and its rateable value was enormously in excess of that of towns which were represented to the extent which had been proposed for Westminster. They were left without the slightest ground to enable them to see why the Government had changed their minds, and yet because the Government had changed their minds with regard to one place the House was to change its mind with regard to another. The Schedules were still open, and there were plenty of places which could contribute the Member asked for; but, because the Government had made up their minds to find this Member in the case of the Tower Hamlets, Westminster was to be deprived of its proper representation. He hoped that the House would not take into consideration any of those arrangements out-of-doors of which they had heard so much. The arrangement which it was now sought to set aside had met with the full approval of the Committee. When the right hon. Gentleman who had charge of the Bill had spoken upon this point, the Leader of the Opposition had got up and congratulated him upon having arrived at such a satisfactory conclusion; there had not been one dissentient voice, and the proposal had been agreed to *nemine contradicente*. Now they were asked to give this up because the Government found that there was a certain amount of difficulty with the Boundary Commissioners. It appeared to him that either the Boundary Commissioners or the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition were always made responsible for any difficulty. He had the greatest respect for the Boundary Com-

missioners, who had done their work with great impartiality and skill; but he would run the risk of displeasing them rather than see an injustice done to an important constituency. He hoped that it was not too late for the Government to consider their decision, and that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, whose fairness they had not found wanting, would even now see his way to consider whether he might find some other victim to offer on the altar of justice rather than Westminster, because anyone would see that the present proposal involved an injustice to that constituency and an infringement of the principles upon which the Bill was founded.

MR. TOMLINSON said, that it was not denied that a great injustice would be done to Westminster by reducing the number of its Members from four to three. It was the mere accident of the Tower Hamlets coming before Westminster in the Schedule which led to this proposal. It was said that injustice would be done to the Tower Hamlets if the number of its Members was reduced from seven to six. But if the scheme of the Government had not been broken into by the previous decision of the House, this question with regard to Westminster would not have been raised. When the Bill was in Committee, the President of the Local Government Board put the case of Westminster on its merits, and the question where the fourth Member was to come from was a secondary matter. But now it was proposed that this secondary point should override the consideration of the justice of the case. He thought this was a question which they ought to carry to a division.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND said, he also must protest against the action of the Government in regard to this matter. The House was bound to consider the case upon its merits, and Westminster was entitled to four Members, as the Government had at first decided. He held that if the additional Member provisionally assigned to Westminster could not be found in London, it was the duty of the Government to look elsewhere for one.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS reminded the House that he had on the former occasion entered a distinct caveat against taking a Member from the Tower Hamlets in order to give four to Westminster. The question of where the other Member was to come from was for after consideration, and as it was admitted that Westminster was entitled to four Members that number ought to be assigned to the constituency. If he was not mistaken, the question as to the Tower Hamlets was decided on the distinct understanding that the case of Westminster should be considered on its merits.

MR. WARTON said, he was of opinion that on the ground both of population and of wealth Westminster was clearly entitled to four Members, and he suggested that the extra Member should be taken from Wolverhampton.

MR. FRANCIS BUXTON expressed a hope that the House would ratify the decision at which it arrived a few days ago. He should be compelled to vote against the Government if they insisted upon carrying the Amendment to a division. Even under this Bill, London was very much under-represented, and if they gave one more Member to the Metropolis it could be nothing but an advantage.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he entirely supported the view advanced by the hon. Member for Andover. There was perfect unanimity among the inhabitants of Westminster that adeqnate representation should be given to that constituency. Why, he asked, should Westminster be subjected to a disability because it contributed so largely to the Revenue? There was no constituency on which taxation fell more heavily than it did upon Westminster. It did not appear to him to be their duty to say how justice should be done. That was a point for the Government to decide. He admitted that the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had shown the greatest desire to do justice to the claims of the various constituencies throughout the United Kingdom. But he contended that Westminster had a population which, according to all the principles laid down in the Bill, entitled it to four Members, and he trusted the Government would recognize its claim. He was no party to any attempt to obtain a representation of one set of views. If they reduced the number of Members of the House, he should be willing that the representation of Westminster should be reduced, and he should not be sorry to see that change, for he believed there

were too many Members for such a deliberative Assembly. But Westminster had a right to claim her proper share of representation.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, that there was a unanimous opinion that Westminster was entitled to four Members, and it would be a dangerous precedent, after the decision of the Committee, if they now departed from a proposal solemnly made and solemnly accepted. He thought the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had signally failed to show why he had changed his mind in regard to this matter.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 91; Noes 171: Majority 80.—(Div. List, No. 142.)

Question, "That the word 'three' be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

MR. EDWARD CLARKE said, he rose to move an Amendment the object of which was to remove the hamlet of Penge from the Schedule as part of the new borough of Camberwell and to transfer it to the borough of Lewisham. The Bill as originally drawn made Penge a part of the borough of Lewisham, but in Committee Penge was transferred to Camberwell. The inhabitants of Camberwell were much opposed to the change for many reasons. The addition would make the borough a most unwieldly shape, its length being as much as five and a-half miles. Moreover, Penge was entirely separated from Camberwell by the hills upon which the Crystal Palace stood. The matter had been strongly taken up by various bodies in Camberwell, and he would urge the House, for the sake of convenience to all political Parties, to revert to the original arrangement. He believed that every change made in the Bill since it had been laid on the Table had been a mistake, and he should be glad to see them all reversed by a single vote if that could be done.

Amendment proposed, in page 16, line 10, to leave out the words "and the Hamlet of Penge." — (*Mr. Edward Clarke.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that he was perfectly impartial on this question and had received a great number of communications on both sides. It was true that Camberwell had a strong case against having Penge added to it; but Lewisham had just as strong a one. There was as much difficulty of connection between Lewisham and Penge as between Penge and Camberwell. The original principle of the Bill was in the Metropolis to take parochial and local government districts as boundaries. Penge was put in Lewisham because it was under the jurisdiction of the Lewisham District Board of Works. On the other hand, it was said that, although Penge was within the district of the Lewisham Board of Works, it was an altogether separate district, and was in the county of Surrey, while Lewisham was in Kent. Penge was an outlying hamlet of the parish of Battersea, which was a long way from it. There was one consideration which weighed with him in favour of the Amendment now in the Bill, and that was that the present arrangement made the population of these boroughs more equal. If Penge were added to Lewisham it would make the population of the latter place very high. There was a strong local opinion in Lewisham against the addition of Penge, while the opinion of the Penge people was in favour of their transfer to Camberwell. For these reasons he was inclined to support the Amendment made in Committee.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Schedule *agreed to.*

Schedule 4 (New boroughs).

MR. DAVENPORT said, he begged to propose an Amendment, the effect of which would be to include in the new borough of Hanley all such parts of the present borough of Stoke-upon-Trent as lay to the north of Hanley. As the Schedule stood, the Local Government district of Tunstall was excluded from the borough of Hanley.

Amendment proposed,

In Schedule 4, page 16, line 52, to leave out the words "and is not included in the Local Government District of Tunstall." — (*Mr. Davenport.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that he had intended to make the change

proposed by the hon. Member, but he found that opinion in Hanley and Tunstall was so strong against it that he had abandoned his intention.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

In page 17, after line 16, insert as a separate paragraph,—"Royal University of Ireland. Two Members."—(*Dr. Lyons.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE rose to Order. No doubt, it was a fact that some ancient Universities by prescription were boroughs; but he would like to know whether it was in Order to move this clause here under a Schedule dealing with new boroughs?

MR. SPEAKER ruled that the Amendment was out of Order, as the Royal University was not a borough.

DR. LYONS said, that there was no place in the Bill where Universities were considered, and he had, therefore, placed the name of the Royal University down as an independent constituency. He was told by the Clerk at the Table that he was in Order. He hoped the right hon. Baronet would not press a verbal objection to his proposal.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE observed, that even if the name of the Royal University were placed in the Schedule it would require a clause in the Bill to give any effect to the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Schedule 5 (Contents and boundaries of boroughs with altered boundaries).

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT said, he rose to propose that the borough of Warwick should bear the name of "Warwick—Leamington." For the last 10 or 20 years Leamington had increased enormously in proportion to Warwick, and he did not think that Warwick would be at all the worse for having its younger neighbour next to it in the title which he proposed. The people of Leamington attached a great deal of importance to the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in page 22, line 23, after "Warwick," insert "Leamington."—(*Sir Eardley Wilmot.*)

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that Leamington was the more important part of the borough, and, therefore, there was some ground for adopting the double name; but he should prefer the word "and" between the two words.

Amendment, as amended, *agreed to.*

Words "and Leamington" *inserted* accordingly.

Amendment proposed,

In page 20, line 34, after the word "Pembroke," to insert the words "and Haverfordwest."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *negatived.*

Other Amendments made.

Schedule, as amended, *agreed to.*

Schedule 6 (New boroughs).

Amendment proposed,

In Schedule 6, page 28, after line 13, to insert the words,—

"Finsbury.

Three Divisions. One Member for each Division.

Names and Contents of Divisions.

No. 1. The Holborn Division.

So much of the Holborn district as comprises the parishes of—
St. Andrew, Holborn, above Bars and St. George the Martyr, and
Saffron Hill, Hatton Garden, Ely Place, and Ely Rents.
The St. Giles' District:
Gray's Inn,
Furnival's Inn,
Staple Inn,
Lincoln's Inn, and
Liberty of the Rolls.

No. 2. The Central Division.

The parish of St. James and St. John, Clerkenwell.

No. 3. The East Division.

The parishes of—
St. Luke, Middlesex,
St. Sepulchre, Middlesex,
Charter House, and
Glasshouse Yard."

—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. TOMLINSON moved to omit the district of Saffron Hill, Hatton Garden, Ely Place, and Ely Rents from the Holborn Division, to include it in the district of St. Luke's. The alteration would to some extent redress the discrepancy between the number of population of the two divisions.

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment, to leave out the words "Saffron Hill, Hatton Garden, Ely Place, and Ely Rents."—(*Mr. Tomlinson.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the proposed Amendment."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he feared that the Government would jeopardize the arrangement which had been come to if he accepted the Amendment at so late a stage of the Bill.

MR. LEWIS supported the Amendment, remarking that the division from which it was proposed to take the district in question contained now 60 per cent more population than the division to which it was now sought to attach it.

MR. W. M. TORRENS said, he was opposed to the Amendment.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Another Amendment made.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he wished to propose an Amendment, the effect of which would be to secure the return of an Irish National Member for the Exchange Division of Liverpool. He thought the right hon. Baronet would be willing to accept the Amendment, and he would appeal to the House to take the matters into its own hands out of the hands of the Leaders on both sides, who formed the so-called compact, and, if he made out a good case, to decide in favour of his proposal. He made two alternative proposals. He wished to make a change in two of the divisions of Liverpool—namely, the Exchange Division and the Abercrombie Division. There was a small triangular piece of the Exchange Division which he wished to have included in the Abercrombie Division, as well as the large block of Lime Street, which projected into the Abercrombie Division. The alternative proposal was that the small triangular portion should still remain in the Exchange Division, and that the only portion transferred should be the block bounded by the London Road and extending into the Abercrombie Division. There was a considerable and unjustifiable difference between the population of the Abercrombie Division and that of the Exchange Division, and if his proposal were accepted, this disparity would be very considerably modified. The changes he proposed would also make the divisions more in accordance with the principle of the Bill, which was that persons of similar pursuits should, as far as possible, be thrown into the same divisions. The Exchange Division was a working-class division, and the Abercrombie Division was a commercial division, and the Exchange itself had actually been thrown out of the commercial division into the working-class division. He had a conversation with the Liberal Member for Liverpool, who would be in favour of transferring the Exchange and one or two streets round it into the commercial division. But it would be obviously too small a change, and if a change were at all desirable it should take the larger form which he had proposed. He thought it always best to discuss proposals of this kind in a perfectly candid spirit, and he confessed that one of his reasons for proposing the change was that it would give the Irish population of Liverpool a better chance of carrying another of the divisions of the City. The Scotland Ward Division, it was generally admitted, would be a division in which an Irish National candidate would be almost certain of beating all comers, and if his proposal were carried, two out of the nine Members of Liverpool would be Irish National Members. He hoped that the time was long since past when such a prospect as this would be found alarming or irrational. Every responsible and intelligent politician in the House knew that there must be next Parliament in this House an overwhelming majority of Irish Representatives pledged to National principles, and supposing that there were 80, what possible harm could it be to have the number increased to 81 by an Irish National Member sitting for an English constituency? Numerically it would make no difference, but morally and politically it would make the greatest difference, and he ventured to say would be productive of the greatest benefit to the future relations between England and Ireland and between the Irish and English people in England. Every additional opportunity legitimately afforded to Irishmen for the expression of their sentiments in that House was an encouragement to them to urge their claims and to seek redress of their grievances by peaceful and Constitutional methods. He hoped that even at this

late stage of the Bill the Conservative Leader would give the benefit of his support to the proposal. He thought he might say that the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) would not oppose the proposal if the Leader of the Opposition would rise in his place and say he had no objection to it; and he would strongly impress upon the Leader of the Opposition that he should present to the Irish people in England, forming 2,000,000 of its population, the agreeable and statesmanlike prospect of having their claims as strongly advocated by Conservatives as by Liberals in that House. As it was, even allowing the boundaries to remain as at present, the Irish population of the Exchange Division would have a very large controlling force in the return of a Member for that division. No Member could be returned who had not the support of the Irish population, and they would have the Liberal and Conservative candidate both fishing for the Irish vote, after the manner of a Dutch auction. The hon. Member concluded by moving his Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

In page 31, column 2, line 43, after the words "Lime Street Ward," to insert the words "excepting that portion bounded by a line drawn from Moss Street through London Road and William Brown Street down to the junction between Byrom Street and Old Haymarket."—(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. WHITLEY, while admitting that the hon. Member for Galway had stated his case very fairly and moderately, yet expressed his hope that the Government would not accede to that Amendment, which involved a very serious alteration of the Bill. The Boundary Commissioners had very fully considered those matters on the spot; members of every Party in Liverpool, including the Irish Nationalists, had attended before them, and their decisions had met with the approval of the inhabitants at large, with very few exceptions. It would, therefore, be a strong thing now to upset all those decisions. This Amendment, moreover, would not only disturb two particular divisions, but would also have a very considerable effect on the other divisions of the city. Under these circumstances he hoped the House would pause before they accepted a proposal which would meet with the disapproval of the inhabitants of Liverpool generally. As the divisions stood the Irish Party were as fully represented as their numbers warranted, and to alter the boundaries so as to give the Irish Party an overwhelming majority in one of the wards would be prejudicial to the interests of Liverpool, and would meet with the condemnation of nine-tenths of the inhabitants of the city.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE observed that when the Bill was in Committee he had promised to consider this matter, if any agreement could be arrived at. When, however, he had begun to make inquiries, he had found that there was no general agreement of political Parties in Liverpool in favour of the proposal. The speech of the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had been moderate, and put the case from his point of view very clearly, and he was sure it was appreciated. He (Sir Charles W. Dilke) could not speak with any local knowledge of Liverpool, and he had no knowledge of the changes which would be effected by the hon. Gentleman's proposal. As far as he could make out, one of his proposals would increase the population of one of the divisions, and the other would slightly diminish it. He could not agree with the hon. Member as to details; his lack of local knowledge would not justify him in attempting to do so. He, however, believed, that the scheme of the Commissioners had met with general favour in Liverpool, and he thought that the Government would not be justified in altering it.

MR. HEALY was sorry to hear that the only reason of the Government for opposing this Amendment was based upon the opposition of the Conservative Party in Liverpool. The Liberal Party there were not opposed to it; their principal organ *The Daily Post* being in favour of it. So far as he could gather, the right hon. Baronet had no objection himself to the proposal. He regretted very much that the Conservative Party desired to reduce the representation of 2,000,000 of the Irish population to one Member, when the Protestant minority of a little over 1,000,000 in the Northern corner of Ireland was represented by no less than 20 Members. He could not say that this was very fair play which the Catholics of England were receiving

at the hands of the Conservative Party after they had jerrymandered the seats in Ulster. The Irish population were fully one-third of the population of Liverpool, which would be represented by nine Members in that House. It was not a very unreasonable request that they made of the Government to accord the Catholics of Liverpool two Members. The Conservative Party were the advocates of denominational education, and under ordinary circumstances the Catholic population would be at one with them upon religious questions. He, therefore, regretted very much to see that the hon. Member who had acted as spokesman for the Conservative Party should have prevented the Catholics of Great Britain from obtaining an additional Member. He reminded the Conservatives that the English Catholic nobility had always been attached to the Conservative Party, and were some of the most bitter opponents of Ireland. The single-Member system had worked the Irish Party enormous harm. He hoped the Conservative Party would not contribute to the further estrangement of the Irish and Catholic population by following the Conservative Member for Liverpool into the Lobby.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he should have been very glad if the general concurrence of the House had enabled the Government to give way and consent to the change proposed in the divisions of Liverpool. For his part, he thought it was much to be regretted that a certain number of Roman Catholic Members were not returned by English constituencies; and he should be glad to see any reasonable arrangement of constituencies made by which that object could be effected. At the same time, he thought that hon. Members had somewhat exaggerated the numbers of the Irish Roman Catholic population of England in placing it at 2,000,000. The last Census showed the number of Irish-born persons living in England to be 562,000.

MR. HEALY: But what about their descendants?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE did not think that, even making allowance for them, the figures could be anything like 2,000,000. Morever, the Irish Roman Catholics were spread over the whole of the country, and, except in the case of a few towns, were in nothing like large numbers anywhere. The proportion of the Irish to the English in any district was therefore very small. Moreover, hon. Members had understated very much the Protestant population of Ireland in placing it only at 1,000,000. It should be recollected also that it bore a very different proportion to the Roman Catholic in Ireland to that in which the Roman Catholic stood to the Protestant in England. Throughout Ireland the Protestants formed about a fourth of the population, and in Ulster were in a majority. It was impossible to state exactly what electoral power the Irish Roman Catholics would have in England; but in some constituencies they would undoubtedly have considerable influence.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS observed, that the House had nothing whatever to do with the question of whether Catholics should or should not be returned for particular portions of the constituency, but simply as to whether the Boundary Commissioners, looking at the Instructions placed before them, were right in the divisions which they had suggested for Liverpool. The way in which the hon. Member for Galway had brought forward the Motion did him great credit; but from his knowledge of Liverpool he considered the Commissioners had come to a very sensible, natural, and rational division. He believed the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Whitley), who had just spoken, represented correctly the feeling of his constituents when he said nine-tenths of the inhabitants were averse to the proposed change. The question was not a Party one, and he should be surprised if the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Samuel Smith) did not confirm that statement.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH said, he had taken some pains to ascertain the feeling of the inhabitants of Liverpool on the subject, and he concurred with the remark of his Colleague that the feeling was almost unanimous against making any changes in the divisions of the city proposed by the Boundary Commissioners.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: When the hon. Member speaks of the feeling being unanimous, he does not, of course, include the Irish, who form one-third of the population.

[*Second Night.*]

MR. SAMUEL SMITH said, no representations had reached him, and he had friendly relations with a large portion of the Irish population of Liverpool, and hoped that those friendly relations would continue. So far as he could see, the proposed change would require a practical reconstitution of the whole Parliamentary borough. The Amendment would necessitate the division of several wards; whereas the scheme of the Boundary Commissioners coincided with the existing wards, and it would cause great confusion to break up the wards in the manner in which the hon. Member recommended. Even if the Amendment were adopted, it would not give the Irish population a majority in this division. As the wards were constituted in the Bill, the Irish would number about one-fourth of the electors, and if a change were made as proposed the Irish electors would not exceed one-third. The Irish Party would not be in the position to return a Member under any circumstances. It had been charged against the Protestant population that they were not willing to permit Catholics in England to have representation; but he would remind the hon. Member for Monaghan that within the last day or two the first steps had been taken for choosing Liberal candidates for Liverpool, and he believed there was every probability of an Irish Catholic being asked to contest the Exchange Ward. So far as he was concerned, he was entirely in favour of the just representation of Catholics in England.

MR. O'DONNELL said, it was, no doubt, thoughtful of the Liberal Party managers to run a Catholic Liberal in a district in which he hoped to catch some Catholic votes. Even apart from Irish Nationalist considerations, but on the broadest ground of English common sense, this complaint should be attended to. But, apparently, the bigotry and prejudice of the English race, and that curious mixture of qualities which made them incapable of understanding any other race in the world, made the Government refuse this concession.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he regretted that the question had resolved itself into a religious one, and that an understanding upon the subject had not been arrived at by the Front Opposition Bench and the Government. He objected to pressure being brought to bear upon English Members by a separation being brought about between the English and the Irish elements in the great constituencies. He denied that there was any desire on the part of Conservatives to deprive any section of the community of a fair share of representation; but as the question was a particular one, dealing with the peculiarities of one special constituency, and not one of general principle, he felt bound, in case of a division, to give his support to the Government.

MR. BIGGAR said, it was a remarkable fact that both the Members of the Government who had spoken admitted that the Irish Members were right on the merits of the case; but still they were determined, acting on underground influences, to refuse the proposal, and, to suit the exigencies of Party, they refused to do justice to the Irishmen of Liverpool. It was, no doubt, a clever dodge for the Liberal managers to put up a Catholic Liberal in Liverpool; but he thought in doing so they were overshooting the mark. Such a man would be either a political renegade or an anti-Irishman, and the Irishmen of Liverpool would have nothing to do with him.

It being now a quarter before Six of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Further Proceeding on Consideration of the Bill, as amended, *deferred* till *Monday* next.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that he desired to make a statement to the House with reference to the course of Business. He had already informed the House, and the Attorney General had likewise done so, that the Registration Bills were extremely pressing. They were even more pressing for the moment than the Redistribution Bill, and they must make some progress with regard to them, because of the necessity to proceed with the voting lists. The duties imposed on the officers in consequence of the delay which had taken place were very great. Therefore, on Friday, it was proposed to go forward with the Irish Registration Bill, the Scotch Bill being placed second. They had intended

to place all the three Bills for Friday; but serious and very natural objections had been taken to setting down the English measure for that day.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, the House would remember, with reference to the question of transferring the cost of preparing the voters' lists from local rates to Imperial taxation, that after the vote which was given the other night the Prime Minister stated that the Government must take time to consider what course they should pursue, and he wished to ask whether that point would be again brought up during the progress of the Irish Registration Bill through Committee?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he did not think the point would be raised in Committee on the Irish Bill. He thought it would first come before the House in Committee on the English Bill, if raised by opponents of the present system, or it would come up on the Report of the Irish Bill.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Then the Government do not intend to move any Amendment which would have the effect of reversing the decision arrived at the other evening?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I am not aware of any such intention on the part of the Solicitor General for Ireland, or of the Irish authorities; and I think that if they had had any such intention, I should have heard of it.

MR. PARNELL asked that instructions similar to those in the English Bill might be inserted in the Irish Registration Bill; also, if it would be convenient for the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) to be in the House on Friday, in order to assist the Irish officials during the discussion of the Irish Bill? He was sure if the right hon. Baronet could find time to be in the House, the result would be better progress and much greater harmony.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE was understood to say that it would not be in Order for him to discuss that question.

COLONEL NOLAN wished to know when the English Bill would come on?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: That must depend to some extent on the progress made with the Irish Bill.

House adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 30th April, 1885.

MINUTES.] — PUBLIC BILLS — *First Reading* — Local Authorities (Expenses of Conferences) * (93); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 6) * (94).

Committee — Report — Federal Council of Australasia (69).

Report — Criminal Law Amendment * (92).

Third Reading — Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 2) * (64); Infants (78), and *passed.*

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—RUSSIAN ADVANCE—OCCUPATION OF MARUCHAK.

QUESTION.

EARL DE LA WARR: I beg to ask the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a Question of which I have given him private Notice—Whether there is any truth in the report of the occupation of Maruchak by the Russians, and also of a further advance towards Herat?

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, Sir Peter Lumsden, on the 23rd of April telegraphed—

"Just received from Governor of Herat intelligence that Russians have advanced a post 30 miles south of Pul-i-Khisti to Maruchak, on the Murghab."

On the 25th Sir Peter Lumsden merely alludes to the recent occupation of Maruchak. Her Majesty's Government are averse to giving publicity to mere reports; but the matter was so important that an answer was given yesterday in the House of Commons with regard to the information which had thus been received, and on which we had thought it right to make inquiries at St. Petersburg. The Russian Ambassador informed me that his Government knew nothing of the Russian advance to Maruchak. Sir Edward Thornton, to whom I had addressed inquiries, replied on the 29th that the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs said that he could state positively that no Russian troops had advanced to Maruchak. Sir Peter Lumsden, in a telegram which arrived late yesterday evening, said that an Afghan express just in declared the report of a Russian occupation of Maruchak to be quite unfounded.

FEDERAL COUNCIL OF AUSTRALASIA BILL.—(No. 69.)

(*The Earl of Derby.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee, read.

Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee on the said Bill."—(*The Earl of Derby.*)

THE EARL OF CARNARVON said, the House would remember the general substance of the discussion which took place the other evening on this Bill, and that the question at issue turned upon the adhesion of certain Australian Colonies to the 31st clause of the Bill; but since the second reading a very important Paper had been laid on the Table of the House. He had been criticized in a public paper for having said that the Colony of New South Wales had expressed its adhesion to this 31st clause, and had refused to enter the Union unless it were retained. The exact position was that neither New South Wales nor New Zealand had expressed any formal opinion on the subject. He thought that it was understood that if that clause did not remain a portion of the Bill there was no probability that either of those Colonies would come in. There was another very important point in the matter. His statement the other night was that there were four Colonies — Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, and Tasmania—in favour of the omission of that clause, and that two Colonies — New South Wales and New Zealand— were in favour of its retention. But from the Paper to which he had alluded he gathered that South Australia had expressed an opinion in favour of the retention of the clause. On the 17th of April a telegram arrived from the Governor of South Australia in which he said the Government there were satisfied with the Amendments agreed upon, one of which Amendments was the insertion of this particular clause. That was a very important matter, because, in the first place, it would be noticed that instead of there being four Colonies adverse to the clause and two favourable to it, there were three in favour and three adverse to it; and, secondly, in the 30th clause of the Bill it was expressly provided that the consent of four Colonies should be required in order to make a Confederation, and the result would be that no confederation under the Bill might take place, which was greatly to be deplored. The precise position of the Australian Colonies was that Victoria, Queensland, and Tasmania were all in favour of the omission of this clause, and New South Wales and New Zealand required to give the matter more consideration, and, in fact, declined to express any formal opinion. There was, he thought, on all sides of the House a desire to encourage to the utmost and to facilitate the union and federation of the Colonies, believing it to be highly desirable in all respects; but, on the other hand, the difficulties which appeared were many, the delicacy of the position was very great, and it required great delicacy of touch in order to carry the matter through successfully. Therefore, while he had endeavoured to correct his statement of the other night so as to bring it in accordance with the exact and precise state of the case, he still adhered to the opinion that it was, on the whole, best to retain the 31st clause in the Bill, as leading to the consummation they all desired—namely, the adoption of this Federation.

THE EARL OF DERBY said, it was quite true that Victoria, Queensland, and Tasmania were against the retention of the clause, that South Australia and West Australia accepted the Bill as it stood, and that New South Wales and New Zealand had not yet expressed any definite opinion.

Motion *agreed to;* House in Committee.

Bill *reported* without Amendment; and to be read 3ª *To-morrow.*

INFANTS BILL.—(No. 78.)

(*The Lord FitzGerald.*)

THIRD READING.

Bill read 3ª (according to Order).

On Motion, "That the Bill do pass?"

LORD NORTON said, he rose to move an Amendment on Sub-section 2 of Clause 3, which gave a mother power to appoint provisionally, by deed or will, a guardian or guardians to act jointly with the father after her death. He proposed to insert the following Proviso:—

"But no such provisional appointment of guardians to act with the infant's father shall take effect unless confirmed by the Court upon evidence sufficient in its judgment to prove that the father is unfit to be the sole guardian."

As the clause stood, a mother might appoint guardians to act with the father, unless the sanction of the Court should be refused. He thought it better, conversely, that such appointment should be invalid unless confirmed by the Court. Every father should not be obliged to void a formal appointment by proving himself fit to be sole guardian. The hostile guardian should be made to show cause for his appointment at all.

Amendment *moved*,

In line 25, to leave out from "infant" to the end of the sub-section, and insert, "But no such provisional appointment of guardians to act with the infant's father shall take effect unless confirmed by the Court upon evidence sufficient in its judgment to prove that the father is unfit to be the sole guardian."—(*The Lord Norton.*)

Lord FITZGERALD said, he hoped their Lordships would not accept the Amendment, as it involved an essential inroad on the principle of the Bill, which was based on what was for "the welfare of the infant." The Amendment sought to substitute "the moral unfitness of the father." A dying mother anxious for the welfare of her children would naturally wish to nominate a guardian to act with the father if she knew that the latter was not a fit person to whom alone to intrust the welfare of his offspring. If the Amendment were agreed to, a guardian so nominated would not be able to act unless a Judge should be satisfied that the father was absolutely unfit to fulfil his paternal duties, and this condition precedent might fail to be established in cases where it would yet be of the greatest importance for the welfare of the children that the mother's guardian should be accepted as the father's coadjutor. It might be greatly for the welfare of the infant that the father should not be the sole guardian without imputing to him any moral delinquency.

Lord INCHIQUIN said, he should support the Amendment. If it were inserted in the clause the principle would be recognized that the father was the person primarily responsible for the welfare of his children, and that he had a right to be their sole guardian unless proved before a Court of competent jurisdiction to be unfitted to exercise the right. If this principle were not established in the Bill, a guardian nominated by the mother would in almost every case be confirmed in his position by the Courts of Law if appeal was made to them, for Judges would be loth to disregard the wishes expressed by a mother on her death-bed. The dual control of father and guardian which the clause contemplated would work well in very few cases indeed.

The LORD CHANCELLOR said, that if this sub-section of the clause had been omitted an important class of cases would have been left wholly unprovided for. He was bound to admit that the present Amendment would not have that result; but the reason why it was better to provide for that class of cases in the manner proposed by the clause might be stated very shortly. In the first place, it was not plain how the Court would deal with the word "unfit," and whether it might not lay on the person making the application a burden greater than ought to be done. Secondly, and connected with the same idea, there might be circumstances not of the gross character to which reference had been made, and not necessarily involving moral unfitness on the part of the father, which might make it highly desirable and almost necessary for the welfare of the infant that a guardian should be associated with him. Suppose there was a father not a profligate or drunkard, but impecunious, hiding here and there to avoid his creditors, and unable out of his own means to provide for his children. In the present state of the law with regard to the property of married women that case was much more likely to occur than before. The mother might have to provide out of her own means for the maintenance of the children, and at her death might dispose of those means for that purpose and desire to appoint a guardian to act with the father. He was not at all sure that the Court would say that such a case came under the meaning of the word "unfit." But he was quite sure that the Court would say that it was desirable that the guardian, if a fit and proper person had been appointed by the mother, should in such a case be associated with the father.

The Marquess of SALISBURY said, he felt that in discussing this question

they were likely to fall into a fallacy if they were to imagine that it was possible in the majority of cases for the guardian to act with the father. He would be appointed against what the father conceived to be his rights, and would be received as an invader in the house. The children would be subjected to what had been called, with reference to political events, "dual control," and to all the evils attributed to that form of government. On every point the two influences would struggle. If there was a question of religion they would have the father teaching Protestanism and the guardian Roman Catholicism, or *vice versâ*, or the father teaching Low Church doctrines and the guardian High Church doctrines, with the effect not that the child would take its choice, but that he would learn to disbelieve both. Again, with regard to morals. One view of life would be presented by the father, another by the guardian, and the child would not adhere to one or the other, but would take the negative result, and treat the question of morals as unimportant. The noble and learned Lord told the House that "unfitness" was a thing very difficult of proof, and, therefore, the father was to be ousted of his rights, not upon proof, but upon suspicion. Then his noble and learned Friend on the Woolsack spoke of the uncertainty of construction to which words would be exposed. That was true. The Court often applied to words a very different construction from what might have been intended by their author. Lord Cairns passed one of the most important measures with respect to real property which had been passed for many years. That measure was brought before the Court in a case which had attracted general attention, and Lord Cairns told him that the decision at which the Court had arrived in that very carefully-drafted Act of Parliament was the reverse of what was intended. When the noble and learned Earl told the House that the interpretation of the word "unfit" would occasion very great difficulty, would not the interpretation of the word "desirable" also be difficult? He was old-fashioned enough to believe that by the law of Nature and the law of God the father was the person who ought to have the care of his child, and that to disestablish the father altogether of his rights and to say that the Judge should act solely with reference to his own view of the welfare of the infant would be to disregard rights held sacred from the beginning of our polity, and resting on far deeper foundations than most of those which we deemed firmly established. He hoped that the Amendment, which had been drawn in a spirit of compromise, would be accepted by the House.

Amendment (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

Amendment *moved,*

In subsection (2.), line 25, to leave out from ("death") to ("infant") in line 26, and insert ("if it be shown to the satisfaction of the court that the father is for any reason unfitted to be the sole guardian of his children.")—(*The Lord Inchiquin.*)

On question, That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill? Their Lordships *divided:*—Contents 53; Not-Contents 69: Majority 16.

Clause 5 (Court may make orders as to custody).

EARL BEAUCHAMP thought that Clause 5 ought to be carefully considered, as it gave the Court an unlimited power respecting the management of children, even in the lifetime of the father. As the clause stood, a quarrelsome or vindictive wife might take proceedings against her husband with respect to the children, and heavy costs might be incurred. How were those costs to be borne? The clause would be productive of much mischief and tend to promote matrimonial differences, unless it were safeguarded as Lord Cairns had proposed to safeguard it. He would, therefore, move as an Amendment the introduction of words limiting the operation of the clause to cases when the husband and wife were separated either by decree of the Court or by deed. Their Lordships had divided on this question last week; but he would take the sense of the House again on the subject.

Moved to insert at beginning of clause ("Where the father or mother of any infant are living separate under a separation by deed or decree of the court, or otherwise.")—*The Earl Beauchamp.*)

LORD FITZGERALD said, he objected to the Amendment on principle. It was not necessary that there should be a quarrel between husband and wife

The Marquess of Salisbury

for the intervention of the Court to be invoked. There might be reasonable differences of opinion, not inconsistent with amicable relations between the parties, which could only be satisfactorily settled by the Court. The Amendment was not only contrary to the spirit of the law of the Church, but was also against the policy of the law, which did not encourage, and, indeed, for a long time did not recognize, separation of husband and wife; and it was a hard thing to impose as a condition precedent to the grant of relief in such cases to a wife that she should leave her home and children.

LORD BRAMWELL said, he was surprised at the arguments of his noble and learned Friend. The clause was a mischievous one as it stood. There might be nothing wrong in the husband's conduct; yet, because his wife entertained different views from him as to the bringing up of the children, or had a trifling difference with him, which good sense and good temper would have got over, a permanent quarrel was to be established between them, and the man was to be subjected to the annoyance and expense of legal proceedings. There was no justification for interfering with the present law. No doubt, there were Petitions in favour of this clause; but, as he had often said, it was the discontented who petitioned, and though those who were satisfied with the existing law might be the overwhelming majority, they were not heard of. He had asked the opinion of a learned Judge who had thought and written as much about our laws as any man, and his learned friend said—"If two men ride on one horse one must ride in front." He declared that rather than pass the clause in its present form he would hand over to the mother the whole government of the house and children. He did not intend to say anything uncivil of women, or to suggest that they were particularly prone to mischief; but undoubtedly this clause would give a wife great power of worrying her husband. He might not only have to pay his own costs in proceedings which she instituted, but probably the costs of his wife, for counsel and solicitors were in divorce proceedings regarded as "necessaries," for which the husband was liable. This would really add another to the terrors of matrimony.

LORD BRABOURNE said, that it was his duty to make an earnest appeal to their Lordships not to accept this Amendment, which those who promoted this measure considered well-nigh fatal to it. Of this the House might be assured, since he (Lord Brabourne) had received many letters and communications to that effect from different parts of the country. He would respectfully entreat their Lordships not to consider the question now before them as if it was one affecting only or principally the class to which they themselves belonged. In that class the clause might, indeed, not be required, and the Amendment might be innocuous. But in the poorer ranks of life such cases as the following sometimes had to his knowledge occurred. A husband would leave his wife either to get work elsewhere, or to go on what was known as "a drunken spree." During his absence the wife supported the children by her hard-won earnings. Then the husband would return, and it was more than doubtful whether the couple could in a legal point of view be held to have been living "separately." As the law now stood, the husband could use the threat of removing the children from the custody of the mother to some place or person disapproved by her, as a means of extorting from her money to squander upon himself. By this clause as it stood, the wife could in such a case apply to the Court for an order as to the custody of the children. The Amendment of the noble Earl would enact that before she could so apply she must separate from her husband. But she might not wish to do this, and might still cherish a hope to reclaim him. He (Lord Brabourne) would leave the two noble and learned Lords who had spoken to discuss the question of costs. To his mind, there was a higher question involved; here was a remedy which it was admitted on all sides that the wife should have, and he protested against its being made a precedent condition that she should separate from her husband. It was all very well to talk of a "dual control;" but all the legislation of late years upon these subjects had been in the direction of elevating the status of the woman, and giving her some share in the direction of her children and household; and having presented many Petitions from wives and mothers who took a deep interest in this

question, on their behalf and in their names he earnestly asked the House to reject the Amendment.

On Question? Their Lordships *divided:*—Contents 35; Not-Contents 69: Majority 34.

LORD DENMAN, in moving, as an Amendment, after Clause 5, to insert the following new clause:—

"In case of the conduct of any father making it wrong for him to have the custody of his infant children or child, and if his wife, their mother, should have a separate household, she, by the order of the Probate and Divorce Court or other court of the High Court of Justice, or of the nearest county court, shall have all the rights which other householders possess, or may in future possess, at every election of Members of Parliament and at all other elections,"

said, he could not expect their Lordships to admit a disfranchising clause in the Bill; but as on December 4, 1884, he alluded to the case of "The King *v.* Greenhill," 1836, referred to by his lamented Predecessor on July 28, 1839, he wished to show that some married women ought to have votes.

Amendment *negatived.*

On the Motion of The Lord FITZGERALD, the following new Clause was inserted:—

"In England and Ireland the High Court of Justice, in any division thereof, and in Scotland either division of the Court of Session, may, in their discretion, on being satisfied that it is for the welfare of the infant, remove from his office any testamentary guardian, or any guardian appointed or acting by virtue of this Act, and may also, if they shall deem it to be for the welfare of the infant, appoint another guardian in place of the guardian so removed."

Amendment *moved,*

After Clause 10, to insert as a new clause—("Nothing in this Act shall prejudice the sole authority of the father, as now recognized by law, in the matter of the religious education of his children.")—(*The Lord Braye.*)

LORD FITZGERALD said, he hoped the noble Lord would not press the Amendment, as he thought it would be introducing into the measure a dangerous element. It was a well-settled principle, and he hoped it would not be shaken, that the children should be brought up in the religion of their father. There was nothing at all in the Bill to derogate from that, and he thought the Amendment entirely unnecessary.

Lord Brabourne

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY said, if the framers of the Bill had no intention of altering the existing state of the law, why should they hesitate to affirm it by this Amendment? The tendency of the Bill appeared to be of an opposite nature, and to leave it to a County Court to decide what was most for the welfare of a child; and this might include the religious bringing up of a child.

On Question? Their Lordships *divided:*—Contents 7; Not-Contents 56: Majority 49.

Clause *disagreed to.*

Motion, "That the Bill do pass," *agreed to;* Bill *passed* accordingly, and sent to the Commons.

CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL.

(*The Earl of Dalhousie.*)

(NO. 92.) REPORT.

Amendments *reported* (according to Order).

Clause 2 (Procuring woman to be a common prostitute or to enter a brothel).

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE moved an Amendment to the clause, so as to make the offence of procuration punishable under the clause in all cases. As the provision stood, the offence was limited to cases in which the woman or girl, with respect to whom the crime should be committed, was under 21 years of age.

Amendment *moved,* in page 1, lines 10 and 11, to leave out ("under twenty-one years of age.")—(*The Earl of Dalhousie.*)

Amendment *agreed to;* words *left out* accordingly.

LORD ABERDARE moved to insert the following clause after Clause 5:—

"Where, in case of any charge under this Act, any girl under 15 years appears to have solicited the offence, such solicitation shall be deemed an offence, and on conviction thereof the Court may require such girl to find securities for good behaviour, or sentence her to be sent to a certified reformatory school or such other certified institution as may hereafter be provided for the reception of such juvenile offenders."

It had, he said, as their Lordships knew, been proved before a Select Committee that there had been cases in which girls had been enticed abroad for immoral purposes. It had been also proved that a considerable amount of juvenile im-

morality existed in this country, for the cure of which some provision ought to be made. But there were none of their Lordships prepared for the revelations made before the Committee. A short paragraph of their Report stated that the evidence proved beyond doubt that juvenile prostitution, upon an enormous scale, was increasing in England, and especially in London. It also said that the Committee were unable adequately to express their sense of the magnitude, both in a moral and physical point of view, of the evils thus brought to light. The object of his Amendment was to suggest the application to those miserable children of that system of reformatory treatment which had obtained such success in the case of juvenile thieves. He thought the proper way of dealing with this subject would be by a Bill; but he was anxious to take this opportunity of bringing it before the House, if only by way of suggestion. He hoped his noble Friend would give an assurance that the question should be dealt with. Such an assurance would be satisfactory to the House and to the country.

Amendment *moved*,

After Clause 5, insert as a new clause:—"Where, in case of any charge under this Act, or any charge of indecent assault, any girl under the age of fifteen years appears to have solicited an offence under this Act, or an indecent assault, such solicitation shall be deemed an offence, and, on conviction thereof, the court may require such girl to find securities for good behaviour, or sentence her to be sent to a certified home within the meaning of this Act."—(*The Lord Aberdare.*)

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, that the noble Lord himself did not consider the clause was drawn in such a shape that the Government could consent to its insertion in the Bill. He need not, therefore, enter into any criticism of its wording. He would only say that his noble Friend had called attention to a most grave subject, with regard to which a very important recommendation had been made by a Committee of their Lordships' House. There was nothing in this Bill to carry out that recommendation. It was not thought advisable to introduce into so short a Bill a matter for which such elaborate and complicated provisions would be required, as the establishment of these homes would involve. But he would bring to the notice of the Secretary of State what had been said by his noble Friend.

Amendment (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

Bill to be read 3ª *To-morrow.*

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—THE EXPEDITION UP THE NILE.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

VISCOUNT HARDINGE rose to ask the Under Secretary of State for War, Whether he could give the House any information with respect to the present transport arrangements for conveying clothing and stores to the troops on the Nile? His noble Friend, he was sure, felt that the comfort and welfare of the troops on the Nile was a matter well worthy of his attention. He had heard from sources on which he could rely that the troops were in a very bad state as regarded their clothing. In some cases the clothing was all but falling off the backs of the men, and the troops were in an equally bad condition with regard to boots. Officers seemed to suffer alike with the men. So far as he was aware, no fresh clothing had reached them yet; and he should like to know what prospect there was of the troops getting the necessary stores? No doubt the transport difficulties were very great, for he was quite aware of the great loss of camels which the Army in the Soudan had sustained. In the march from Gubat to Korti the loss of camels was enormous, and it would appear that there had been no margin left for casualties in this respect. He had heard that the stores of clothing had not got beyond Assouan, and he should be glad to be informed that his information was incorrect. He hoped his noble Friend would be able to say what the present and future transport arrangements were, and whether the troops were to wait for the rising of the Nile before they obtained fresh clothing. He might be told that all these matters were left to the General commanding, but the War Office was ultimately responsible; and they should know accurately and be able to impart such information, where the stores actually were, and what prospect there was of these stores reaching the regiments. Large sums of money had been subscribed in this country for the purchase of stores; but these would be useless if they did not reach their destination. If the health of the troops was to be secured, there should not only be

sent out comforts of every description, but books and newspapers were invaluable to men who were cooped up all day in straw huts, and who, after the excitement of a campaign, were so liable to sickness. It was stated that four weeks ago our men were entirely destitute of clothing and other necessaries.

THE EARL OF MORLEY said, he was not at all surprised that the noble Lord should have asked this Question; and he could assure him that anything which conduced either to the good health or to the comfort of the troops in the Soudan occupied the serious and earnest attention of the authorities who had to supply their needs. With regard to transport, the position was this. They knew generally that certain means existed of conveying various articles to the troops; but those means were entirely in the hands of the General who commanded the lines of communication and the commanding officers. They, and they alone, determined what were the particular articles which were most in demand; and the orders of those officers, who were perfectly acquainted with the most pressing demands of the troops, must regulate what articles were sent out. The noble Lord was quite wrong in stating that the clothing had not got beyond Assouan. The stores of clothing and boots in Egypt were enormous, and there had been for a long time considerable stores at Wady Halfa. In the last detailed Report he observed that a steamer was now plying above Dongola, and had started more than four weeks ago with a large supply of clothing and necessaries required by the troops; and a distinguished officer, who had recently returned from the upper regions of the Nile, had informed him that at the time he left the General in command of the communications had stopped all supplies except those required for pressing needs, and those were forwarded without delay. He trusted that by this time the clothes and boots had reached the men who required them. He might mention that since the time referred to by the noble Lord some of the troops had descended the Nile, and had, no doubt, met the supplies half way. He could assure him that the difficulties of transport were very great indeed, and that the greatest efforts had been made to keep up the lines of communication by steamers and boats, and where these were not available by camels. Everything that could possibly be done had been done to keep the troops supplied with what was necessary for their health and comfort.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE CAPE COLONY—CAPE TOWN AND SIMON'S BAY RAILWAY.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH rose to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether Her Majesty's Government has undertaken or intends to undertake the completion of the railroad between Cape Town and Simon's Bay and the Cape of Good Hope? The value of this railway, he submitted, had been pointed out by various Military Authorities; and it was entirely upon military, and not upon commercial, grounds the undertaking should be completed. The communications by sea from Simon's Bay to Table Bay were very long. If the line of railroad were completed it would be possible to establish barracks halfway, and the troops could be moved backwards and forwards, and it would be a good line of defence. He understood that the Government proposed to expend £90,000 upon the fortifications at Simon's Bay; but the works of defence there would be absolutely useless unless they had the means of conveying troops to Simon's Bay by railway. The only assistance asked in the matter was a sum of £50,000 for the construction of six miles of railway. He hoped the noble Earl would take the question seriously into consideration, as from the best information he could obtain our defences were in a most imperfect condition.

LORD CHELMSFORD said, that he had gone closely into the question of the defences of these two places, both with good maps and also by having personally ridden over the ground; and he had come to the conclusion that it was absolutely impossible to separate the defences of Simon's Bay from those of Table Bay. The two must be considered as part of one defence, and it was absolutely necessary that the railway should be completed. He was glad to find that his opinion was corroborated by that of the noble and gallant Lord (Lord Napier of Magdala).

THE EARL OF DERBY said, he did not think the noble Lord would expect

him to enter into controversy on the subject. He believed the noble Lord's statement of facts was quite accurate, and he was very willing to defer to the high authority of the noble and gallant Lord opposite. There was no doubt that it was very desirable to connect these two places. But the question was—who was to make the railway, and who was to bear the expense? Within the last few days he had received a communication from the Agent General of the Cape Colony conveying a proposal on the part of the Government of that Colony, which he intended immediately to refer to a small Departmental Committee appointed by the Colonial and War Offices and the Admiralty. The subject would be at once taken into consideration. He had not seen the details of the proposal, and could not, therefore, express an opinion upon it; but he was quite sure that whatever decision was arrived at that communication would not be lost sight of.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON said, that it was extremely difficult to discuss these questions openly, because so many military considerations were involved. He quite agreed with the noble and gallant Lord behind him as to the great necessity of completing this railway. He was glad that the Colonial Secretary had undertaken to examine the subject; but he was disposed to regret that it was to be referred to a Departmental Committee, and that reference would involve a loss of precious time. No further facts could be ascertained, and there did not seem to be two opinions on the subject. The railway ought to have been taken in hand long ago; and he, with other noble Lords, had on several occasions urged the importance of this and other similar undertakings at a time when they might have been prosecuted more effectively, and at a less expense than was possible now. He urged with all the force in his power that there should be no unnecessary delay on the part of the Government in taking action in the matter.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH wished to add that means should be taken for the conveyance of torpedoes from one port to the other.

House adjourned at a quarter past Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 30th April, 1885.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEE — Industries (Ireland), *nominated.*

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered in Committee*—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 1) (Bradford and Shelf Tramways and others) * [143]; Leasehold Building Land Enfranchisement * [145]; Turbary (Ireland) * [146]; Land Tenure (Scotland) * [147]; Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt Practices) * [148].

Second Reading—Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 4) * [116]; Metropolitan Streets Act (1867) Extension [137]; Medical Act (1858) Amendment [130], *debate adjourned.*

Committee—Report—Barristers Admission (Ireland) * [95-144].

Committee—Report—Third Reading—Industrial Schools (Ireland) * [96], and *passed.*

Third Reading—Oyster and Mussel Fisheries Provisional Order * [124], and *passed.*

PROVISIONAL ORDERS BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (POOR LAW) (No. 4) BILL.—[BILL 116.]

(*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles W. Dilke.*)

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [23rd April], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL said, it would be recollected by the House in reference to this matter that there was considerable opposition on the other side of the House the last time the Bill was under consideration. The Local Government Board had carefully considered the question with regard to that part of the Bill relating to the parish of St. Benedict, Cambridge; and they did not feel disposed in view of the opposition that had arisen to press their original suggestion. At the same time, in regard to the Amendment given Notice of by the hon. and learned Member for Cambridgeshire (Mr. Bulwer), it did not appear that a compromise would be arranged

to the satisfaction of the parties particularly interested; and he thought, it would be waste of time to bring the suggested compromise forward. He would now ask that the second reading might be taken with the understanding that when the Committee stage was reached the Local Government Board would withdraw all that part of the Provisional Order which related to St. Benedicts', Cambridge, letting that matter come to an end in the present year.

MR. BULWER said, he had intended to oppose the Bill; but he thought, if he correctly understood the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Local Government Board, the necessity for that opposition to the second reading was removed. He understood that when the Committee stage was reached the Schedule to which he took exception dealing with the parish of St. Benedict—and it was only to that he objected—would be withdrawn from the Bill. Under those circumstances, he withdrew all opposition to the second reading.

MR. W. FOWLER said, did he understand the hon. Gentleman that what he said applied to both parts, the whole of the Bill as regarded the town of Cambridge?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL said, all as regarded the parish of St. Benedict.

MR. W. FOWLER said, he would suggest that the Local Government Board should withdraw the other part, leaving the whole of the town unaffected by the Order.

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL said, the questions relating to both parishes were rather technical and complicated, and unsuited for discussion in the House at that period. If he were allowed to carry the Bill forward through this stage he would carefully consider the whole. All that he now was prepared to do was to withdraw that part which related to the parish of St. Benedict, to which only opposition was now raised. That the Local Government Board were quite willing to do. He was quite ready to consult with the hon. Member (Mr. W. Fowler), before Committee was reached, as to the propriety of withdrawing the other part also.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

QUESTIONS.

—o—

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL (FINANCE, &c.)

MR. SALT asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he will lay upon the Table of the House a full statement of account as between this Country and the Transvaal; stating the original amount of debt due from the Transvaal, the amount received and remitted; also the amounts of interest paid, remitted, and now due?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Yes, Sir; if the hon. Gentleman will move for such a Return it shall be given.

POOR LAW (IRELAND) — BELFAST BOARD OF GUARDIANS—HOLYWOOD BURIAL GROUND.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that a letter, dated 15th November 1878, was sent from the Local Government Board to the Belfast Board of Guardians, requesting to be informed how the Guardians propose that the expenses in the purchase of additional land for enlarging the Holywood Burying Ground should be charged, having regard to section 234 of "The Public Health Act, 1878;" whether it be true that the Guardians passed the following resolution in reply:—

"That the Electoral Divisions situated in the county Down portion of the Union, with the exception of that portion of the Ballymacarrett Electoral Division included in the borough of Belfast, be the proposed area upon which to charge the expenses of purchasing the additional land referred to;"

whether it be true that, although the aforesaid resolution was neither disapproved by the Local Government Board, nor rescinded by the Belfast Board of Guardians, the Guardians nevertheless, on the 28th January 1879, fixed a rate of one penny in the pound, under the Burial Grounds Act, on the rural portions of the Union, both in Antrim and Down, outside the borough of Belfast; whether it be true, as alleged, that that rate was made on the 24th June 1879, and levied without any sealed order from the Local Government Board, as required by section 234 of "The Public Health Act, 1878;" and, if so, whether, without a sealed order, the Guardians had any power to levy a burial rate; whe-

ther it be true that the purchase-money for two acres additional land to Holywood Cemetery, and the cost of enclosing it by a wall and gate, was paid out of that rate; whether it be true that, after the Board of Guardians had paid £428 16*s.* 3*d.* for that purpose, the Local Government Board in November of the same year handed over the cemetery to the Holywood Town Commissioners as the Burial Board, without securing the repayment of any part of the aforesaid money; whether it be true that, although the county Antrim is separated from the said cemetery by Belfast Lough and the borough of Belfast, and can derive no benefit from it, that the ratepayers have been compelled to pay about £250 of the entire cost of extensions; and, whether the Local Government Board will direct their auditor to inquire into and make a report on this subject?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The circumstances detailed in this Question have been the subject of a correspondence which appears to disclose a case for a further inquiry, and the Local Government Board will proceed to make it.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—SUB-CONSTABLE M'CORMICK.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a sub-constable of police named M'Cormick, now on duty in Magherafelt, was removed from Coleraine and reduced from the rank of sergeant for a criminal offence; whether M'Cormick was criminally prosecuted for the foregoing offence; whether other misconduct is alleged against him; and, what course will be taken in his case?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Constable M'Cormick was never removed or reduced in rank for a criminal offence, nor was he ever charged with such an offence. He was once guilty of conduct which was held to amount to a constructive assault, for which he was removed from charge and seriously cautioned.

NAVY (SHIPS, &c.)—MANUFACTURE OF GUNS.

MR. CHARLES PALMER asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether any action has been taken to carry out the recommendation of the Committee on the building and repairing of Her Majesty's ships, viz., that the entire responsibility of the manufacture of guns for the Navy should rest with the Admiralty, and be quite separate from the War Department; and, whether the only reasons for not carrying out those recommendations are questions of book-keeping between the two Departments?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: No action has yet been taken. Many important questions, in addition to that of book-keeping, must be considered before any change is made. We shall not certainly lose sight of the recommendations of the Committee.

LAW AND POLICE (METROPOLIS)—WANDSWORTH POLICE COURT.

SIR TREVOR LAWRENCE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the magistrates sitting in the Wandsworth Police Court, Mr. Paget and Mr. Shiel, have written to him to say that, in their opinion, the existing state of the Court is "a disgrace to the Metropolis, and calculated to bring the administration of the Law into contempt;" and, whether he can now state the nature of the arrangements which have been made for the removal of the Court to more commodious premises?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, that the Treasury had sanctioned the expenditure of certain sums on the Police Court in question; and he had requested the First Commissioner of Works to take the matter in hand, and see what was best to be done.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY — ASSISTANT CLERKS TO COUNTY INSPECTORS.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a circular was issued on the 12th of October last by the Inspector General of the Royal Irish Constabulary, putting an end to the arrangement by which the offices of assistant clerks to county inspectors were occupied by sergeants of the force; whether all the sergeants deprived of office by the circular, except one, Sergeant Bratton, were Catholics; and whether Sergeant Bratton has since been appointed Chief Clerk at Athlone; whether there were any Catholics, and, if so, how many, among the sergeants, about ten in number, who have been retained in the

county inspectors' offices in contravention of the circular; whether thirty-six constables were examined at the depôt last November, with a view to the appointment of the most suitable to be clerks to county inspectors; who examined and valued the papers of the candidates; were the candidates informed of the result of the examination; how is the fact explained that every one of the competing constables since appointed clerk to a county inspector is a Protestant; and, whether, notwithstanding the circular of the 12th of October, discontinuing sergeant clerks, the Protestant constable clerks who since attained the rank of sergeant are permitted still to hold the clerkships?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Inspector General informs me that he found it necessary to make the order referred to for disciplinary and other reasons. Exceptions were made in some cases where the duties were of greater importance; and of eight sergeants retained in these circumstances six are Roman Catholics. In consequence of the order seven sergeants had to revert to ordinary duty. Five of these were Roman Catholics and two were Protestants. Of these seven, two Roman Catholics and two Protestants have been since re-appointed to vacancies, and Sergeant Bratton is one of these. The examination referred to was most carefully conducted, and the candidates who were unsuccessful were so informed. The men who took the first two places were Roman Catholics and received the first appointments. Out of eight appointments made three were Roman Catholics. Two assistant clerks, a Protestant and a Roman Catholic, have attained the rank of sergeant since the issue of the order, and both have been required to revert to ordinary duty. I give these details with the view of showing the absolute want of foundation for the allegations of partiality on the score of religion; but I must again point out the undesirability of Questions of this kind in reference to a disciplined force in which promotions are made on the ground of merit alone.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—AMALGAMATION OF NEWPORT AND WESTPORT POOR LAW UNIONS.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to a project to amalgamate the Newport with the Westport Poor Law Union, What effect has been produced upon the Local Government Board by a unanimous resolution of the Westport Board, adopted on the 19th ultimo, condemning the project of amalgamation, pointing out that it would almost double the average rate of the Westport Union; that there would be a distance of over forty miles between some of the districts in the new Union and the Workhouse, and that it would be impossible to collect the rates, and scarcely possible even to procure collectors; whether the Local Government have considered and framed any alternative schemes of amalgamation or alteration of Unions by which the needs of the poor may be more adequately met, and the pressure of the poor rate be more equally distributed than by the scheme projected; what steps have been taken to ascertain the opinions of the ratepayers and others affected; and, whether, having regard to the pressure of the general question of Union amalgamation in Ireland, the Local Government Board will suspend any scheme confined to individual Unions until the general question has been considered?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Local Government Board have the resolution of the Westport Guardians at present under consideration, and hope soon to address them on the subject. I am not aware of any alternative schemes being under consideration. Opportunity was given of expressing their views to all parties interested at the inquiry which was held, of which notice was given to all the Unions adjoining Newport. There is no general question of amalgamation of Unions in Ireland under consideration that would make it advisable to suspend action in any particular case.

LAW AND POLICE—WANDERING LUNATICS.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to several cases recently reported, in which workhouse authorities refused to receive, even temporarily and pending inquiry, wandering insane persons for whom reception orders were duly made by police magistrates; whether, in consequence of such refusal, these unfortunate lunatics had to be kept for a considerable time

in the police cells, where no proper accommodation exists, at great inconvenience to the police and serious risk to themselves; whether the Lunacy Commissioners have taken any notice of these cases, or offered any suggestion as to the best method of dealing with them; and, whether he will give peremptory orders in the proper quarter to arrange for the immediate reception of insane persons presented under the order of a police magistrate, until they can be examined and their cases properly dealt with?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, that he had answered a Question on that subject put to him the other day; and he had then stated that, in his opinion, the proper place for these unfortunate persons was neither a police cell nor a prison, but in a workhouse. But great difficulties had been raised by workhouse authorities in regard to the subject; and he, therefore, would propose in the Lunacy Bill now before the House of Lords to introduce some clause to clear up the matter.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—SALARIES OF TEACHERS IN WORKHOUSES.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in reference to workhouse teachers, What is the average salary of workhouse teachers in Ireland; what is the value of the weekly rations allowed them; what has been the average increase of salary to workhouse teachers during the past ten years; what compensation, if any, has been given to workhouse teachers for gratuities withdrawn by the Commissioners of National Education upon the passing of the Act of 1875; what is the average length of service of a workhouse teacher; is the whole of a workhouse teacher's time devoted to the care of the children in charge and to the discharge of other workhouse duties; and, is it true that, for several years past, the salaries of workhouse teachers have been paid from the Consolidated Fund and not from Poor Rates?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have not had time to obtain the information asked for.

FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—UNION HALL PIER, CO. CORK.

COLONEL COLTHURST asked the Secretary to the Treasury, When the pier at Union Hall, county Cork, will be commenced?

MR. HIBBERT: This pier is one of those included in the complete scheme of the Fishery Piers and Harbours Commissioners which has just been sanctioned. The necessary formal steps and the preparation of contract drawings will be proceeded with as soon as possible; but some little time must necessarily elapse before the actual commencement of the work.

CRIMINAL LAW (IRELAND)—CRIMINAL LUNATIC ASYLUM, DUBLIN—ESCAPE OF PATIENTS.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it true that the residents in the neighbourhood of the Criminal Lunatic Asylum near Dublin lately memoralised the Government on the subject of the escape of patients, stating that they were afraid to live in the locality in consequence; whether a considerable force of constabulary has consequently been placed on duty there day and night; whether escapes have multiplied under the present management; and, whether he will lay the report of the inquiry held into the matter in January last upon the Table?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: There has no such remonstrance been received from the residents in the neighbourhood of the Asylum. Constabulary have been employed to guard the Asylum during certain structural alterations, with the view of securing the safe custody of the inmates. Some escapes, unfortunately, occurred before the police were sent; but none have happened since. A Departmental Committee has recently made a Report on the Asylum; but Reports of this character are always regarded as confidential.

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT—RAILWAY RATES.

MR. J. W. BARCLAY asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether, since the Railway Commission has full powers to deal with preferential rates to Foreign goods, the Board of Trade will exercise the powers imposed by the 3rd section of the Traffic Act, 1854, and instruct the Attorney General to take proceedings before the Railway Commissioners to enforce the provisions of the Traffic Act?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN The section referred to by the hon. Member merely authorizes the Board of Trade to certify to the Attorney General in case of a violation or contravention of the Act of 1854, and upon this certificate it is lawful for the Attorney General to apply to the Court. The Act of 1854 has, however, been amended by the Regulation of Railways Act, 1873. The Act of 1873 permits a complaint of a contravention of Section 2 of the Act of 1854 to be made, not only by a person aggrieved, but by any person appointed by the Board of Trade, or by a Municipal or Public Corporation, if furnished with a certificate from the Board of Trade. Local Authorities have availed themselves of this power; and it appears to me that any allegation of preferential rates would be more properly and more effectually brought under the notice of the Commissioners by such Local Authority than by the Board of Trade.

ARMY—BILLETING AT DOWNPATRICK.

MR. SEXTON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he is aware that the Catholic clergy of Downpatrick strongly object to the arrangement by which one hundred and ninety men, recruits of the 5th battalion Royal Irish Rifles, now billeted upon the licensed vintners of the town, are lodged in a number of houses, some of them not certified lodging houses, and as to the sufficiency of the sleeping accommodation of which there is considerable doubt; whether there is a number of unoccupied houses in the town, one of them large enough to accommodate eighty men; whether the Government lately paid £1,000 for the tenant right of a piece of land adjacent to the town, to be occupied by the whole battalion when it assembles; and, whether for economy, and for other reasons, the Government, instead of continuing to pay 4*d.* a-night for each man, will make use for their accommodation of the ground it has bought, or of the unoccupied houses?

MR. BRAND: I have made inquiries of the General Officer Commanding at Belfast, with the following result:—No complaints have been made by the Catholic clergy. The billeting arrangements are satisfactory. There is not sufficient accommodation in unoccupied houses in Downpatrick for 190 men, nor is there any single unoccupied house which would accommodate 80 men. There is a camping ground at Downpatrick, and after to-day it will be used. It is not customary to encamp troops at an earlier date than the 1st of May.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—MONAGHAN LICENSING SESSIONS.

LORD ARTHUR HILL asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether it is the case that, at the late Quarter Sessions in Monaghan, a man named Murray applied for a transfer of a licence, which was refused by the County Court Judge, and the house shut up; whether, notwithstanding such refusal, the magistrates at the following Petty Sessions granted a protection order for the same house to a man named Rafferty, although it was proved at the Quarter Sessions that Rafferty had sold to Murray; and, whether the Petty Sessions Court has the legal right to reopen a public-house, closed by order of the Quarter Sessions Court; and what steps the Government propose to take in the matter?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): I am informed that the reason for the refusal mentioned in the first paragraph was, that Rafferty had not himself got a licence, and, therefore, had no right to sell drink. Rafferty, however, had bought the licensed house for a man named M'Nally, and Rafferty should have been the person to have applied at the Quarter Sessions. Rafferty has since obtained under Section 12 of the Licensing Act of 1874 a protection order, and an application for a transfer can be made in proper form and the mistake rectified. There are no special circumstances, and I do not think any illegality has been committed.

PARLIAMENT—PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—VENTILATION OF THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

MR. J. G. TALBOT asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether any of the recommendations of the Select Committee which inquired last Session into the ventilation of the House have been carried out; and, whether he proposes to move the re-appointment of the Committee, in accordance with the suggestion made in their Report?

MR. HERBERT GLADSTONE: According to the recommendation of the Select Committee, the Local Authority has closed the ventilation gratings of the sewer in the roadway to the west of Westminster Hall. In accordance also with the suggestion of the Committee, the President of the Local Government Board directed Major Tulloch to inspect and report on the sewerage arrangements of the Houses of Parliament. Major Tulloch, who probably had not sufficient time at his disposal to make an exhaustive examination, advised that certain alterations should be made. The expediency of these proposals was doubted by the officers responsible for the drainage system; and a protracted and complete examination, accompanied by numerous and careful experiments on the movement of the air in the main sewer, under the personal superintendence of Mr. Prim, has confirmed the doubt. Sir Robert Rawlinson, the Chief Engineering Inspector of the Local Government Board, has, on behalf of his Board, made an additional Report, which does not bear out the opinions expressed by Major Tulloch. A complete Report, containing a detailed account of all the experimental data which have been obtained, will very shortly be completed. I may add that, so far as the drainage system of the Houses of Parliament is concerned, the results of the inquiries are extremely re-assuring. It does not at present appear that there is any reason for the re-appointment of the Select Committee.

CENTRAL ASIA—AFGHANISTAN—ENGAGEMENTS WITH THE AMEER.

MR. FRANCIS BUXTON asked the Under Secretary of State for India, When the pledge was first given, to the present Ameer of Afghanistan, that Her Majesty's Government would be responsible for the integrity of Afghan territory, whether such a policy was supported both by the late and the present Government; and, in what document or documents any such pledge is to be found?

MR. J. K. CROSS: The engagement to the Ameer was as follows:—

"Your Highness has requested that the views and intentions of the British Government with regard to the position of the ruler at Cabul in relation to foreign Powers should be placed on record for your Highness's information. The Viceroy and Governor General in Council authorizes me to declare to you that since the British Government admit no right of interference by foreign Powers within Afghanistan, and since both Russia and Persia are pledged to abstain from all interference with the affairs of Afghanistan, it is plain that your Highness can have no political relations with any foreign Power except with the British Government. If any foreign Power should attempt to interfere in Afghanistan, and if such interference should lead to unprovoked aggression on the dominions of your Highness, in that event the British Government would be prepared to aid you to such extent and in such manner as may appear to the British Government necessary in repelling it; provided that your Highness follows unreservedly the advice of the British Government in regard to your external relations."

This engagement was given in a letter from Sir Lepel Griffin to Abdurrahman Khan on the 1st of August, 1880, and was renewed in the same terms in two letters from the Viceroy to the Ameer of the 22nd of February and 16th of June, 1883. The first of these letters is printed in Afghanistan, No. 1, of 1881, page 40; the two latter in Central Asia, No. 1, 1884, pages 72 and 85. As regards the policy of the late Government, on which I would rather not express an opinion in answer to a Question, particulars will be found in the various Papers presented to Parliament on the subject of Afghanistan while they were in Office.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY: Have the Government got the Ameer's answer?

MR. J. K. CROSS: The answer of the Ameer was contained in the same Paper as the first three letters.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Had the Ameer at that time been recognized by the whole of Afghanistan?

MR. J. K. CROSS: He had been recognized by the British Government.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I wish to ask, whether Sir Lepel Griffin's letter of June 14, 1880, did not contain the following passage, with these reservations:—

"The British Government are willing you should establish one Afghanistan, including Herat, the possession of which cannot be guaranteed to you, though the Government are not disposed to hinder any measures you may take to obtain possession of it."

MR. J. K. CROSS: I think it would be convenient if my hon. Friend will give Notice of a Question of that kind.

FISHERIES (IRELAND)—THE SHANNON SALMON FISHERY.

MR. TOMLINSON (for Colonel KING-HARMAN) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will give a Return of the number of fixed and movable engines for the capture of salmon in the tidal portions of the River Shannon, each description of net separately; the locality in which those nets are fished; the names of the owners of same; and the amount of licence paid for each class of net or engine; and, of the number of fixed engines that were in existence in the lower waters (tidal) prior to the Act of 1863; how many of those engines were abolished by that Act; and the number of same that have subsequently been reinstated by the Inspectors of Irish Fisheries?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN was understood to say that he had written to the hon. and gallant Member on the subject.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—POSTMASTER OF MOUNTFIELD POST OFFICE.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Postmaster General, Whether sub-constable Thomas Donnelly stationed at Carrickmore, county Tyrone, has purchased a farm in the locality and applied for the mastership of Mountfield Post Office, he being still a member of the Royal Irish Constabulary?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: In reply to the hon. Member, I have to say that the nomination for this office does not rest with me, but with the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury. I can inform the hon. Member that the noble Lord has not yet made any appointment to the office, and, I believe, does not contemplate giving it to the officer to whom the hon. Member refers.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS—CARMEEN DIVISION, COOTEHILL UNION—THE INQUIRY.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that the clerk of Cootehill Union made the following statement in his letter to the Local Government Board, No. 14,583—84, in answer to the allegations made against him by Mr. Owen M'Cabe, candidate, and Rev. F. M'Kenna, P.P. his nominator, paragraph 11;

"This property" (Carmeen) "is held in trust by the persons named" (Most Rev. Dr. Donnelly, &c) "who lodged separate statements of claim on a valuation of £119, on which I allowed four votes, &c.;"

if it is a fact that the clerk confirmed the above statement, with 25 others, by solemn oath at the subsequent inquiry, July 8th, 1884, before Mr. Armstrong, Local Government Board Inspector; if it is a fact that the clerk did not allow any property votes on the said property of Carmeen, for which the Rev. F. M'Kenna, P.P. Latton, was proxy, and at whose residence the voting paper was left, inasmuch as the clerk alleged, at the counting of votes, that the property voting papers of the townland of Latton were missing, and could not be produced; that the clerk swore at the inquiry, 8th July, he could not find the property voting papers of the townland of Latton at the counting of votes, and of course did not allow them; that the fact that the clerk did not allow any property votes for Carmeen is notorious, having occurred in the board room in the presence of all interested, and sworn to at a public inquiry, and is in the knowledge of the Local Government Board; and, if it is a fact that Mr. Owen M'Cabe and Rev. F. M'Kenna, P.P. have again and again directed in a special manner the attention of the Local Government Board to the contradictory swearing of the clerk in this matter?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The matter referred to in this Question has already been the subject of a Question asked by the hon. Member for Louth. I must refer the hon. Member to an answer given on the 24th of April, 1884.

EGYPT (AFFAIRS OF THE SOUDAN)—THE MILITARY SITUATION.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, since the cessation of active hostilities, any communications have been received from Lord Wolseley or Sir Evelyn Baring as to the extent of the influence or power of the Mahdi in the Soudan, and more particularly in that part of the country north of Korti; and, if so, whether there is any objection to laying them upon the Table of the

House; and, whether, as further offensive operations are not at present contemplated, there is now any objection to at once removing so many of the troops at or about Suakin as are not required for the protection of that place and its immediate neighbourhood into some healthier and more convenient quarters, where they would be equally available for active service elsewhere in case of need?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Since the Government decided to review their policy with regard to the Soudan, we have been in communication both with Sir Evelyn Baring and with Lord Wolseley upon the whole subject; and some of the despatches and telegrams received from them can certainly be said to touch upon the subject referred to in the first part of the Question. These communications, however, cannot be said to be complete, and some of them are of an extremely confidential character. I doubt very much whether it is possible at present to lay on the Table Papers which would add materially to the information in possession of the House. I shall, of course, from time to time revise the Correspondence which has taken place, with a view to seeing whether further information can be laid on the Table. With regard to the latter part of the Question, Lord Wolseley has just left Cairo for Suakin, with a view to report upon the military situation there. Until we have received that Report it will not be possible to say what number of troops may be removed from that place. Although I have no reason for thinking that the health of the troops is endangered, it is probable that some portion of them will be removed.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT: May I ask what steps the Government propose to take to protect the friendly tribes in the neighbourhood of Suakin and the friendly tribes on the Nile, particularly in the neighbourhood of Dongola?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: These questions are both included in the subjects on which we are in communication with Lord Wolseley. Until we have received further Reports upon them, and until we have arrived at a more definite conclusion as to the whole policy in the Soudan, I do not think an answer can be given to the Question of the hon. and gallant Member.

MR. O'DONNELL: Does the Government understand that the presence of a British Army is necessary for the protection of the friendly tribes; and if it is necessary will a British Army be retained there?

[No reply.]

THE PAPAL SEE—DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE VATICAN—MR. ERRINGTON.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, With reference to the following statement in *The Times* of the 28th April:—

"Our Correspondent in Rome informs us that, if the Vatican proceed, and persists in nominating Dr. Walsh rather than Dr. Donnelly, who is patronised by the English Government, Mr. Errington, who is officially intrusted with the duty of settling with the Holy See ecclesiastical questions connected with England, will immediately leave Rome;"

whether he will lay upon the Table a Copy of the instructions of Government to Mr. Errington; and, whether his withdrawal from Rome would be followed by the declaration usual in such cases?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No instructions have been given to Mr. Errington, so it is not in my power to lay them on the Table of the House.

MR. SEXTON: I wish to ask the noble Lord, having regard to the assurances given by the Prime Minister, and by the noble Lord himself in 1883, that a record would be made from time to time, and kept in the Foreign Office, of Mr. Errington's proceedings, whether there is any objection to laying on the Table the record of 1883 of Mr. Errington's visit to Rome? Also whether the present visit is the subject of official record; and whether any Member of Her Majesty's Government is in communication with Mr. Errington in respect to the vacant Archbishopric of Dublin?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The understanding given in 1883 was that a record would be kept for the information of successive Secretaries of State. I stated, in reply to a Question on June 11, 1883—

"No Department of the Foreign Office will be charged with making and keeping the record of any correspondence with Mr. Errington. The

record of it will eventually be placed in the archives of the Office for the information of successive Secretaries of State."—(3 *Hansard*, [280] 219.)

MR. SEXTON: Would there be any objection to laying that record, or any portion of it, on the Table?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Yes, Sir. I have no power at all to undertake to lay any portion of these communications upon the Table of the House.

MR. SEXTON: Is the present visit of Mr. Errington to Rome the subject of a similar record?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: If the hon. Member desires to ask me any further Questions, he had much better place them on the Paper. He can see from my answer that no department of the Foreign Office is charged with keeping this record; and as I only represent the Foreign Office in the House, I am not in a position to reply to the Question of the hon. Member, at least now.

MR. SEXTON: I shall ask to-morrow whether the visit of Mr. Errington to Rome is being made the subject of a record?

MR. HEALY: Might I ask the noble Lord whether it is the intention of the Government to continue Mr. Errington as Ambassador to Rome after the next General Election?

[No reply.]

MERCHANT SHIPPING—SALE OF THE "KINFAUNS CASTLE" TO RUSSIA.

MR. COLERIDGE KENNARD asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the steamship *Kinfauns Castle* is now the property of the Russian Government, and is being fitted out for warlike purposes; and, if so, whether he will inform the House from whose and to what name the said ship was transferred, and the date of the transaction?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I am not aware whether or not the *Kinfauns Castle* is actually the property of the Russian Government; but she was purchased on behalf of the Russian Volunteer Fleet Society. Nor am I able to say whether she is being fitted out for warlike purposes. I am informed that before she left England she was fitted up for the accommodation of a large number of men, to carry emigrants to the Amoor and tea from China to Odessa. The *Kinfauns Castle* belonged to the Castle Mail Company, and the negotiations for the sale began in November, 1883, and were concluded shortly afterwards. The registered managing owner at the time of the sale was Sir Donald Currie, who transferred her on behalf of the Castle Company. No record is kept of the names of purchasers in the case of vessels sold to a foreign flag. She left this country early in 1884.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—KILKENNY FEMALE PRISON.

MR. MARUM asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been directed to the dissatisfaction existing amongst the magistracy and general public of Kilkenny county and city by reason of the absence of a female prison in Kilkenny, during the last three years, whereby females remanded or committed for perhaps trivial offences or defaults, in the north portion of the county, are sent, under police escort, some sixteen miles by road, possibly in inclement weather, and twenty miles per rail, to the gaol of Tullamore, in King's County, and likewise females in the south, under similar circumstances, are sent to Waterford Gaol, a distance of some thirty miles; and, whether the Government is prepared to recommend to the prison authorities the advisability of re-establishing a prison for females in the city of Kilkenny?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Government have received no complaints of the abolition of the prison, which followed upon the closing of Spike Island. In view of the strong recommendation of the recent Royal Commission that the prisons in Ireland should be further concentrated, I should say there is little prospect of a female prison being re-established at Kilkenny; but the future status of the prison in that City forms part of the general question which is now under consideration.

PARLIAMENT—ADMISSION OF STRANGERS TO THE HOUSE—THE NEW REGULATIONS.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether steps will be taken to supplement the staff of this House to supply the place of the Committee Clerk now appointed to assist the Speaker's Secretary

in carrying out the new Regulations for the admission of strangers?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): In reply to the Question of the hon. Member for Portsmouth, I have to say that I am one of the Commissioners for the regulation of the salaries, emoluments, and retiring allowances of the officers of the House, and that if Mr. Speaker should bring before us any proposal as to the staff of the House it shall have my most careful attention. It is not for me to initiate proposals of this character.

PARLIAMENT—PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—WESTMINSTER HALL (RESTORATION).

MR. CAUSTON asked the junior Member for Leeds, now that the Committee on plans for the restoration of Westminster Hall has agreed to its Report, If he will comply with the request recently made to him, that, in order to enable Members to judge of the effect of the West side of Westminster Hall were the works to be carried out there to be limited to restoring the buttresses and flying buttresses, he will, before the House is asked to decide upon the question of restoration, give instructions to have the painted screens in the two central bays removed, and the flying buttress flanking them temporarily finished in similar style to the pinnacles now exposed to view; whether ample time will be given to honourable Members to consider the Evidence and Report of the Committee before the House is called upon to decide the matter; and, whether he will undertake that the discussion in Committee shall come on at a convenient hour and after full notice?

MR. HERBERT GLADSTONE: There will be no objection to leaving one of the canvas pinnacles after removing the painted screens in the central bays, so that hon. Members may see the effect of the proposal of my hon. Friend. It would be useless to make an imitation flying buttress, as the masonry of the original flying buttresses themselves will not be altered. Ample time will be given to hon. Members to consider the evidence after it is published. The discussion will be taken in Committee of Supply on the Vote for the Houses of Parliament, which, being in Class I., will have precedence and will be taken first.

TRAMWAYS AND PUBLIC COMPANIES (IRELAND) ACT, 1883—THE MIGRATION CLAUSE.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the Government has any information as to the reasons of the failure of the Migration Clause of the Tramways Act; if Government has granted any sums of money, and, if so, how much, and to whom, for the purposes of the Migration Clause; how has this money been employed; and, if the failure is due to defective legislation, whether Government will take any steps to remove this cause of failure?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have no information on this subject. The Act does not place the initiative in the hands of the Government, and, as I said before, we have received no application for grants.

POST OFFICE—FOLKESTONE POST OFFICE.

SIR EDWARD WATKIN asked the Postmaster General, Whether the contract for building a new Post Office at Folkestone has been given to a contractor at Bristol; whether he will lay upon the Table the names of the various contractors tendering, with the amounts of their tenders; and, if he will also state whether the contract is for a "lump sum," or may involve "extras?"

MR. HERBERT GLADSTONE: The contractors are Messrs. Howell and Son, of Bristol and London. Tenders were invited in the usual way by advertisement, and 18 were received. Following the usual course, the lowest tender was accepted. The Department does not deem it advisable to lay on the Table the names of the unsuccessful contractors, with the amounts of their tenders; but I shall be glad to give them to the hon. Baronet. The contract is for a lump sum; but it is quite impossible to say whether any extras will arise.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—REPORTED ENGAGEMENT.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government have any information as to the reported engagement between the Russians and Afghans; and, whether the Afghan

forces still hold Bala, Murghab, and Khushk?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No, Sir; we have no information as to the reported engagement. The Afghans still hold Bala, Murghab, and Khushk.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—THE NEW SOUTH WALES CONTINGENT.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, If it is true that the New South Wales Ministry had no legal authority to send a contingent of armed men to carry on hostile operations in that part of the Ottoman Empire called the Soudan?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: No doubt the Act establishing the Colonial Forces in question did not contain any provision for their employment in foreign countries; but the New South Wales Government did not hesitate to take the responsibility involved in promptly despatching the Contingent to the Soudan, and then applied without delay to the Legislature to confirm their action, which it did fully and readily. I should like to quote, as part of my answer, the striking words of Mr. Dalley, the acting Colonial Secretary of New South Wales, who replied as follows to strictures made on the Administration, for their initiatory and independent action:—

"We prefer, thank God, slight constitutional improprieties to the abandonment of duty, the neglect of great opportunities, and we prefer the glory of giving a noble example."

MR. O'DONNELL: Will the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies inform the House what is the international position of armed men, so raised without Constitutional authority, employed against any foreign Government?

MR. MACFARLANE: Have the Australian Contingent volunteered for service in India if required?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: Yes, Sir; they have.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND asked whether the despatch of troops from New South Wales was not subjected to adverse criticism in the Assembly; and, how many Members declared by their votes that it was unwise and unjust? [*Cries of* "Do not answer!"]

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: I am unable, without Notice, to answer that Question.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND)—THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND.

MR. DALRYMPLE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he would be disposed to convene a meeting of Scotch Members for the purpose of ascertaining their views as to the question of placing education in Scotland under the charge of a Secretary for Scotland, so that, if opinions appear to be sharply divided, or decidedly adverse to the proposal, the Secretary for Scotland Bill may be liberated to further and more rapid progress through Parliament?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR), who replied to the Question, said, they should be glad to learn from the hon. Members from Scotland whether there was any prevalent desire for such a meeting.

POOR LAW—PRESCOT (LANCASHIRE) UNION—MR. DUNN.

MR. BIGGAR asked the President of the Local Government Board, Has he seen the report that it is proposed by certain guardians in the Prescot (Lancashire) Union to give the appointment of rate collector to Mr. John Kitchen, on condition that he allow Mr. Dunn, who has been recently dismissed for embezzlement, £50 a-year out of his salary; and, whether he approves of such an arrangement; and, if not, whether he will use his influence to discourage that or any similar arrangement?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: The only information which at present we have received from the Guardians with regard to the officer referred to is that Mr. Dunn has resigned. We will make inquiry of the Guardians on the subject.

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND) BILL.

MR. BRODRICK asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it is his intention to include, in the financial proposals of the year, any charge for the cost of the Registration of Voters in Ireland, in accordance with the vote given in a Committee of the whole House on Friday last; and, whether such charge will also provide for the cost of the Registration of Voters in Great Britain?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): In reply to my hon. Friend, I have to say that it would be altogether premature that I should state now what course we propose to take in consequence of the division in the Committee on the Irish Registration Bill. We proceed with the Committee to-morrow.

CORPORATION OF LONDON TOWER BRIDGE BILL.

MR. BRODRICK asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the promoters of the Corporation of London Tower Bridge Bill have yet submitted any, and what, revised plans; and, whether they have yet applied for and obtained sanction for the interference with the precincts of the Tower of London, as shown by the deposited plan and section, to which exception was taken by the War Office?

MR. BRAND: The Corporation have submitted revised plans, which have so far removed the objection previously taken in the matter of interference with the Tower precincts that the War Office has withdrawn dissent on the understanding that the designs are submitted for its approval and that of the First Commissioner of Works.

ARMY (ORDNANCE DEPARMENT)—DEFECTIVE CARTRIDGES.

CAPTAIN AYLMER asked the Surveyor General of the Ordnance, What was the date of the receipt of Lord Wolseley's report on the Martini-Henry rifle cartridges; and, whether, previous to such report, any unfavourable reports on the Boxer cartridge had been received by the Department from officers commanding troops in the field; and, if so, from whom and when?

MR. BRAND said, that two communications had been received from Lord Wolseley, one of which was received on the 21st. He had not had time to search the records for such Reports as had been sent in to the War Office since the introduction of the Boxer cartridge; but, in any case, such Reports were confidential.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL inquired whether there was any objection to lay the Reports upon the Table?

MR. BRAND said, that he was not able to comply with the request.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE BARBAVILLA PRISONERS.

MR. CALLAN asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether, in view of the Notice of Motion standing first on the Notice Paper for Tuesday next, to call attention to the continued unjust incarceration of the prisoners in connection with the Barbavilla, &c. cases in Ireland, he will supply the Crown printed report of the trial of the Barbavilla case in the Library for the convenience of Members?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER), who was very inaudible, was understood to state that there was no Crown printed Reports of the trials in the Barbavilla cases. There was a manuscript Report of the first trial; but the evidence at the trial on which the conviction was obtained was not, in many respects, the same.

MR. CALLAN asked, whether the manuscript would be placed in the Library for the convenience of Members?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): No, Sir; I will not place it there.

CENTRAL ASIA—AFGHANISTAN—ENGAGEMENTS WITH THE AMEER.

MR. JOHN MORLEY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, By what instruments or other records our obligations to the Ameer of Afghanistan are, in the view of Her Majesty's Government, defined; whether these obligations have been modified during the recent conferences at Rawul Pindi; and, whether the Ameer's own wishes would operate as a release from all or any of them?

MR. GLADSTONE: In answer to an earlier Question, my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State has already read to the House what is in point of fact the principal, I may say the only, documentary evidence in our possession that is producible. It explains sufficiently the basis of the relations between the Ameer of Afghanistan and the British Government. But I think it may be well to add that these relations, although not previously expressed in documentary evidence now at our command, yet are to be inferred, to a certain extent, from the transactions that have taken place. There is a Return

before the House, published some considerable time ago, in 1882, which gives an account of the aid supplied to the Ameers of Afghanistan at different periods; there is some to Dost Mahomed in 1856 and 1857; and to Shere Ali in 1868-9 were given various items of arms and ammunition, and 12 lakhs of rupees. In 1870 there was a further provision of arms and ammunition, and a further grant of money. In 1872 a further provision of arms and ammunition was given; and in 1873 both arms and ammunition and money. Of course, my hon. Friend will perceive that these were not isolated and accidental acts, but that they were acts expressive of a certain policy and of certain obligations voluntarily undertaken by the British-Indian Government. With regard to the second part of the Question, no modification whatever has taken place in these obligations. With regard to the third part of the Question, the Ameer is on the footing of an ally, though a protected ally; and naturally my hon. Friend will understand that the Ameer's own wishes would form a very material element in the consideration of any question that might arise.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked, whether there was any truth in the statement in *The Indian Statesman* to the effect that the Ameer had been compelled to come to the Conference at Rawul Pindi by threats that if he refused to do so Ayoub Khan would be put in his place?

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir; certainly not. That statement is new to me. It is so entirely at variance with all my knowledge and my firm and unhesitating belief that I cannot for a moment scruple to ask the hon. Gentleman to consider it as a statement made in error.

MR. JOHN MORLEY asked, whether these earlier gifts to the Ameer were not accompanied by an express warning that they involved no obligations on our part with respect to them?

MR. GLADSTONE: I should not like to make a declaration reaching so far back as these transactions; but certainly they were expressive of a policy—a conditional policy, it is true, but a policy which would have a binding effect on a great State.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR inquired whether, in the undertaking, there was not an express reservation with regard to Herat, which the British Government declined to secure or guarantee to the Ameer.

MR. GLADSTONE: That passage, I believe, was read to the House.

CIVIL SERVICE (PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATURE)—MR. W. JOHNSTON, INSPECTOR OF FISHERIES.

MR. HEALY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If his attention has been called to the public letter written by Mr. Wm. Johnston, Inspector of Fisheries, to the Orange Grand Master, which appeared in *The Belfast News Letter*—

> "Expressing his readiness, if called upon, to contest one of the divisions of Belfast at the General Election;"

is he aware that this official admits the authorship of the following letter in *The Belfast Evening Telegraph*—

> "The 12th of July is being prepared for all over Ulster. In view of the approaching General Election it will be of unusual importance. On that occasion I hope to take my place with my Orange brethren. No more loyal addresses will be presented to the Prince and Princess of Wales than the Orange ones, and I hope to be able hereafter to give emphasis to them when I am Member for South Belfast;"

will he explain on what principle the Government consider that such declarations by a Civil Servant of his intention to seek a seat in Parliament do not constitute a breach of the Treasury Rule of November 12th 1884 (since made an Order in Council), which requires that any Civil Servant who, by an election address or "in any other manner, announces himself as a candidate," should resign his position under the Crown; is it the fact that Mr. Johnston, who threatens next 12th July "to take my place with my Orange brethren," is the same official whose repeated political speeches compelled the Irish Executive to exact from him a promise in writing that he would never again interfere in politics while a public servant; and, what course the Government will take under all the circumstances of this case?

MR. GLADSTONE: I am afraid I cannot assist the hon. and learned Member very much with regard to this matter. The Question seems to have been put to me under a very natural misapprehension. As the hon. Member is aware, it is the duty of the Treasury departmentally to take cognizance of matters with regard

to the Public Service, and to promote proper regulations with respect to it. One of the matters which came under the notice of the Treasury was with reference to the candidature for seats in Parliament of gentlemen in any Public Office. This matter was considered, and an Order in Council was made on the subject which remained binding on the conduct of the different Departments of the State. The Treasury had, however, no right to interfere in a matter of this kind with the discretion of other Departments.

MR. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman kindly state to whom the Question should be addressed?

MR. GLADSTONE: I must certainly put the responsibility upon my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman).

MR. HEALY: I will then address the Question to the Chief Secretary for Ireland.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Question which appears in the name of the hon. and learned Member looks like one which I answered before. The circumstances of the case are engaging the attention of the Irish Government.

MR. HEALY: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will answer this passage—[*Cries of* "Oh!" *and* "Order!"] I must ask hon. Members to have a little patience. I would ask, is it a fact that Mr. Johnston is the same official whose repeated political speeches compelled the Irish Executive to exact from him a promise in writing that he would never again interfere in politics while a public servant?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Mr. Johnston's written undertaking, as well as the whole matter of his alleged candidature, is being examined into and considered by the Irish Government.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—THE DEFENCE OF KHARTOUM—GENERAL GORDON.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in view of the long and heroic defence of Khartoum by its inhabitants under General Gordon, he will lay before Parliament the evidence on which he grounded the statement made by him—

"We have no reason to suppose that any very considerable body ever attached themselves to him, and we have no reason to suppose that the general population of Khartoum—though I have no doubt that some of his immediate adherents may—have suffered in consequence of what has taken place;"

and, whether he can also give any evidence in disproof of the repeated statements of survivors of the garrison and others, to the effect that thousands of the loyal inhabitants of Khartoum were massacred by the Mahdi's forces, and that the women and children who survived were sold into slavery?

MR. GLADSTONE: I think this Question refers exclusively to a matter which, when I made a speech on the subject, I described as matter of argument and opinion. I have stated my opinion, and the hon. Member can state his; but it appears to me that to enter into the subject in reply to a Question would really be to introduce purely debatable matter into this department of our Business.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, that as the right hon. Gentleman, as First Minister of the Crown, had made a statement of this sort considerably derogating from the services of General Gordon, he would ask him whether he would lay on the Table of the House Papers in support of his statement?

MR. GLADSTONE: I entirely differ from the hon. Gentleman as to the preamble of his Question; and as to his request I cannot comply with it.

CENTRAL ASIA—THE AFGHAN BOUNDARY COMMISSION—SIR PETER LUMSDEN.

MR. O'KELLY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to a paragraph in *The Indian Statesman* of the 7th April 1885, which states—

"The prospects of a peaceful settlement with Russia would be hopeful, but for the prostitution of Sir Peter Lumsden's Mission to open intrigue, by lavish bribery with the tribes;"

and, whether Her Majesty's Government have asked Sir Peter Lumsden for any explanation of the alleged intrigues of the Mission with the Turkoman tribes, against the Russian Government in Central Asia?

MR. GLADSTONE: I am not aware there have been any intrigues of any sort between Sir Peter Lumsden and the Turkomans; and, that being so, the Question has no bearing.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—RUSSIAN ADVANCE—OCCUPATION OF MARUCHAK.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE inquired, Whether Her Majesty's Government had any further intelligence to communicate to the House with reference to the negotiations with Russia?

MR. GLADSTONE: There is only this declaration which it is my duty to make, that the supposition of an advance of the Russian Forces to Maruchak is erroneous. We have a telegram from Sir Peter Lumsden, dated 27th April, in which he uses these words—

"Afghan express just in. Declares report of Russian occupation of Maruchak quite unfounded."

SUPPLY — THE VOTE OF CREDIT—PERSONAL EXPLANATION (MR. GLADSTONE).

MR. GLADSTONE: With the permission of the House, I wish to make a personal explanation which I hope may not be without convenience to the House. It has reference to words which fell from me on Monday night. It was part of my duty on Monday night, as I believe, and as I think it will be generally felt, in relation to the demands made upon us for information upon the subject under discussion, to refer to precedents afforded by former Votes of Credit. It had been my full intention to refer to these precedents in a manner purely defensive and formal, and raising no subject of contention; but I was led by circumstances, to which I need not refer, to introduce into a portion of my speech some references which were of a highly polemical and controversial character with regard to the proceedings under the Vote of Credit of 1878. What I wish to say in the frankest manner is, first of all, that it was a suggestion to me from the course of the debate, and from circumstances which had happened at the moment—it was no part of my intention with which I had determined upon the statement I was to make to the House. It was what is called an unpremeditated suggestion, upon which I acted on the spur of the moment. I wish further to say that I very much regret it. I look back upon the whole of the circumstances, upon the patriotic and forbearing conduct of all sections of the House upon that occasion, to which I attach the highest value, and I feel that these words of mine might have had a tendency to cause a descent from the higher ground of the matters which we have had under consideration to a lower ground, and might have had a tendency—nay, had a tendency, I will say, to revive a controversy which is bygone, which belongs to the last Parliament, which none of us would desire to revive, and the revival of which in connection with the higher subject is undoubtedly not for the public advantage. I wish to make this statement in the frankest manner, and without waiting for any criticism on that portion of my speech; but I may just add only this one word—that it may be my duty possibly to print in a corrected form that speech, and, if I do so, I shall certainly append to it this expression.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I am sure, however irregular it may be for me to say a word after what has fallen from the Prime Minister, the House will pardon me expressing my own great satisfaction and the feeling of others near me at the manner in which the right hon. Gentleman has spoken of what occurred the other night. It is obvious that the words which fell from the right hon. Gentleman were unpremeditated to a certain extent, and certainly they were words which were very much to be regretted. I can only say that we should have felt it to be our duty decidedly to challenge the statement of facts and the inferences drawn by the right hon. Gentleman; but with regard to the introduction of such matter into the discussion we did feel that it was painful to us, who were anxious to support the Government in the main, that we should have had matter of that sort introduced, and I am gratified to find that the right hon. Gentleman has of his own accord, spontaneously and without waiting for any challenge from us, expressed his regret for having introduced words not necessary to his argument, and inconsistent with the spirit of his speech.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

In reply to Mr. BROADHURST,

MR. GLADSTONE said: It is not intended to proceed with the Seats Bill on

Friday. It has become a matter of urgency to make progress with the Registration Bills, and it is intended to take the Irish Bill to-morrow as the first Order.

MR. SERJEANT SIMON asked if the Seats Bill would be proceeded with on Monday?

MR. GLADSTONE: It will depend on the progress made and the degree of urgency as to the Registration Bill whether the Seats Bill will be taken on Monday.

EGYPT—SEIZURE OF THE "BOSPHORE EGYPTIEN."

MR. O'DONNELL asked the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he could give the details of the settlement with regard to *The Bosphore Egyptien* incident; and whether it was true that the office of that paper was to be reopened, and that the Egyptian Government had apologized for their proceedings?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I have already stated that the incident is practically closed; but the arrangement has not yet assumed the final form which would enable me to make any official statement to the House. But the Papers will be laid on the Table.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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WAYS AND MEANS—FINANCIAL STATEMENT.—COMMITTEE.

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS), in rising to move the 1st Resolution, said: Sir Arthur Otway, I will commence by asking the Committee to forgive me if, on this occasion, I do not give them as many figures in comparison of details as it has been generally the custom of my Predecessors to give. I shall have a long Statement to make to the Committee, and I would, therefore, as far as I can, shorten those parts of it which hon. Members will be able to obtain for themselves from the Papers which are now in their hands.

I will first carry back the Committee to the Statement which I made on the 17th November last, when I asked the House to give us additional Ways and Means in connection with the military operations which had been undertaken in the Soudan. I gave, on that occasion, the result up to that time of the Budget Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure, including certain additional Estimates connected with the Civil Service voted after the Budget, but excluding special War Votes; and I stated that the surplus, so corrected, might be taken at £106,000. But I said that the House had also passed a Vote of Credit for £300,000, and had later voted £1,324,000, in the shape of additional Naval and Military Estimates for the Soudan Expedition, and £725,000 for the Bechuanaland Expedition, so that, altogether, there had been an approved expenditure of £2,349,000 beyond the Budget Estimate. Allowing for some improvement in the Revenue, I calculated the deficit roughly at £2,000,000; which we proposed to meet by an additional Income Tax of 1*d.* in the pound, producing £1,200,000 in the last financial year, and £720,000 in the present financial year.

I was pressed, on that occasion, on two points. I was asked, in the first place, whether £2,349,000 would, in my opinion, probably suffice for the expenditure in connection with the Nile Expedition and Bechuanaland, and I was also asked for further information as to the probable improvement in the Revenue for 1884-5. With reference to the first, I stated that there had been very extravagant rumours in the Press as to the expenditure then going on; but I estimated that the amount named by my noble Friend the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) and by my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty (Sir Thomas Brassey), and voted by this House, would be sufficient. As to the second question, I stated that I must decline to name any particular figure, but that I thought we might look for a reasonable and a fair improvement.

And now, Sir Arthur Otway, the Committee will be glad to know what is the outcome of the Revenue and the Expenditure for 1884-5. In the first place, the expenditure on the Nile Expedition and in Bechuanaland has not exceeded, but has fallen short of, the Vote taken last year. On the other hand, two circum-

stances have largely disturbed my anticipations. Three months after I spoke Khartoum was betrayed, and the Expedition to Suakin was in consequence ordered. That was one source of very large expenditure, affecting the Estimate I had made in November; and the other disturbing cause was the great delay in settling Egyptian finance, and in the consequent issue of the loan out of which a large amount of money due to the English Treasury would be paid. This, we had in November no reason to doubt, would come into the Exchequer during the course of the last financial year. The amount so due was, in all, no less than £544,000, and consisted of £340,000 for the Army of Occupation, and £200,000, a-year's interest on the Suez Canal shares. On the other hand, as against these disappointments, the Revenue has come in much better than we could have expected; and this, I may say, is mainly due to the energy and efficiency of the officers of the Inland Revenue Department, but partly to the fact that before the end of the financial year large payments were made at the Custom Houses in anticipation that increased rates of duty would be imposed on certain articles. The actual deficit for the year 1884-5, the detail of which I shall give in a few minutes, was £1,050,000; and if we add to this the amount of the estimated Revenue paid in anticipation of increased duties, say about £300,000, we may take the corrected deficit of last year at £1,350,000. But the sum due from Egypt, the payment of which has been postponed to this year, was £544,000, and the actual expenditure in connection with the Suakin Expedition was £964,000, giving a total of £1,508,000. Therefore, but for the betrayal of Khartoum and the consequent Expedition to Suakin, and for the delay in the payment of the money due from Egypt, my nominal surplus for the year would have been £458,000, and the real surplus, allowing for the £300,000 paid in anticipation of increased duties, would have been £158,000. The Committee will, of course, recognize that I could not possibly, in the month of November, have based any Estimate upon the betrayal of Khartoum, which did not occur until the following January, or upon the postponement of the Egyptian payments, which we then fully expected to receive before the end of March; and that, therefore, it would have been absolutely impossible for me to have asked then, on these accounts, for additional taxation in Committee of Ways and Means. It will be, I repeat, satisfactory to the Committee to see that, but for the unforeseen circumstances to which I have alluded, we should have had in 1884-5 a nominal surplus of £458,000, and a real surplus of £158,000.

From these general considerations I will now pass to the salient features of the Expenditure and the Revenue of 1884-5. In comparing both with those of 1883-4 there is one item which I must carefully eliminate—namely, the Indian Home Charges, which we now, wisely I think, omit from both sides of the account, I will take, first, the permanent charge for the Debt, which was £28,884,000; being somewhat less than that of 1883-4 by £90,000, but the same as my Estimate. The interest on local loans was £465,000; less than that of 1883-4 by £13,000, and less than my Estimate by £60,000. The interest on the Exchequer Bonds connected with the Suez Canal share purchase was £200,000, the same as that of last year and the same as my Estimate; and the other charges on the Consolidated Fund were £1,479,000; less than those of 1883-4 by £111,000, and less than my Estimate by £16,000. On the items which I have named nothing calls for observation except in relation to the Debt charge, as to which I will give the Committee some information further on in my Statement.

The Supply Services give the following results. The Army expenditure, including the Vote of Credit for the relief of General Gordon and all Supplementary charges, amounted to £18,955,000, exceeding the Budget Estimate by £3,024,000 and the expenditure of 1883-4 by £3,045,000. Of the total, £292,500 was voted to make good the Egyptian contribution, so that the net actual excess over the 1883-4 charges was £2,753,000. The Navy cost £11,427,000, being more than the Budget Estimate by £615,000, and more than the expenditure of 1883-4 by £698,000. Of the total, £52,000 was due to the necessary Vote to make good the part of the Egyptian contribution credited to Naval Votes, making the actual Navy charge £646,000 in excess of that in 1883-4. The grant to India for the Afghan War was £250,000,

which was the same as the Budget Estimate, but less than that of the previous year by £750,000. The Civil Service expenditure was £17,562,000; more than the Budget Estimate by £318,000, and more than the expenditure of 1883-4 by £380,000. Of this increase of £318,000 over the Budget Estimate, almost the whole, or £282,000, was due to additional expenditure, under Class IV., for educational purposes. The Customs and Inland Revenue expenditure amounted to £2,745,000, being more than the Budget Estimate by £11,000, and less than the expenditure of 1883-4 by £27,000. The Post Office expenditure was £4,666,000, being more than the actual expenditure of the year before by £159,000. The expenditure on the Telegraph Service was £1,731,000, being more than the expenditure of 1883-4 by £24,000. The expenditure on the Packet Service was £729,000, being more than the actual expenditure of the previous year by £8,000. Thus the total Expenditure for the last year, 1884-5, was £89,093,000, being more than the Budget Estimate, which was £85,292,000, by £3,801,000, and exceeding the Expenditure of the previous year—which was £85,770,000—by £3,323,000.

Now, I pass to the Revenue of last year. The Customs produced £20,321,000; but of this, as I have said before, some £300,000 was due to acceleration of payment in consequence of anticipations of fresh duties being imposed, leaving the real Revenue about £20,021,000. The Excise produced £26,600,000, the two together producing £46,621,000. My Estimate for those two heads of receipt was £46,628,000, the Receipt for the previous year having been £46,653,000, including, however, an additional amount for Railway Duty to the extent of £355,000. As in previous years, I will now give the Receipts of those two Departments, eliminating from each the amount received for spirits, and then the amount of the Spirit Duties under the two Departments taken together. The amount of the Customs' receipts, corrected as to anticipated payments and less the amount of the Spirit Duty, was £15,713,000, my Estimate having been £15,650,000, and the produce of the previous year having been £15,440,000. The Excise also, eliminating Spirits, produced £12,613,000, my Estimate having been £12,478,000, and the produce of the previous year, including the additional Railway Duty of £355,000, having been £12,825,000. Under the head of Spirits, the duties collected during the past year by the two Departments amounted to £18,295,000, the Budget Estimate having been £18,500,000, and the produce of the previous year having been £18,436,000. I may, therefore, fairly sum up the general result of these figures, in connection with the Customs and Excise receipts, as follows. They show a slow and continued falling-off in the duties from spirits, and, I may add, a slight fall in those derived from wine; they show a continued slow rise in the other chief duties; and, as I am bound to state, for the credit of the gentlemen concerned, they show a great accuracy in the forecast of the Revenue Departments. I may add, in passing, that they also show a specially satisfactory progress under two heads, those of tea and tobacco, both of which are, in a large degree, indicative of the progressive well-being of the nation.

I now go from these great branches of Revenue to the Receipt from Stamps. Stamps produced £11,925,000, being more than the Budget Estimate—which was £11,490,000—by £435,000, and more than the amount they produced in 1883-4—which was £11,620,000—by £305,000. This increase is due to the special steps taken last year to bring in outstanding amounts due for Legacy and Succession Duties, a successful effort having been made to reduce these outstandings to the extent of about £400,000. The Land Tax produced £1,065,000, and House Duty £1,885,000, the amount of the latter tax rising very slowly, as it has been doing for some time. The Income Tax at 6*d.* in the pound produced £12,000,000, my Estimate having been £11,250,000, which it exceeded, therefore by £750,000. The amount of the receipt from this tax at 5*d.*, with some remains of the 6½*d.* tax, was in the previous year £10,718,000. The causes of this great increase in the production of this tax are very easy to explain. In the first place, a larger amount than we expected had been left over from the previous year 1883-4, so that the original Estimate formed from previous experience turned out to be too low to the extent of nearly £200,000; and, in the second place, we have got more than we expected out of

the additional 1*d.* imposed in the month of November; the Act itself not having passed, in fact, until the month of December. We had at that time to guide us only one precedent of an addition to the Income Tax so late in the year; and that was the additional 1*d.* imposed by the late Mr. Ward Hunt in 1867-8, which produced far less than he expected. Fortunately, however, the Inland Revenue Department were able to overcome the greater part of the difficulties which, having only this one precedent before them, they anticipated. But the principal cause of the great increase over my Estimate was the activity of the Department, not that they got in a larger amount, but that they got it in earlier. I may add to this that a good many collections have lately fallen in. Now, I will ask the House to put together the Receipts from taxation which I have just enumerated. They will find that the total is £73,796,000. My Estimate had been £72,303,000, and the Receipts of the previous year were £71,886,000.

Now, Sir, I pass to the Revenue which is not in the nature of taxation.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT: What about the Beer Duty?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): My hon. and gallant Friend will hear more of that before I have done. The Post Office produced £7,905,000. That is £5,000 more than the Estimate, and £175,000 more than the Receipt of the preceding year. The Telegraph Service produced £1,760,000, or £40,000 less than the Estimate, and £15,000 more than it produced last year. The Crown Lands produced £380,000, which was the same as the Estimate, and the same as the Receipt of last year. The Miscellaneous Revenue was £3,175,000, or £5,000 more than the Estimate, and £68,000 below the Receipt of last year. I have corrected, as I said I would, the item of Miscellaneous Revenue by omitting the Receipt for Indian Home Charges. There is one branch of the Non-Tax Revenue on which I wish to make a remark — namely, the interest on advances, which produced £1,027,000, or less than the Estimate by £153,000, and less than the Receipt of the previous year by £169,000. Most of the items making up this total were slightly better, and the decrease was due entirely to one of them — namely, the non-payment by the Egyptian Government of the interest on the Suez Canal Loan, amounting to £199,000. The total Receipts not connected with taxation amounted to £14,247,000, which was somewhat under the Estimate, and very nearly the Receipt of the previous year, £14,294,000. Adding this to the Receipt from Taxes, we have for the year 1884-5 a total Revenue of £88,043,110, and a total Expenditure of £89,092,883, showing a deficit of £1,049,773, or, practically, £1,050,000.

At this point of the Financial Statement it is usual for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to give the Committee some information on the subject of the National Debt. In the last two years, there have been two very important operations in connection with the Debt. In 1883-4 we converted a large amount of Funded Debt into Terminable Annuities, and in 1884-5 we converted a large amount of Three per Cent Funded Debt into Two-and-Three-quarters and Two-and-a-Half per Cent Stock. The details of these conversions have been already laid upon the Table. On the 31st of March, 1880, the Funded Debt stood at £710,476,000; on the 31st of March, 1884, it stood at £640,631,000; and it has been reduced this year to £640,182,000. The Funded Debt has therefore been reduced since March, 1880, by £70,294,000, and during the last year by £449,000. But the conversion which was made last year into Two-and-a-Half and Two-and-Three-Quarters per Cents nominally increased the capital of the Funded Debt; and the Committee, therefore, may be curious to know what the reduction in the Funded Debt would have been if the Three per Cents were valued at par, the Two-and-Three-Quarters per Cents at two per cent less than par, and the Two-and-a-Half per Cents at 8 per cent less than par. On that basis, the reduction of the Funded Debt since 1880 would be £72,712,244, and last year it would be £2,080,587; and it should be remembered that this calculation includes the conversion some years ago of £7,750,000 Exchequer Bonds into £8,600,000 Consols and Two-and-a-Half per Cent Stock.

But we have not only to do with the Funded Debt. We have to compare the Unfunded Debt and the Terminable Annuities, and also to take into comparison

the loans we have made and the state of our balances. During last year the Unfunded Debt was reduced by £77,000. The value of Terminable Annuities, calculated on the principle proposed by my right hon. Friend the Member for the City of London (Mr. Hubbard), of taking them in Consols at par, is £5,514,000 less than it was last year. To this must be added the actual reduction in the Funded Debt of £449,000, and a small diminution of other liabilities to the extent of £26,000, making altogether £6,066,000. On the other hand, we must deduct the diminution in the balances, which were less by £639,000, and the diminution in the amount of the loans recoverable, estimated at £480,000, making together £1,119,000. The net diminution of the Debt last year therefore amounted to £4,947,000; or, if it were corrected with respect to Two-and-Three-Quarters and Two-and-a-Half Stock, in the way which I have just described, the diminution of the Debt last year would have been £6,579,000, and the diminution in the five years from March, 1880, to March, 1885, would have been £32,404,000.

Here, perhaps, I may say, in passing, that we have now paid off the whole of the War Charges bequeathed to us by the late Government—namely, £7,850,000, and all but £250,000 of the £5,000,000 which we ourselves recommended should be granted to India on account of the Afghan War; the two sums together amounting to £12,600,000 in the five years, or rather more than £2,500,000 a-year.

And now, Sir, I will pass from the year 1884-5, and the movement of the Debt in that year, to the present year, 1885-6. I will take first the estimated Expenditure, comparing it with the Estimates of last year, and giving the result. The permanent charge of Debt we put down at £28,037,000 — less than the Budget Estimate of last year by £847,000. Of that sum £800,000 is due to the falling in of what are called the Russo-Turkish and Afghan War Annuities, constructed by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote) in 1880, and £47,000 is due to the saving from the conversion into the Two-and-a-Half and Two-and-Three-Quarters per Cents. The interest on local loans we estimate at £552,000, and the interest on the Suez Canal Bonds at £200,000. The other charges on the Consolidated Fund we take at £1,760,000—greater than last year's Estimate by £265,000, and greater than last year's Expenditure by £281,000. This increase is partly due to a charge appearing this year, as in some former years, of £110,000 for the localization of the Military Forces, but mainly to the charge of £150,000 in aid of Indian Non-Effective Charges. I promised the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) that I would, on this occasion, give to the Committee as clear an explanation as I could of the nature of that transaction, the details of which are explained in a Treasury Minute. This £150,000, then, is the first payment of the Annuity which I shall ask to create in order to make good the deficiency on account of the Indian Non-Effective Service. I have laid Papers on the Table which explain the arrangement between the Imperial and Indian Governments for the adjustment of the Indian share of Army pensions paid out of Army Votes. From these Papers it will be seen that, though the Imperial Government did not intend to pay out of British taxes any part of the charge of the Indian Army, yet, in effect, they did so; and that up to 1870 the payments made by India were quite insufficient to meet the charge of Indian Army pensions on Army Votes. In 1870 a juster principle of charge, as between the two Governments, was adopted; but it was, unfortunately, agreed that the Indian share of Army pensions should be capitalized year by year. The arrangements were made, I think, without sufficient actuarial assistance. As the capitalized sums far exceeded the charge in the year of the pensions capitalized, the sums received from India should, of course, have been carried to a fund out of which only so much should have been paid to the Exchequer as represented the charge of Indian pensions paid out of Army Votes. Even had this been done, the Non-Effective Account would not have been solvent, as the rate of interest upon which the calculation rested was too high, and because, from one cause or other, the payments by India were always in arrear. But no fund was created. The sums received from India were paid over to the Exchequer direct, and thus current Budgets profited at the expense of Budgets to come. In 1881 my right hon. Friend, then Chan-

cellor of the Exchequer, and Lord Frederick Cavendish, then Secretary to the Treasury, put a stop to this unsound system, which had obtained since 1870. The War Office actuaries have investigated the position of the account, and their Reports clear up what has become a very complicated transaction. In effect, they show that to make the account solvent we ought to have had, on the 31st of March, 1884, somewhat more than £4,000,000, which we had not got. After careful consideration, we have come to the conclusion that it will be better to put a stop to capitalization altogether, and to ask India only to pay, year by year, her share of Army pensions granted since the 1st of April, 1884. This, however, would create a very heavy charge on the Army Estimates in this and succeeding years, for which neither we nor our Successors are responsible; and I propose, accordingly, to create a fund in the hands of the National Debt Commissioners to transfer to them all capitalization moneys in our hands or receivable from India, and also to pay them yearly a sum of £150,000 from the Consolidated Fund. The National Debt Commissioners would pay each year, out of the funds in aid of Army Estimates, the exact sum which the actuaries report to be the charge on Army Estimates in the year, of Indian pensions granted between the 1st of April, 1870, and the 31st of March, 1884. This arrangement would be renewed from time to time. I propose shortly to bring in a Bill making the necessary arrangements to carry out this operation.

The Consolidated Fund Charges altogether are estimated at £30,549,000, which is less than the Expenditure of last year by £479,000.

I now come to the Estimates for the voted Services. The Estimate for the Army is £17,751,000; which is greater than the original Estimate for last year by £1,820,000, although it is less than final Expenditure, including the Vote of Credit and the Supplementary Estimates, by £1,205,000. In these Estimates is included a special item, not of annual occurrence, of £500,000 for the Bechuanaland Expedition. On the other hand, as I have already explained, last year's Estimates included a payment of £292,500, due to the non-receipt of the Egyptian contribution to the expenses of the Army of Occupation. The Navy Estimates amount to £12,386,000, which sum is greater than last year's original Estimate by £1,575,000, and greater than the actual Expenditure by £959,000. To be quite accurate, there are two small corrections to be allowed for of about £50,000 each; one for Bechuanaland this year, and the other in the Egyptian contribution last year, and the two just balance each other. The Afghan War grant will be this year £250,000, which is the same as last year's Estimate and grant; and I congratulate the Committee upon this being the last instalment we shall have to pay. The Miscellaneous Civil Service Estimates amount to £17,687,000; the Budget Estimate last year having been £17,244,000, and the actual Expenditure £17,562,000. This increase, like that of last year, is due to the Educational Estimates in Class IV., which are more by £391,000 than last year's Budget Estimate, and £109,000 more than the actual Expenditure. The other classes of the Civil Service Estimates pretty fairly balance each other. The Customs and Inland Revenue Services will cost £2,801,000; the Post Office, £4,855,000, or £189,000 more than last year's actual Expenditure, which was £4,666,000; and the Telegraph Service, £1,840,000, or £109,000 more than last year's Expenditure, which was £1,731,000. The Packet Services will cost £754,000, a trifle over the amount last year. Adding together all the voted Services, we get a total of £58,323,000; which, when compared with £54,188,000, the Budget Estimate of last year, shows an increase of £4,135,000; or an increase of £258,000 over the actual Expenditure, £58,065,000. To sum up, the total estimated Expenditure of 1885-6, exclusive of the recent Vote of Credit, is £88,872,000. This is more than the Budget Estimate of last year, £85,292,000, by £3,580,000; and less than the total Expenditure of last year, £89,093,000, by £221,000.

I now pass from the Expenditure to the Revenue; and here I think I ought to explain the basis of my forecast, with special reference to the probable state of trade and agriculture, which we have, of course, to consider, when estimating what the Revenue may be. I said, last year, that I had to deal with very conflicting considerations. Trade, I said, was depressed, the profits on land received by

both owners and farmers were low, and Railway Receipts were falling. On the other hand, food was cheap, pauperism was decreasing, and the amount produced by each 1*d.* of the Income Tax was still slowly increasing. This year I do not think it will be possible to give quite so satisfactory an account. It is quite true that the profits from land and from trade are pretty nearly stationary; I do not think they can be said to be worse. [*Cries of* "Worse!"] I do not think so, judging from the information to which I have access, and which is collected with great care. It is also true that bread is still cheaper than it was last year, and that the produce of a 1*d.* Income Tax is still increasing. But the most remarkable fact in illustration of the prosperity of the country is that the Savings Banks' Deposits are steadily increasing. The Post Office and the other Savings Banks' Balances have increased by more than £3,000,000 during the last 12 months, and that increase is going on down to the present time. The account for the last month, compared with that for the preceding month, shows an increase of £250,000, which is just at the rate of £3,000,000 per annum. This is a most remarkable fact in connection with the progress of the country. On the other hand, pauperism appears to me to be beginning to increase; and there is an increasing desire to emigrate by no means confined to Ireland. I am sorry to say that I do not agree with Prince Bismarck in concluding that this is evidence of the prosperity of the country. Since last year there has been a still more serious fall in Railway Receipts; and these are, to my mind, an unfailing barometer of the condition of the country. Having, then, last year, framed my Estimate on evidence of a not altogether unfavourable state of matters, as affecting both the consumer and the payer of Income Tax, and that Estimate having been entirely justified, this year I shall not take quite so hopeful a view. I shall estimate on the basis of a moderately decreased consumption, a slight fall in the average of wages, and a stationary income for the middle and higher classes. That is the foundation upon which the figures I am about to give to the Committee are based.

I will proceed now, Sir, one by one, to the Estimates of Revenue. In the first place, I divide, as I did last year, and the year before, Customs and Excise under three heads—Customs, exclusive of spirits; Excise, exclusive of spirits; and spirits by themselves. Customs without spirits we take at £15,800,000, as against £16,013,000 last year. This diminution, I ought to say, is occasioned by the Revenue of this year having been, as I have described, largely anticipated by payments in March and February, made in apprehension of increases of duty under the present Budget. Excise, without spirits, we take at £12,450,000, as against £12,613,000 last year. Spirits we take at £18,100,000, as against £18,295,000. Dividing the Customs and Excise Receipts from spirits *pro formâ*, the figures will be, Customs, £20,000,000, as against an actual receipt last year of £20,321,000; Excise, £26,350,000, as against an actual receipt last year of £26,600,000. Stamps we estimate at £11,200,000, as against £11,925,000. I have already explained what it was that swelled the Receipts last year, of which we shall not have the benefit to any great extent this year. There is, besides, a steady falling-off in the Stamp Revenues other than the Death Duties. We take Land Tax at £1,050,000, against £1,065,000; House Tax at £1,880,000, against £1,885,000; and the Income Tax we estimate will produce at 5*d.* £10,000,000, against £12,000,000 at 6*d.* I take the Income Tax at 5*d.*, because since 1880 that has been the uniform rate, except when it has been disturbed for a special purpose, as it was twice for War Credits, and once to enable the Malt Tax to be converted into Beer Duty. We expect the Post Office to yield £8,000,000, against £7,905,000 last year; telegraphs, £1,760,000, against the same sum last year; Crown Lands, £380,000, the same as last year; and the interest on advances, £1,360,000, against £1,027,000. The last increase is due to a corresponding decrease last year, caused by the non-receipt of the Suez Canal interest. Two years' payment will be received this year, the second, under the recent Convention, at 4½, instead of 5 per cent. Miscellaneous Receipts we take at £3,200,000, against £3,175,000. The total Revenue for 1885-6, based on a 5*d.* Income Tax, will be £85,180,000, against £88,043,000 last year, with a 6*d.* Income Tax.

Before comparing this Estimate of Income with the Expenditure, it is important to observe whether there is anything exceptional to note on either side of the account. In the first place, we have to note that we shall have this year, either as interest on Suez Canal shares, or as Army contribution from Egypt, £544,000 belonging to last year; and this double payment will not accrue in future years. We are also the better by £92,000 than we shall be in future as to Debt charges. In these respects, in future years, we shall be worse off by £636,000. On the other hand, this is the last year of the Afghan Grant, amounting to £250,000; and the Army Estimates contain a temporary charge of £500,000 for the Bechuanaland Expedition. These items, two on each side of the account, about balance. But I must also point out to the Committee that in the Army Estimates of this year there is no provision for the defence of our commercial harbours, or for the improvement of the seaward defences of our great military ports. As to these, statements were made in both Houses on the 2nd of December last; by Lord Northbrook in the House of Lords, and by my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty (Sir Thomas Brassey) in this House; and they pledged the Government to full consideration of the Reports on these subjects, and to probable proposals for large expenditure in future years. This must be borne in mind when we consider what the future normal military expenditure, not including War Credits, is likely to be.

There is also one deduction from this year's Revenue to which we are pledged. I have included in the Estimate of Revenue the receipts for telegrams at the present rate. On the 1st of August, 6*d.* telegrams will come into operation. If the Bill which we have introduced passes in its present form, the loss for the current year will be £40,000. If addresses are to be free the loss will be vastly more. I allow for the loss of £40,000; and, deducting this amount, the Revenue, with a 5*d.* Income Tax, we estimate for the present year at £85,140,000, and the Expenditure at £88,872,000, showing a deficit of £3,732,000. To this sum we have to add, first, a reasonable allowance for Supplementary Estimates, which I take at £200,000; and, secondly, the Vote of Credit for £11,000,000 adopted by the Committee on Monday last, making a total deficit of £14,932,000.

Before passing to the proposals which we have to make with a view to meeting this deficit, I will refer to one matter which may interest the Committee, I mean the net revenue of the Post Office during the last four years, disturbed as it has necessarily been by the initiation of the Parcel Post, and the preparations for 6*d.* telegrams. I do not include in the comparison I am about to make the expenditure out of other than regular Post Office Votes; as, for instance, that for buildings and stationery, which, I may say, is about balanced by extra receipts; although I include for 1882 the Inland Revenue expenditure on postal and telegraph stamps, which since then has been defrayed by the Post Office itself. I will now give the Committee the figures. In 1882-3 the aggregate Receipt of the Post Office was £9,010,000; the Expenditure, including that for stamps, was £6,176,000; so that there was a profit to the taxpayer of £2,834,000. In 1883-4 the Receipt was £9,475,000, and the Expenditure, £6,935,000, showing a profit of £2,540,000. In 1884-5 the Receipt was £9,665,000, and the Expenditure £7,126,000, showing a profit of £2,539,000. According to the Estimates which are now before the Committee for 1885-6, the Receipt is put at £9,720,000, and the Expenditure at £7,448,000, or a net profit of £2,272,000, £560,000 less than in 1882-3. Of course, the Committee will be aware that a very large amount of this Expenditure is and was in the nature of capital Expenditure in preparation for the Parcel Post, and still more in preparation for the establishment of 6*d.* telegrams. [Mr. W. H. Smith: Exclusive of works and stationery?] Yes; excluding works and stationery on one side and extra receipts on the other.

I revert from this digression, which I hope the Committee will consider not devoid of interest, to the deficit of £14,932,000. It will be, no doubt, a matter of interest to the Committee to consider how this is to be met. It is, I believe, the largest deficit which has been placed before the House of Commons since the Crimean War; and, whatever we do to meet it, we must make a great demand on the patriotism of the people. Now, there

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have been two governing considerations present to me when I discussed and decided with my Colleagues how we are to meet the whole or part of this deficit. In the first place, it appeared to me that it would be overstrained adherence to a sound general rule that we should raise, in a year like the present, taxes for the whole of the deficit, and not have recourse to what is popularly called the "Sinking Fund." By the Sinking Fund, I mean the sums set aside annually, in time of peace, for the steady reduction of Debt mainly raised and required for war; and, in my humble judgment, when war or active preparations for war on a large scale come upon us the *raison d'être* for the normal addition to the Sinking Fund is very much weakened. The second proposition which I maintain, and would submit to the Committee, is that the whole of the additional taxation which we have to raise on such occasions ought not to fall upon property. Among the benefits which were conferred on the community by the teaching of my late lamented Friend, Mr. Fawcett, none, I think, was more valuable than the stress which, in spite of its apparent unpopularity, he laid on this principle. Only a fraction of the present electorate pay, and a much smaller fraction of the future electorate will pay, any tax upon property, in the shape either of Income Tax or of House Tax, which is limited to houses of £20 value, and does not extend to Ireland, or of Land Tax, or of what are known as Death Duties. If, therefore, the whole of the additional Expenditure caused by war, or preparations for war, is met by taxes on property, those who will really control the military policy of the country will bear no charge for military operations. Now, on this subject, my own declarations, as well as the declarations of my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, have been unambiguous. On the 21st of November last year, when I proposed to add 1*d.* to the Income Tax for the Expedition to Khartoum, I was challenged as to the unfairness of relying solely on charges upon property for expenditure of that character; and my reply was that, three or four months before the end of the financial year, it was impossible to obtain the Revenue which might be required by putting a temporary tax on articles of consumption; but I said that "it was not right to go to the Income Tax alone, except in such cases of emergency towards the end of the year;" and I quoted the language, much more emphatic than mine, used by my right hon. Friend in former years. But I do not base the proposal I have now to make either on my own arguments, or on those of my right hon. Friend, or on those of the late Mr. Fawcett; but I have carefully analyzed, with great pains, and I think with accuracy, the Revenue raised from articles of consumption and from property respectively during the last quarter of a century, and I will give to the Committee very briefly the result of that inquiry. I shall compare, then, the Revenue from articles of consumption, including tobacco and liquor licences on one hand, with the Income Tax, the Land Tax, the House Tax, the Death Duties, and establishment licences, on the other hand, at four different periods. I take as the first that of 1858-9, after the Crimean War, when our Expenditure was relatively low. I take as the next that of 1868-9, the closing year of Lord Beaconsfield's first Government, when it happened that the Income Tax was just at the same rate as now; and I take as the third the year 1875-6, a year in Lord Beaconsfield's second Government, when wages were high and consumption was high. Then I compare the results of those years with our Revenue from these sources, according to the Estimates for the present year. Now, the comparison, I admit, may not be quite perfect, because I have to omit the rest of the Stamp Revenue, which it is impossible to distribute with anything like accuracy between property and trade; but the figures which I give to the Committee I am able to guarantee. In 1858-9 the Revenue from articles of consumption was £39,800,000, while the taxes on property and establishment licences produced £13,200,000. In 1868-9 articles of consumption paid £41,000,000, while the taxes on property amounted to £16,500,000. In 1875-6 articles of consumption paid £45,400,000; taxes on property produced £13,200,000. The Estimates for 1885-6, as I have stated them, show, without any additional taxes, a Revenue from articles of consumption of £44,300,000, while taxes on property, with the Income Tax at 5*d.*, would produce £20,700,000. From this

comparison it will be seen that, while the taxes on articles of consumption produce only 11 per cent more than in 1858-9, 8 per cent more than in 1868-9, and 2½ per cent less than in 1875-6, the taxes on property, taking the Income Tax at 5*d.* only, produce 57 per cent more than in 1858-9, 26 per cent more than in 1868-9, and 57 per cent more than in 1875-6. But I will make a further comparison—I hope the figures will not weary the Committee—I will make a further comparison between the Revenue from articles of consumption as estimated now and as actually received in 1875-6, dividing it between the duties and receipts in connection with fermented and spirituous liquors and the duties on other articles of consumption. Of the £45,400,000 received in 1875-6, £33,500,000 was Revenue from liquor; but of the £44,300,000 estimated now for 1885-6 only £29,800,000 is from liquor, the receipts from other articles having risen from £11,900,000 to £14,500,000. I have drawn from these facts two conclusions, which I will state with all modesty to the Committee. Ths first is that, during the last 30 years, there has been a gradual and moderate relief of the consumer as compared with the owner of property; that this policy should, in my opinion, be steadily persevered in; but that when a large addition is to be made to taxation, it should not be allowed to fall entirely on property. The second conclusion which I have come to is that, having regard to the change in the incidence of indirect taxation during the last 10 years, liquor, rather than other articles of consumption, should be subjected to a moderate increase of taxation.

Before, then, stating to the Committee the proposals which I intend to make as to the taxation of property and articles of consumption, I will say, in the first instance, what I do now propose to do. I do not propose any, strictly speaking, new tax; and in that respect I am afraid I shall disappoint many thousands of ingenious persons who have written to me on the subject within the last few months. There may or may not be in this country an "ignorant impatience of taxation;" but certainly there exists an amazing fertility of invention in regard to new taxes, especially when those new taxes do not fall on the inventors. I have received hundreds of proposals to tax cats, and soda water, and photographs, and bicycles, and advertisements, and even Christian names. Certainly, these would not have gone far to make good the deficit in the Revenue. But other proposals have been made to me which would, no doubt, give a much larger Revenue. I have been requested to ask Parliament to re-impose the Duty on Sugar; to increase the Tea Duty, which is already 48 per cent on the value of the article; I have also been asked to put a tax on all coal raised, and even to tax gas, and petroleum, and other oils. Well, Sir, I shall propose none of these taxes. I will have nothing to do, except in the last emergencies of war, and, indeed, hardly then, with the imposition of taxes upon raw materials, or on the necessities of life, or on the means of providing warmth and light, or with any duties of a protective character; and, therefore, I am limited to a much smaller number of alternatives, which I will explain later to the Committee.

What I do propose, then, in the first instance, is a tax upon property. I propose to raise the Income Tax, which, according to the Budget of last year, was 5*d.* in the pound, or which, under the Supplementary Budget of November, was 6*d.*, to the amount of 8*d.* in the pound. That is to say, I ask for 3*d.* more Income Tax than under the Budget of last year, and 2*d.* more than the actual payment for that year.

Now, it should be borne in mind that the Income Tax, so increased, will be much less than it was when the military charges, about a quarter of a century ago, were increased to anything like the extent to which it is now proposed to increase them. The Committee will remember what led to the necessity for larger armaments and increased taxation in the year 1859-60. In that year the Army and Navy Estimates were increased by £5,200,000, and the Income Tax was raised to 9*d.*, or 1*d.* more than I propose to raise it now. In the following year, 1860-1, when the Army and Navy Expenditure included £3,000,000 for the China War, the Income Tax was raised to 10*d.* in the pound, and a 9*d.* rate was continued both in 1861-2 and 1862-3. Remembering, therefore, what was deemed necessary at that time, I do not think that the Committee will

consider me extravagant if, under the present circumstances, I propose an Income Tax of 8*d*. That rate of Income Tax is estimated to produce, over and above the 5*d*. rate, the sum of £5,400,000.

I may say here, as a matter of some interest, that in connection with this increase of the Income Tax we have made arrangements, with the full consent of the City Commission, which is so well represented by my right hon. Friend opposite the Member for the City (Mr. Hubbard), and by my hon. Friend who sits behind me, the Member for Gravesend (Sir Sydney Waterlow), from whom we receive so much assistance, to reduce the poundage paid to assessors and collectors, which would be extravagant at the present scale if the Income Tax is to be raised. This reduction will only affect the larger rate of remuneration. In connection also with the Income Tax, I wish now to fulfil a pledge which I gave last year to the hon. Member for West Norfolk (Mr. Clare Read), and other Members of this House, that I would inquire very carefully into the incidence of Schedule B on the British farmers. I have carefully studied the difference between the charge paid by the farmers in England and that paid by the Scotch and Irish farmers. With an 8*d*. Income Tax, for instance, the English farmers would pay on 4*d*., and the Scotch and Irish farmers on 3*d*. I am bound to say that this can only be justified as a rough-and-ready arrangement, although one not altogether inequitable. But though this provision cannot be justified on strictly mathematical principles, it is, at the same time, one very difficult to change; and I do not propose in the present year to make any change. But I have a suggestion to throw out to farmers, which I should be very glad if they would consider before the next Budget is prepared, and it is this—that instead of being charged Income Tax on an arbitrary amount having relation to their rent, why should they not pay, like every other business man, upon their net profits? Every other person carrying on a trade pays upon his net profits. Why should not farmers do the same? I know it is said that farmers are so ignorant and unbusiness-like that they do not keep books, and do not know what the net profits of their businesses are. I deny, however, that the farmers, as a class, are either ignorant or unbusinesslike; and as to keeping books, I can only say that, under the new Bankruptcy Act of my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade, if a farmer gets unfortunately into the Bankruptcy Court, he will get into serious trouble if he pleads that he had not kept accounts. In the present Budget, as I have said, I propose no change in this matter; but I hope that farmers will consider my suggestion, and will not discard it merely because it is a change. I will give one reason which may have weight with them. If a farmer pays under Schedule D, he will be able to appeal, not only as now to the Local Commissioners, where he will probably meet his squire and his banker, but to the Special Commissioners, who go on circuit through the different districts of the country, and who are absolutely unconnected with the locality. That, I believe, would be a great advantage to farmers, besides the obvious benefit of paying, like other people, according to their profits.

I now pass, Sir, from the Income Tax to my next proposal. I propose to put into operation—although it will produce but a small sum this year—the final reform of what are popularly called "the Death Duties." There are two branches of the proposal which I am about to make, the one assimilating the incidence of the tax on real to that on personal property, and the other imposing an equivalent duty upon corporate property. I will first deal with the proposed changes in the taxation of real and personal property, passing from one person to another in consequence of death. As the Committee is aware, there are now four taxes which are imposed on property devolving by death—namely, (1) Probate Duty, called in Scotland "Inventory Duty;" (2) Account Duty, imposed as a defence to the Probate Duty; (3) Legacy Duty; (4) Succession Duty. Successions to personal property, including leasehold property under will or intestacy, and personal property passing under voluntary deeds, are liable to two of these taxes—Probate or Account Duty, and Legacy or Succession Duty; whereas personal property, passing by marriage settlement and successions to real property, are liable to one only—namely, Succession Duty. The Resolutions I

am about to lay before the Committee will, if adopted, remedy this anomalous state of things by imposing an actual Probate or Account Duty, or an equivalent tax on all property passing on death by will or by settlement. An actual Probate or Account Duty will be imposed on all property other than charges by way of annuity on real estate and real estate itself. These two classes of estates will be charged with increased Legacy or Succession Duty, as the case may be. The new tax will not in any way be retrospective, and it will only be imposed on successions by death which may occur after this date. The Resolutions will be three in number. The first will, in the shape of Probate or Account Duty, include—firstly, property locally situate abroad belonging to a person domiciled in the United Kingdom; secondly, all charges on real estate, other than charges by way of annuity; thirdly, real estate directed to be sold, all these being, under the existing law, now exempt from Probate Duty. The 1 per cent Legacy and Succession Duty on properties where this new Probate and Account Duty is paid will be abolished, so as to assimilate the practice with the Act of 1881, which has been most successful in its operation. The 2nd Resolution imposes, in the shape of Succession Duty, as an equivalent of the Probate Duty, a rate of 3 per cent on all properties which are now exempt from Probate or Account Duty, and do not come within the scope of the 3rd Resolution. In this equivalent rate the Succession Duty of 1 per cent is absorbed. Provision is also made that leaseholds under wills or intestacies, which already pay Probate Duty, are not to be charged with the additional tax. Reversionary rights already sold are not to be charged to the new tax. There is a further provision that, in the case of personal property settled on a husband or wife for life, with remainder to children, the duty is to be paid at once and for all. The 3rd and last Resolution imposes, in the shape of Legacy Duty, as an equivalent of Probate Duty, a rate of 3 per cent on all legacies charged by way of annuity on real property. In this equivalent rate the 1 per cent Legacy Duty is also absorbed. The scope of this last Resolution will be very limited, as it only applies to legacies by way of annuity charged on real property. When effect shall have been given to the Resolutions which I have now explained, an equal tax will have been imposed, as far as possible, on all successions to property by death, whether the property be real or personal; but it is impossible that it can be paid in the same manner. Probate and Account Duties are now payable by law within six months from the date of death; but, practically, it is found by experience that Probate Duty is paid much within the time allowed by the law, for it is the interest of the executor or trustee to take out probate as soon as possible, for without it he is not entitled to touch any of the personal property of the deceased. I propose to shorten the period of payment of Account Duty to three months, which will not create any difficulty. Legacy Duty is due when the legacy, or share of residue, is paid to, or retained for, the use of the legatee. This I do not mean to alter, nor the Succession Duty in the case of personal property, which is to be paid exactly in the same way as Legacy Duty. But in the case of real property the tax is now payable by eight half-yearly instalments, the first of which is due 12 months after the successor becomes entitled to the beneficial enjoyment of his succession. For these eight half-yearly instalments, I propose to substitute four annual payments. In future, real property to be enjoyed by a person absolutely, or as tenant in tail, will be taxed upon the capital value, and not only on the life interest; but this tax will only have to be paid, as well as the tax on charges on real estate by way of annuity, in four annual instalments. Before passing from this part of the subject, I would again observe that in the matter of Probate, Legacy, and Succession Duties there has hitherto been one law for real estate and another for personal estate. Personal estate has been subject to Probate Duty—real estate has been exempt from it. Personal estate has been subject to Legacy and Succession Duties, with reference to its full market value. Real estate has been taxable with reference only to its value for the successor's life, although he may have been in a position to sell it and put in his pocket the full market value of the estate. This inequality will be adjusted, and real estate will no longer bear what my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has called

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"a very small and disproportionate share of these taxes."

The financial effect of the scheme I have thus briefly laid before the Committee will, it is estimated, be, in the present financial year, a sum not exceeding £200,000; in the second, £400,000; in the third, £550,000; in the fourth, £700,000; and, finally, £850,000. Against that gain I should set off a loss, not very considerable, to arise from the relief from the *ad valorem* duty of *5s.* per cent upon settlements which are dispositions conferring successions. As I have already explained, this additional Revenue will be derived partly from personal estate not now paying Probate Duty, and partly from real estate, also now exempt from Probate Duty; and when it is remembered that Parliament in 1853, in passing the Succession Duty Act, sanctioned the raising of a sum of £2,000,000, whereas no greater sum than £850,000 has ever been realized from that source, I feel confident that the burdens I am now seeking to impose on real property will, at any rate, be considered as reasonable and moderate.

I now pass to the second branch of this subject—namely, the tax which I propose that Corporations should pay as an equivalent for the Death Duties. Having, by the scheme laid before the Committee, succeeded, I hope, in equalizing the burdens arising from successions upon death in real and personal estate, I will allude briefly to a class of property which enjoys the same privileges and the same protection under the law, but is exempted—and, I think, unjustly exempted—from many of the duties arising on death. Corporations are immortal; but this immortality should not relieve them from a tax falling on others who do not enjoy this advantage. The subject is one involving a great principle, rather than one which will bring in much Revenue into the Exchequer, for although I believe it will be the wish of the Committee that property held in mortmain should not altogether escape a tax on succession by death, yet I am sure that it is not my wish, or their wish, indiscriminately to lay a tax on all property vested in Corporations, irrespective of the purposes for which the property, or the income arising from it, may be applied, the time within which the property was acquired, or the nature and character of the Corporation itself. The Resolution which I shall lay upon the Table of the House, therefore, proposes altogether to exempt religious bodies and charities, and is framed with the intention of not taxing societies in respect of incomes derived from the donations and contributions of living persons. Further, it is proposed to exempt property belonging to Corporations for trading purposes, which is represented by shares already liable to Death Duties as the property of individuals, and property which shall be legally applied exclusively for the benefit of the public at large, or belonging to any friendly society, or which has been acquired within the last 30 years. The Resolution lays down that there should be imposed upon the income of the Corporations, as defined in it, a duty of 5 per cent per annum, to be charged and paid upon an account to be rendered to the Commissioners of Inland Revenue at the close of the first half of each financial year, subject to the exemptions to which I have already alluded, and others set forth in detail in the Resolution, with which I will not now trouble the Committee. It must be remembered that if a Corporation could be supposed to die, the property passing to its successor would pay on a duty of 13 per cent; but it would be unfair to suppose that the higher rate of succession to a stranger would always be incurred, and therefore I only propose to impose an annual tax of 5 per cent, my object being, as I said before, not so much to swell my receipts as to establish a principle at once fair and equitable. I need not say that I have very carefully considered the important Mortmain Return prepared on the Motion of my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth); but, though it is true that corporate property is in the aggregate large, when you come to proceed upon principle in dealing with exemptions you find that a great proportion of that property must be treated as exempt, and I do not venture to put the estimate of the yield of the tax for the year at a higher amount than £150,000.

The duties which I have described fall under the head of Stamp Revenue; but, before passing from it, I will refer to a slight additional source of Revenue in connection with stamps. Bonds and foreign securities payable to bearer only

pay now a Stamp Duty of 2*s.* 6*d.* per cent on issue or first negotiation, and are then free from all transfer duty; whereas registered Stocks and Shares pay duty every time they change hands, the latter 10*s.* per cent. We propose to lessen this difference by imposing the original stamp of 10*s.* per cent on all the securities I have named, transferable to bearer. This will produce about £100,000 per annum.

I now pass to articles of consumption. The Committee will have gathered, from my earlier remarks, that I propose to deal with fermented and spirituous liquors. As to spirits, we have satisfied ourselves that they may now well bear an increased duty. It is more than 20 years since the present rates were fixed, and experience shows that we need not be deterred from raising them by the fear of smuggling or of illicit distillation. We propose, then, to raise the duty upon home-made spirits from 10*s.* to 12*s.*, and upon foreign and Colonial spirits from 10*s.* 4*d.* to 12*s.* 4*d.* a-gallon. This we calculate will produce during the present year, under the head of Customs and Excise, about £900,000. Of course, this is based upon some reduction in consumption. At the present time the consumption is about 36,000,000 gallons, producing above £18,000,000 a-year. If the higher duty produces only £900,000 more, a simple sum in arithmetic will show that the consumption will have fallen below 32,000,000 gallons. It is no business of mine, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, to say whether that is to be regretted or not.

I pass to the article of beer. Beer now pays 6*s.* 3*d.* per barrel of 36 gallons, or a little over 2*d.* per gallon. Roughly speaking, that is about 20 per cent on the value of the article free of duty. If the duty on spirits is to be raised—of which, in proportion to the population, there is probably more drunk in Scotland and Ireland than in England—I could not be a party to such a proposal, unless a fair increase were made in the duty upon beer, of which, if I remember aright, fully 11-12ths are drunk in Great Britain as compared with Ireland. Now, Sir, by increasing the duty on beer from 6*s.* 3*d.* to 7*s.* 3*d.* per barrel of 36 gallons, we hope to get during the year £750,000, or about 9 per cent more than the present Revenue. The additional £900,000 gained upon spirits is only about 5 per cent of the existing receipts; but the increased rate of duty is slightly more in the case of spirits.

I now pass to the Wine Duties. The duty upon wine, which has remained the same, with but slight change, since 1860, was fixed not solely with reference to fiscal considerations. It had been nearly 6*s.* a-gallon, when it was reduced to 1*s.*, or, on stronger wines, to 2*s.* 6*d.* per gallon, in connection with the Commercial Treaty with France. Since then the Wine Duties have been more than once used as weapons to obtain Commercial Treaties with wine-growing countries. But, irrespectively of this consideration, the Committee should observe, as to the relative incidence of duty upon beer and wine, that wine pays somewhat a larger percentage on its value than even beer. The Wine Duties are, on the average, about 25 per cent on the value of that article; the Beer Duty is barely 20 per cent. We do not propose to alter the Wine Duties generally; but I have an important proposal to bring before the Committee with regard to the Wine Duties, to give effect to the Declaration with Spain of the 21st of December last, which has been laid before Parliament in the Paper "Commercial, No. 2," of the present Session, as to which several questions have been asked from various parts of the House. The Committee is aware that, in 1877, the Spanish Government withheld from British trade the benefit of certain reductions then made in the Spanish Customs Tariff, on the ground that the Wine Duties in the United Kingdom were really differential against Spain. This action of the Spanish Government led to a long correspondence, and also to the appointment of a Committee of this House, in 1879, to report on the Wine Duties. They recommended "a duty of 1*s.*, with a limit of strength to be determined by the Executive," and that the alcoholic test should be maintained; and they pronounced an opinion that an *ad valorem* scale of duties would be impracticable. No useful purpose would be served by entering upon the long controversies which ensued; but, in offering Great Britain most-favoured-nation treatment in 1883, the Spanish Government went beyond the offer made in previous years, and Her Majesty's Government felt themselves fully justi-

fied in agreeing to raise the limit of the 1*s.* duty from 26 to 30 degrees. It is of importance to trade that the arrangement between the two Governments shall take effect as soon as possible. The Spanish Government will be informed, as soon as the necessary measure authorizing this change has been passed by this House; and a date, of which public announcement will be made, will be fixed for the simultaneous application of the terms of the Declaration of the 21st of December, 1884. Our thanks are due to the several Spanish Ministers who have taken part in these prolonged negotiations, in which success has ultimately attended the labours of Sir Robert Morier, who has shown great ability and energy in overcoming serious difficulties. I must no less acknowledge the loyalty of the present Spanish Ministers in taking over in their substance the engagements entered into by their Predecessors, and the friendly and straightforward manner in which they have defended the Declaration before the Cortes. I may say that negotiations for a complete Commercial Treaty with Spain will commence in the autumn, in order that engagements which may require legislative sanction may be submitted to the Cortes and to Parliament in the ensuing Session. I may say that we do not anticipate any diminution in the Revenue from wine, for whatever loss may be expected on wines between 26 degrees and 30 degrees of strength will be made good by the increased consumption due to the higher Spirit Duty and the diminished use of spirits.

I may here mention two small changes which we propose in connection with indirect taxation. We were pressed last year by hon. Gentlemen sitting on both sides of the House to allow private brewers' licences to be taken out for a half-year only. I think that a concession in this respect may be properly made, and I propose to allow a private brewer's licence to be taken out for a half-year for 4*s.*, where the charge for the whole year is 6*s.*, and for 6*s.*, where the charge for the whole year is 9*s.* The half-years will end in March and September respectively. I do not believe that there will be any loss of Revenue from the change.

The other change relates to Patent Medicines. The Committee are aware that a Bill has been introduced by the Lord President into the House of Lords which will meet some of the complaints in connection with the sale of patent medicines. We also propose that foreign medicines be treated, in respect of the Patent Medicine Tax, precisely as British medicines—that is to say, they will only be regarded as dutiable if they are held out as Proprietary or as specifics. Further, the stamp will be altered, so as to show clearly and make it plain that there is no Government guarantee of the medicine. The Revenue will not be materially affected by these alterations.

The additional taxes which I have enumerated account for £7,500,000 out of a deficit of £14,932,000, leaving a sum of £7,432,000 to be provided for. The Committee, I think, will have conjectured, from what I said in the early part of my Statement, how I propose to meet this remaining deficit—that is to say, out of the sum annually applied to the reduction of Debt. Popularly, as I have already said, that sum is called the "Sinking Fund;" but this is not a strictly accurate description, and I will state the exact facts to the Committee. The sums devoted by law to the reduction of Debt are so applied under several old Acts, as well as under the Act of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote), passed in 1876, and under the Act which I asked Parliament to pass in 1883. They consist of virtually four classes. The first is so much of outstanding Terminable Annuities of all kinds as represents capital, and this amounted last year to about £5,600,000. The second is the difference between the sum of £28,000,000, as settled by the Act of 1876, and the charges on it, which are mainly for interest on Funded and Unfunded Debts and Terminable Annuities. That is called the "New Sinking Fund," and it amounted last year to above £500,000. The third class consists of the amount of Stock cancelled on grants of Life Annuities; compositions of Land Tax, and small transactions of that kind, and that amounted last year to nearly £1,500,000. The fourth sum applicable to the reduction of Debt is the surplus of the Income of each year over the Expenditure, which is called the Old Sinking Fund. Altogether, then, in 1885-6 the sums applied to the reduction of Funded and

Unfunded Debt will amount to something under £7,600,000. But of these four sources, the only payments we propose to intercept are those under what I call No. 1—namely, that part of the outstanding Terminable Annuities which represents capital. Of course, the Old Sinking Fund, No. 4, has disappeared this year, as there will be no balance of Income over Expenditure, and it would be impracticable to interfere with the reduction of Debt in connection with Life Annuities and similar operations. Nor do we propose to touch the New Sinking Fund. All, then, that we propose now is, to intercept this year the principal of the Terminable Annuities created in 1883, extending for a year the operation of the Act; and the difference between this sum of something over £4,600,000 and the £7,412,000 will be borrowed temporarily, so far as may be necessary, in Unfunded Debt. This addition to the Unfunded Debt will not, as I have explained, exceed the diminution in the Funded; but we propose in 1886-7 to pay it off out of the capital of the Terminable Annuities, in the same way as we propose to apply for the same purpose £4,600,000 this year. We also propose to take power to meet the deficit of last year by borrowing in Unfunded Debt, if it should be found necessary. I am aware that this part of my Statement is highly technical, and almost impossible fully to elucidate at the end of a long speech; but I propose to lay on the Table a Treasury Minute which will explain the operations more fully.

I will now recapitulate the figures which I have laid before the Committee. The net deficit for the year, calculating the Income Tax at 5*d.* in the pound, is £14,932,000. We propose to intercept the action of the Sinking Fund during this year, so as to produce something over £4,600,000. By raising the Income Tax to 8*d.* we get £5,400,000. The Death Duties will produce £200,000. We calculate that the duties to be imposed on Corporate Property will yield £150,000; the increase in the Spirit Duties £900,000, and the increase in the Beer Duty £750,000. The minor charges will produce £100,000, making a total of £12,100,000, and leaving a deficit of about £2,800,000 to be met by a similar Sinking Fund operation during the coming year.

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I am very much obliged to the Committee for having listened with so much attention to the long Statement which it has been my duty to address to them, and I hope I have made myself perfectly clear. I have now to ask the House to pass the necessary Resolutions, so that the increases of duty may take place to-morrow morning, although, as the Committee is well aware, such increases are always subject to repayment should the proposals of the Government not be adopted. As regards the altered Death Duties, the tax on corporate property, and the additional stamp on securities to bearer, those, of course, will not be put in operation until after the Act is passed; but with regard to the Resolutions relating to the Customs, Excise, and Income Tax, it is necessary that they should take effect at once. In conclusion, I may say that, if it will suit the convenience of the House, I do not propose to take the second reading of the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill until this day fortnight, so that there may be ample opportunity for considering the proposals of the Government.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, there shall be charged, collected, and paid for the year which commenced on the sixth day of April, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five, in respect of all Property, Profits, and Gains mentioned or described as chargeable in the Act of the sixteenth and seventeenth years of Her Majesty's reign, chapter thirty-four, the following Duties of Income Tax (that is to say):

For every Twenty Shillings of the annual value or amount of Property, Profits, and Gains chargeable under Schedules (A), (C), (D), or (E) of the said Act, the Duty of Eight Pence;

And for every Twenty Shillings of the annual value of the occupation of Lands, Tenements, Hereditaments, and Heritages chargeable under Schedule (B) of the said Act,—

In England, the Duty of Four Pence;

In Scotland and Ireland respectively, the Duty of Three Pence;

Subject to the provisions contained in section one hundred and sixty-three of the Act of the fifth and sixth years of Her Majesty's reign, chapter thirty-five, for the exemption of persons whose income is less than One Hundred and Fifty Pounds, and in section eight of 'The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1876,' for the relief of persons whose income is less than Four Hundred Pounds."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, I only rise at this moment in order to

express the thanks of the Committee to the right hon. Gentleman for the clearness of his Statement, and to assure him that we have listened to it with interest—I may say to parts of it with painful interest—but with a full sense of the difficulty of his task and the manner in which he has dealt with it. I quite agree with him that in regard to the somewhat complicated arrangements with respect to the payment of Debt, it would be better for us to wait until we have the Paper before us relating to the scheme which he has put forward. With regard to the other matters, I do not think it necessary or desirable that the Committee should at this moment enter into any discussion on their merits. The course which is proposed with respect to the Customs and Excise Duties is, I think, the usual course, and the one which I think to be quite right. I would wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman—no doubt it was included in his Statement, although I cannot call it to mind—what will be the duty on foreign beer? I suppose the addition to the duty on imported beer would be the same as upon beer brewed in this country. I think, under the circumstances, we shall do well to put off to a later day the discussion of the Budget as a whole, because there are several points in it which will require time for our careful consideration.

Mr. ORR-EWING said, he rose to call the attention of the Committee to the great injustice done by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer to Scotland and Ireland by the proposed imposition of an additional tax upon spirits. He would point out that at the present time whisky paid a duty of 10*s.* a gallon of proof spirit, whilst the alcohol which was drunk in the form of beer only paid one-sixth part of that sum. When they considered that spirits were necessary as the national drink of Scotland and Ireland, and that they had to pay six times the duty paid on beer, which was the national drink of England, he thought the Committee would see that the vast injustice already existing would be greatly aggravated by the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman. For his own part, he was surprised that any Chancellor of the Exchequer should venture to increase that injustice. Again, when they considered that wine was to remain at the present rate of duty, which was not above one-half, in respect of the alcohol it contained, of the duty on spirits, it would be seen that that was really a tax upon the poor man operating for the benefit of the rich. French wine paid on the average, according to its alcoholic strength, only 4*s.* a gallon of proof spirit, and Spanish wine paid only 6*s.*; and with regard to those there was to be no increased duty at all. But in the case of the national drink of Scotland and Ireland there was to be an increase of 20 per cent, although, at the present moment, it had to pay six times as much as beer. He must protest against that injustice on behalf of the people of Scotland and Ireland, and he held that it was the duty of every Scotch and Irish Member to resist the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman, who, he said, should get his increased Revenue by doubling the tax upon beer; and then, under that arrangement, it would only pay one-third of what was paid on whisky in Scotland and Ireland.

Mr. MITCHELL HENRY said, that when he heard the Chancellor of the Exchequer say that he would not be a party to increasing the duty upon spirits unless there were also an increase of duty on beer, he was in hope that the right hon. Gentleman was about to do complete justice in the matter of the taxation of alcohol. He regretted very much that the right hon. Gentleman had not taken that opportunity of affixing his name to a change that would be at once philosophical and just. Alcohol was undoubtedly a very proper subject on which to raise Revenue; but assuredly the only just and rational mode of dealing with it for that purpose was to tax it wherever it was to be found. There could be no reason whatever why those who in one part of the country found it convenient, principally in consequence of large breweries being established in their neighbourhood, to take their alcohol in the form of beer, should be taxed at a lower rate than those who, not having the same convenience, were obliged to content themselves with taking their alcohol in the shape of spirits. He could not imagine why that subject had always been shirked by Chancellors of the Exchequer. His right hon. Friend had certainly proposed to increase the alcoholic duty on beer; but he had also increased the alcoholic duty on spirits to

an extent which would produce to the Revenue something like £900,000, whereas the increased duty on beer was reckoned only to produce £700,000. That was not redressing the injustice which existed; on the contrary, he said it was rather an aggravation of it. The right hon. Gentleman, therefore, could not expect that those proposals would be satisfactory. There was another point on which he would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman in connection with this subject—he appealed to him as to whether, in the spirit of justice, he did not think that the articles of luxury paid for by the rich should be taxed at a higher rate than the articles of necessity paid for by the poor? He believed that there was a great deal of nonsense in all that was said about the Wine Duties. Wine was really an article of consumption amongst the higher classes; they were drunk by the higher classes from the smallest claret to the most expensive champagne; they did not form part of the diet of the lower class, although they were supposed to do so. Therefore, he would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he could not make a distinction in the Wine Duties, and impose a higher rate of duty upon bottled wine? Wines which came into this country in casks were wines of a lower order; they contained less alcohol, and were cheap, and they might possibly be consumed by the lower class, by which he meant those who had small incomes, and were obliged to economize. But, in the name of justice, he asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who, like other Members of the House, dined well—when they were not occupied at the House—why he could not place a higher duty on claret and champagne? That wine, and the higher class of clarets, were all imported in bottles; the duty upon them could be easily raised; it would be a just duty, and he was certain it would be a popular one throughout the country, because it would show that the right hon. Gentleman had regard to the circumstances of those who could not pay for the wines in question. With regard to the duty on Spanish wines and their alcoholic strength, he did not believe that there were any wines which contained 30 per cent of alcohol. The plea put forward by the Spaniards for the introduction of their wines into this country was that they had a higher percentage of alcohol, and that they were now unfairly weighted as compared with French wines. He had no doubt that the Chancellor of the Exchequer believed that he would let in the natural wines of Spain, as had been the case with the French wines; but he would point out that they were strengthened wines, and there was no reason why they should be introduced on the ground that they were the natural productions of Spain, and that they were not fairly treated unless the alcoholic scale of duty was raised. He rejoiced very much that the right hon. Gentleman had recognized the principle which some Members of that House had tried to induce him to see before. It seemed to him an extraordinary proposal that large masses of Debt should be paid off with money borrowed at 2½ and 3 per cent, which possibly had to be provided at a cost of 5 or 10 per cent. The money raised last year had undoubtedly pressed very hardly upon those who raised it. It had pressed on the agricultural party, especially the poorer classes in Ireland and Scotland, who were very badly off in these times of slack trade and wretched harvests. He ventured to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on the great skill with which he had jumped over that formidable obstacle; and he had only to express the hope that he would go a step further and introduce a philosophical method of taxing alcoholic drinks that would do justice to all parties concerned.

Mr. J. G. HUBBARD said, he felt that it was undesirable on those occasions to go at length into the various points of the Budget. He should not be satisfied, however, if he were not to rise and express the satisfaction with which he had listened to the eloquent Statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He had called it an eloquent Statement; but he used the term in the sense that it was both clear and convincing. He was gratified to hear the right hon. Gentleman say that in an emergency such as that which now pressed upon the country they ought to divide the burden of the extraordinary expenditure between the present generation and those who were to come afterwards. They ought not to save the present generation entirely by placing the whole of the burden on posterity; and, therefore, he re-

garded the allocation of the deficit of £15,000,000, between Debt and Taxation, as a wise and moderate proposal on the part of the right hon. Gentleman. Although he did not bind himself to the exact details of the new system, as set forth by the right hon. Gentleman, he thought that, for the most part, they were likely to be beneficial. His right hon. Friend no doubt felt, when he was proposing the addition of 3*d.* in the pound to the Income Tax, that it must be a severe blow to him (Mr. Hubbard), who believed that the Income Tax, as it was now administered, was a wicked tax, and that it was within the power of the Government to make it a righteous tax whenever they chose to do so.' Schedule B was nothing in the world but another form of Schedule D. Farming was as much a trade as any other, although it was specially dealt with on the assumption that farmers did not keep books; that it was impossible for them to make a Return of their incomes; and that, therefore, they must be charged in a certain ratio to the rent they paid for their land. He was quite willing that that mode of assessment also should be retained; but he was satisfied that there were ways in which Schedule D might be modified, and an alleviation extended to farmers. With regard to the Death Taxes, he had been very much struck with the way in which his right hon. Friend proposed to deal with Corporation funds. He thought he was quite right in laying upon them a charge by way of a substitute for Legacy Duty, which, as Corporations never died, they had never paid. The Income Tax, properly understood, was the tax of the country; it reached all classes of the people, and he was happy to find that gradually everything was working round to the adjustment he had advocated for many years. The rates to be levied as a substitute for the Succession Duties would, no doubt, be properly adjusted by the Government. He did not rise to make a long speech, but chiefly to express his satisfaction at the general tenour of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK said, there was one point with regard to the increase of the Income Tax on which he should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say a few words to the Committee. The Committee were aware that there were several Stocks on which the dividends were payable to-morrow morning; and the dividends would, in the ordinary course, be paid with a reduction of 6*d.* only. The bankers had received a Circular from the Inland Revenue Office requesting them to make certain arrangements to insure the payment of the increased amount. He presumed there was no question as to the legality of the proceeding; but still it would be satisfactory to everyone if his right hon. Friend would say something to the Committee upon the matter. He need hardly say that the bankers had every wish to facilitate the collection of Revenue, and that he had no doubt they would be justified in acting on the request of the Inland Revenue Board. He was glad that the right hon. Gentleman proposed a tax on corporate property equivalent, or partly so, to the Income Tax. The right hon. Gentleman would, no doubt, find a good deal of opposition to the proposal; but, nevertheless, it was one founded on justice. He (Sir John Lubbock) also desired to make a few observations with respect to the Post Office. He understood there was a net Revenue from the Post Office of £2,273,000. Now, there were items connected with the Post Office which went into Class I. of the Estimates, and he was not quite clear whether they were included in the sum he had mentioned. It was very desirable they should know what was received from the Post Office, because he was afraid some people went away with a very exaggerated idea of the profits derived from that Institution. He was afraid it was not possible for Her Majesty's Government to raise the whole amount of the necessary Expenditure of the year without infringing upon the Sinking Fund; at the same time, he must express great regret that now, possibly at the very beginning of a struggle, they would not only have to do away, practically, with the whole of the Sinking Fund, but have to borrow about £2,800,000 in addition. It might be necessary, under the circumstances, to do that; but he had heard that part of the Statement of his right hon. Friend with great regret.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN regretted to say that after carefully weighing all the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer the Budget

proposals appeared to him to be somewhat unfair. He quite agreed with the propriety of increasing the Income Tax from 6*d.* to 8*d.* in order to meet the present deficit. There was no fairer tax imposed by the House, if properly adjusted, and there was no tax that he paid more cheerfully than he did the Income Tax. The reason of that was, that no man was called upon to pay the tax who had not got an income. But of indirect taxation the poor man was required, as a rule, to pay more than his fair share. According to the Statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, about three-fourths of the Revenue of the whole country was derived from the taxation on consumable articles, and only one-fourth was raised by taxation on property. Surely the right hon. Gentleman would not say that that was a fair state of things. Notwithstanding the fact that three-fourths of the Revenue was produced by the taxation on consumable articles, the right hon. Gentleman now proposed to add considerably to the duties paid on those articles. He (Mr. O'Sullivan) believed he was right in saying that 19-20ths of the indirect taxation of the country was contributed by the working classes, or, in other words, that a man with £10,000 a-year did not pay in taxes more than 5 per cent upon his income; while the working man with £50 a-year, especially if he drank or smoked even moderately, paid about 10 per cent of his income in taxation. Was it fair, under such circumstances, that the right hon. Gentleman should increase the charge upon the working people of the three countries? The right hon. Gentleman proposed to put an increased duty of 2*s.* a-gallon upon spirits. Why should he put 2*s.* a-gallon on the drink which formed the almost universal beverage of the Scotch and Irish people, and only 1*s.* on 36 gallons of beer, which was the drink of Englishmen? If they examined the alcoholic strength of the different beverages, what was the result? It was well known by those who had studied the question that a barrel of good beer—a barrel of 36 gallons—contained about five gallons of alcohol. The duty, therefore, upon the five gallons of alcohol was 1*s.*, or a fraction less than 2½*d.* per gallon. He appealed to any impartial person if it was fair that beer should be taxed so lightly and spirits so heavily? Again, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had estimated that the new tax upon spirits would yield about £900,000, and that the tax upon beer would bring in about £750,000. Had it occurred to the mind of the right hon. Gentleman that the £750,000 would be paid by 20,000,000 of the population, while the payment of the £900,000 would be confined to about 1,000,000 people? ["Why?"] For the simple reason that beer was drunk by a very much larger population. Of course, Revenue must be raised in some way or other; but he thought it was the duty of the Government to put taxation on the people who could bear it best. In his opinion, there were several things which ought to be taxed before either beer or spirits. Why, for instance, should not ground rents be taxed? As he pointed out last year, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer brought in his Budget, ground rents were altogether exempt from taxation. He maintained that ground rents were amongst the first things that should be taxed, and for the very reason that they were earned without any outlay or effort on the part of the proprietors, and in very many instances they amounted to as much as 20 times their value, owing to the buildings erected by the industrial classes upon the land. It had been roughly calculated that the ground rents of the Kingdom produced £30,000,000 annually. It would not be unfair or unjust to put a tax of, at least, 10 per cent upon those rents. If that were done, £3,000,000 would be gained by the Exchequer; and that, with the £5,500,000 produced by the extra Income Tax, would be actually more than the Government required. He maintained, also, that clubs should be taxed. Clubs, as a rule, were luxuries, though in many places they were merely drinking saloons and betting houses. It was a monstrous state of things that clubs were allowed to go untaxed. £500,000 might very easily be raised annually by such means. The next suggestion he had to make was one which, no doubt, would excite some laughter, for it was that a tax should be imposed upon every unmarried man over 30 years of age. Surely bachelors were very well able to bear taxation. He put it to the sense of justice in the House if a man with £500 a-year and a wife and children

and servants to support was as well able to pay 6*d.* in the pound Income Tax as a bachelor, who had no one but himself to support? A tax upon bachelors would be as fair, as just, and as honest a tax as could be imposed by the House. Of course, he could not make any accurate calculation as to what the tax would yield; but he took it that the taxpaying bachelors formed, at least, one-fourth of the whole taxpayers of the country, and, therefore, 1*d.* in the pound ought to produce £500,000. Furthermore, he thought that the wine drinkers should pay more taxation than they were now required to do. Was it not a monstrous thing that in a time of emergency like the present, in a time when money was greatly required, the Chancellor of the Exchequer refrained from raising the duty upon such luxuries as champagne, old clarets, crusted ports, and the best sherries? He put it to the right hon. Gentleman if it was just to the working men? Working men, as a rule, drank nothing but beer and spirits; but the wealthier classes indulged in champagne, ports, sherries, and Madeira, and in a time like this not an extra 1*d.* was put upon the latter wines. Such an increased duty ought to be put on high-class wines and on cigars, which would bring in, at least, £500,000. There was another matter to which the Chancellor of the Exchequer might very well turn his attention with a view to the saving of Expenditure, and that was the amalgamation of the Inland Revenue and Customs Offices. He did not know what saving there would be if such an amalgamation were effected; but it was a monstrous state of things that there were two sets of Commissioners, two sets of Chairmen, two sets of solicitors, two sets of officials in every big town of the three countries, for the purpose of carrying on pretty much the same business. Now, perhaps the Committee would permit him to make a few comparisons of the duties which were paid on articles consumed by the poor, and the duties on articles consumed by the wealthy classes. In the first instance, let him take the case of gin, which was about the lowest class of spirits. What were the facts? On that article, which was largely consumed by the poorer classes, and the value of which was about 20*s.* to 24*s.* per dozen, a duty of 15*s.* per dozen was charged; while upon champagnes and old clarets, which were worth from £3 to £5 per dozen, and which were drunk by the upper classes, a duty of only 2*s.* per dozen was charged. Was that a state of things which ought to exist for another day? The people who drank claret were well able to pay 15*s.* a-dozen. Then he found that whisky, the value of which was about 30*s.* a-dozen, paid an average duty of about 18*s.* per dozen, or three-fifths of its value. Madeira and old ports and sherries were worth from £3 to £4 per dozen; but they were only required to pay a duty of 5*s.* per dozen. Upon common tobacco the duty amounted to from 3*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* 10*d.* per lb., while upon the very finest cigars imported, which were worth more than 10 times the value of the tobacco of the poorer classes, the charge was only from 5*s.* to 5*s.* 6*d.* a-box. He appealed to the Committee—was that not one-sided legislation? What would be said outside when it was found that the wealthy classes who made the laws taxed the poor in that way? It was impossible to expect the working people to be content when increased duties were put upon the articles which they chiefly consumed, and no extra charge was made upon the articles of luxuries which only came within the reach of the rich. There was no actual reduction of the duty upon the drink of the rich; but he understood that it was proposed to raise the limit of the 1*s.* duty on alcohol in wines from 26 to 30 degrees. The result would be that a gallon of alcohol in first-class wines would pay less than 4*s.*, while spirits would pay 12*s.* a-gallon. He might make other comparisons to show the injustice and unfairness of the decision arrived at by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer; but he had no desire to weary the Committee. He trusted, however, that Scotch and Irish Members of the House would, when the proper time came, vote against the proposal to increase the duty on spirits by 2*s.* a-gallon, as a protest against the disproportionate duties levied upon the beverage of the Scotch and Irish peoples and the beverage of the English people.

MR. DODDS said, there was only one portion of the important and satisfactory Statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer

upon which he desired to offer a few words to the Committee, and it was that portion in which the right hon. Gentleman dealt with the Death Duties. It would be in the recollection of many hon. Members of the Committee that the subject was one upon which he (Mr. Dodds) had ventured to address the House on many occasions, and that the result of the discussion which took place in 1879, when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) was Chancellor of the Exchequer, and of the subsequent discussions, was that the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, and then Chancellor of the Exchequer, in 1881 took up the subject, and dealt with it to a very important extent. The right hon. Gentleman then said that he (Mr. Dodds) had only dealt with the fringe of the subject; but, at all events, the changes introduced in 1881 had been found of great value to the Revenue, and of the greatest convenience to the public at large. It was, therefore, with the greatest satisfaction that, after waiting some years in the hope that further steps would be taken, he heard the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer say he was about to initiate a final reform of the Death Duties. No more important question could occupy the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and he (Mr. Dodds) hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would find that that was an opportune moment for levying certain Death Duties not levied before. As far as he could follow the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his very clear Statement, he thought he would be able to agree with the right hon. Gentleman in almost every proposition he made with regard to the Death Duties. It would be wasting the time of the Committee were he to go into the matter in detail at the present time; when they had the Resolutions in their hands they would be able to deal with the matter more fully and more effectively. If there appeared to be any necessity for it, he would have, on a subsequent occasion, to trouble the Committee with such observations as long professional experience enabled him to make on the subject. His chief object in rising now was to express his satisfaction at the Budget Statement generally, and to ask the right hon. Gentleman to give the Committee a little more information, when he rose to reply, with regard to the important subject of the taxation of corporate property. It was with great pleasure he heard the right hon. Gentleman say he proposed to deal with corporate property, and he found that his pleasure at the statement was shared by hon. Members generally. The point on which he desired more information was as to the extent of the proposed exemption of what he termed religious houses. His own county was very largely concerned in the matter—indeed, every county in the Kingdom was interested more or less in it. In the county of Durham there were from 50,000 to 100,000 acres of land, including a very large extent of coal and other minerals, held by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. The income derived from this was enormous, and it would, indeed, be a great disappointment to everyone in the county if that property were to be exempted from taxation; it would be felt to be a great hardship if owners of land were called upon to pay the proposed new tax, whilst the Ecclesiastical Commissioners were exempted from it. That was the point on which he desired additional information.

Sir GABRIEL GOLDNEY complimented the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon the generally clear way in which he had introduced his Budget, and upon the cordial reception which most of his proposals had received. There was only one point on which he (Sir Gabriel Goldney) was not quite clear, and that was as to the duties which the right hon. Gentleman proposed upon real property, as compared with personalty. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman, in his reply, would show what effect his proposals would have upon landed property.

Mr. Alderman W. LAWRENCE said, that, in the first place, he begged to thank most heartily the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the very clear and lucid manner in which he had placed this matter before the Committee. They knew that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had had a great opportunity. The opportunities of Chancellors of the Exchequer only occurred in connection with a large surplus or a great deficit. It was only on those two occasions that Chancellors of the Exchequer were enabled to make great changes in taxation.

When expenditure and income were nearly balanced, those right hon. Gentlemen did not like to make any changes in taxation. The opportunity of the Chancellor of the Exchequer this year had been a great deficiency. With regard to the Death Duties, as they were called—namely, the duties on the transfer of property by death — the hon. Member for Stockton (Mr. Dodds), who had taken some interest in this matter, had alluded to his having brought it before the House some years ago. Before that time he (Mr. Alderman Lawrence) himself had had an opportunity of bringing it before the House; and the point to which he had especially directed the attention of Chancellors of the Exchequer had been the injustice and inequality which existed between the treatment of real property and that of personal property. He had drawn attention to the fact that while leasehold property paid Probate Duty and Succession Duty, real property only paid Succession Duty; so that in the case of a man who had two houses, one freehold and the other leasehold, dying, and leaving a house to each of his two sons, the son inheriting the freehold house would only have to pay Succession Duty on his life interest, whilst the other son, for a house which might be in the same street, of equal value to the first, would have to pay Probate Duty on the full amount of the value, irrespective of what age he might be when he came into possession of the property, and also to pay Succession Duty on his life interest. That injustice had lasted for a very long time. They knew how urgently the matter had been referred to by the Prime Minister in his speeches in Mid Lothian—how warmly he had spoken of the injustice of those Legacy Duties and the Probate Duties under the last Administration, and of no remedy having been attempted. He (Mr. Alderman Lawrence) had attempted to bring the subject forward; but pressure of Business had prevented a full discussion being taken on the question. He was glad to see that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had risen to the occasion, and had declared that in future there should be no difference made between real property and personal property, and that both should contribute their fair share to the taxation of the country. The right hon. Gentleman had stated the manner in which this was to be done; and he (Mr. Alderman Lawrence) was inclined to think that the mode he suggested would be a great improvement upon the existing law. The right hon. Gentleman proposed to deal with it as he had already done with respect to the 1 per cent duty on real property. He thanked the right hon. Gentleman for having brought the matter before the Committee, and must say that he thought it would be received with approbation by the country as remedying a great injustice. He also agreed with the right hon. Gentleman as to the taxation he proposed to impose upon corporate property. It was a great mistake to suppose that Corporations themselves were not perfectly ready to pay the tax. What were the facts revealed in the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Livery Companies of the City of London? One charge brought against the Livery Companies was that they paid no Succession Duty. But that was not the fault of the Companies. The Companies were never asked to pay it; and, of course, they could not be expected to come forward voluntarily and offer to do so. Many of the Companies, however, according to that Report of the Commissioners, had stated that it would only be fair and just for them to pay that duty. But how had that statement of the Companies been treated by the Commissioners in their Report? It was not every Company that had expressed that opinion; but then it was not every Company that had property on which to pay Succession Duty. The Commissioners said that some Companies had appeared willing to pay, and they went on to state that though the Companies had notified their readiness to pay, they—the Commissioners—did not think that it came within their functions to recognize it in their Report. Now those Companies would be called on to pay the duty which had been spoken of in lieu of Succession Duty. He was not prepared to say that the amount to be paid in lieu of Succession Duty—that the amount mentioned was a fair amount; but that point would come up for consideration at some future time. It was impossible at present to say whether it was fair and just. As to exemptions, that was a great question, and it would be a very important matter,

to consider in the taxation of Corporations. He (Mr. Alderman Lawrence) anticipated that in future there would be grave discussion as to what Corporations should be exempted. There would be questions asked, no doubt, on that point, when the Budget Bill was brought before them. He must say that there was one thing that struck him in regard to a Resolution proposed in reference to the Spirit and Beer Duties. He was glad that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not put an extra duty upon tea, coffee, sugar, soda water, apollinaris, or any of the teetotal drinks; but at the same time he was sure that the mass of the people of this country would feel that if alcoholic drinks were to be taxed higher than they were at present the whole of them should be affected by the change. There was no reason, if they were to raise the duty on spirits and beer—and he would not go into the question of the national drinks of England, Ireland, and Scotland—but his point was that if they were going to charge an extra tax on their national beverages they ought not to refrain from putting a tax upon wine, which was the beverage of the rich. He thought that omission to put an equal tax upon wine was the weak point of the Budget. He had no doubt that complaints would come from all quarters of the country as to that omission, and assuredly the Government would have to remedy it. It would never do to leave the upper classes of the community unaffected by that increased taxation, whilst the consumers of beer in England and of spirits in Ireland and Scotland were burdened by it. Unless some change were made, he felt convinced that a *furore* of feeling through the country such as the Government little expected would be created. The poor man, every time he drank a pot of beer, would know that he was paying something more for it than he had done hitherto, and he would know perfectly well that the rich man who drank his glass of wine was paying exactly the same for it as he had done in the past. The poor man would consequently feel aggrieved, whatever the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer might say to explain away the apparent injustice. The present condition of the working classes should be taken into account by the right hon. Gentleman. He should bear in mind that while he was proposing to put this additional taxation upon the labouring man who took his glass of beer, that that man's wages were not rising, and that his work was not sure. He (Mr. Alderman Lawrence) admitted that the incomes of the poor were not taxed, and that it was necessary that every class of the community should bear its share of the burden of Imperial taxation. He was not going into the question as to the relative amount of taxation upon the poor and upon the rich, and he would not commit himself with regard to the desirability of imposing a tax upon beer or spirits; but he was of opinion that an increase put upon spirits would lead to a great deal of illicit distillation, particularly in Ireland. Nothing would disabuse the minds of the wage-earning classes in England, who very seldom got anything better to drink than beer, of the idea that they were suffering under an injustice in having the tax upon their beverage increased; and it must be borne in mind that beer to the working classes was a necessity, and not so much a luxury. The hard-working man, who perhaps got very little during the day but his beer and bread and cheese, might possibly be taxed fairly enough; but it would be with considerable bitterness of feeling that he would reflect upon the fact that the tax upon the wine of the squire, and of the landlord and of his employer, was not raised, but, as a matter of fact, was lowered; because in the future that class of people would be able to obtain wine at a higher alcoholic strength than they did now for the same price. That subject was much more serious than the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer seemed to think; and he (Mr. Alderman Lawrence) was sure that it would be brought home to him and to the Government in a way they had not the slightest suspicion of. He was afraid that the Budget would be one which would create a large amount of dissatisfaction amongst the masses. He would not go into the questions which arose upon the Budget beyond those affected by that night's Resolution. He would repeat—because he did not think it could be too much impressed upon the right hon. Gentleman—that the working classes ought not to be treated in this exceptional manner; because it would be

treating them exceptionally to tax their beer and spirits, whilst the wine of the rich man was left alone.

MR. CLARE READ said, that he did not doubt that the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. O'Sullivan) was a great authority on whisky; but he (Mr. Read) did not think that the hon. Member was an equal authority on the question of beer. The hon. Gentleman had told them that a barrel of beer contained five gallons of proof spirit. He (Mr. Read) did not think the hon. Member could ever have drunk much beer, or he would not say that. But hon. Gentlemen seemed to think that the people of England did not drink spirits. Well, he only wished they drank more beer and less spirits, because if they did that he believed they would be a healthier people. But the hon. Member seemed to think that the Spirit Duties would fall upon 1,000,000 people, while the Beer Duties would fall upon some 15,000,000 or 16,000,000—he seemed to think, in fact, that the people of England did not drink spirits. That was perfectly absurd. It seemed to him (Mr. Read) that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had treated both countries very much alike—both the country that produced beer and the country that produced spirits; for it must be in the recollection of the Committee that this question of the Malt Tax had often been considered in that House, sometimes with an idea of its entire repeal, but that, instead of that, they had constantly seen additions made to it. In 1840 the duty on malt was 20*s.* 8*d.* Then there was £5 per cent put upon it in that year, which raised it to 21*s.* 8*d.* In 1862 there was a further tax on brewers' licences, when the Hop Duty was repealed, and the tax was brought up to 22*s.* 8*d.* Then in 1880, when the present Prime Minister was going to confer such a great advantage upon the agricultural interest by transferring the tax from malt to beer—which he (Mr. Read) considered was a good thing in itself; but, at the same time, the right hon. Gentleman took care to recoup the Revenue for any possible loss by raising the tax on beer, so that a quarter of malt paid something like 24*s.* Now, by the present addition with which they were threatened by the right hon. Gentleman, the tax on malt would be raised to 26*s.* or 27*s.*, which was almost 100 per cent on the present price of barley. Then they came to the question of private brewers; and he thanked the right hon. Gentleman for the small concession he had made. He believed that a 4*s.* licence for six months would be appreciated by the agricultural labourers in the Eastern Counties, who brewed beer only in the hot months, for haysel and for harvest. All private brewers had been treated very badly by recent legislation. They had certain advantages before the transfer of the tax from malt to beer. They did not pay any licence. They could use what they liked for brewing, and did not require to give notice to the Excise. Now, however, they received visits from the Excise, and had to give notice whenever they brewed. Hitherto the licences had been charged upon them to the extent of some 10 or 12 per cent more than it was when they had to pay the old Malt Duty; but by the present increase the charges would be something like 15 per cent. He concurred in a great deal that had been said by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Alderman Lawrence), and he thought that it was quite unfair upon producers in this country and upon the consumers of beer that they should have their beverages taxed higher than ever, and that there should be no extra tax imposed upon wine, which was the produce of other countries; and he did not doubt that when the poor man quaffed his pot of beer, he would not only think of the lenient manner in which the rich, who were generally supposed to indulge in champagne, were treated, but he would also think of the Aldermen and other gentlemen in a similar station of life, who, perhaps, drank a little more. He (Mr. Read) was sorry that, whatever agricultural question was mooted in that House, some hon. Members always endeavoured to raise some feeling of antagonism between England and Ireland. He was sorry there was any dispute between the countries. It must be remembered that nine-tenths of the beer was brewed from barley grown in the United Kingdom, whilst the higher luxury of wine was produced entirely abroad. Those who happened to grow barley made no complaint that there was no tax on cider; but there was a great deal of what were called non-intoxicating beverages which contained a considerable amount of alcohol, and he did object to those beverages being ex-

cluded from taxation. Those things ought to contribute something to the Exchequer. But with regard to private brewers' licences, he must say that it was a lamentable fact that private brewing seemed to be dying out in the country. He regretted it, because he did believe that nothing conduced so much to the temperance of the agricultural labourers as the home-brewed beer which they could make in their own cottages. He saw that in 1882 there were 32,000 of those brewers. In 1883 they were reduced to 29,000; and in 1884, notwithstanding the increase of the limit to 9*s.*, there were only 27,000 who took out licences. Therefore, it appeared to him that private brewing was doomed to be extinguished in this country. The proposed imposition would assuredly affect it. He could not say that he ought to thank the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon the result of his long and arduous study of Schedule B of the Income Tax. The right hon. Gentleman had been good enough to say that he would undertake to investigate the whole subject, and he told them that his desire was that farmers should pay the tax as all other traders did. But farmers were not traders; they were more than that—they were manufacturers; they were more than manufacturers—they were producers. Therefore, it could not be expected of them that they could keep anything like accurate accounts on their farms in the same way that accurate accounts could be kept in a shop. That difficulty of keeping accounts in connection with a farm was pooh-poohed in many quarters, and it was said that farmers might keep accounts as correctly as traders. To hon. Gentlemen who said that he would simply reply—"Try to do it yourselves." The hon. Member for Cardigan (Mr. D. Davies) amused the House last year upon this very point by telling them that he at one time had interested himself in farming, and had endeavoured to keep accounts. He had told them that, in spite of the greatest care and attention which he had devoted to the matter, he had been obliged to give up all hope of being able to keep accurate accounts in the end. A farmer's account depended not upon the amount of money he had in his pocket or at his bankers, but on the amount of stock he had on his farm; and he could not by any possibility arrive at the profits his farm had made unless he had a thorough, complete, and accurate valuation of everything upon his farm. Not only that, but it was necessary to have an accurate knowledge of the state of the farm, because it was necessary to put a great deal more into it in one year than in another; and the fluctuation in the price of stock was so great that, though one year, when he might possibly have a balance at his banker's, he might stand at a loss, in the succeeding year, when he had a very small or possibly no balance at all at his bankers, the increase in value of his stock and of his corn might give him a profit. Therefore, it was not an easy thing, even for gentlemen who had plenty of leisure and ability, and who knew how to keep accurate accounts—it was not such an easy thing for them to furnish those accounts in connection with farming. A Norfolk gentleman, whose brother generally sat opposite to him in that House, farmed his own estate admirably. That gentleman had been good enough to show him his accounts the other day. He had employed a well-known valuer to make a valuation of his stock and crops. He had found out that the way that profit was made was this—that there was an annual increase in the value and amount of stock, and therefore he showed a very fair balance indeed; but he (Mr. Read) would like to know, when there had been a decrease of something like 20 or 25 per cent in the value of stock during the last 18 months, how would that gentleman's account appear, and who was to say whether he had made a loss or whether he had made a gain? He could assure hon. Gentlemen that, however willing the farmers might be to keep accounts, they would not be able to do so. They did not keep accounts, and even if they did, when their figures came before the Income Tax Commissioners they would be most unreliable. What he (Mr. Read) had said last year had not been touched upon by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with regard to the reason why farmers had been asked to pay under Schedule B on tithes as well as on their rent. That they should do so was never contemplated by the Act of 1842. In 1842 not half the

tithes were commuted. What did he find in the Instructions in the Act that were given as to assessing Schedule B? Why, in No. 10 of those Instructions it said that when any landlord should be subject to any covenant or agreement to pay any parochial rate or any composition on tithes, then the annual value should be estimated exclusive of such rates and of such composition on tithes—showing most distinctly that tithes and rates were to be considered to be outgoings, and that a tenant should only be expected to pay on the rent that he paid to the landlord. It was not until some years after that Act that, in consequence of a Circular from the Inland Revenue, tithes and rent were put together, and the farmer was made to pay under Schedule B on half the amount of those two imposts. He should be very glad indeed if the original intention had been resorted to, for then the farmers would have nothing to complain of. He contended that in the original Act the proposition was fair and just—he would almost say generous; but in the altered circumstances of agriculture and the reduced profits which farmers made, the Income Tax, especially when they were made to pay it on the tithes, had been a far greater burden of late, and was one which he was sure could not be mitigated, however they might desire it, by paying on their supposed profits. He believed that if the arable farms of England were to produce accurate and complete accounts for the last seven or eight years, it would be found that, instead of having to pay the amount of Income Tax that they had been called upon to pay, they would not have been charged 1*d.* He had not exactly understood the right hon. Gentleman with regard to the proposed imposition on the Scotch and Irish farmers. He had said that in England they should pay on the half, which would be 4*d.*, and that Ireland and Scotland should pay on one-third, which would be 3*d.* He was not aware that 3*d.* was——

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I did not say that.

MR. CLARE READ said, that he knew the right hon. Gentleman's explanation, and if he were an Irish or a Scotch farmer he should object to it. However, he would leave the Irish and Scotch farmers to fight the matter out for themselves. Then they came to the other question of the imposition of full Legacy Duty on real property. As he was not the owner of much land, it did not affect him; but he did hold it to be a monstrous injustice that, if they were going to put an increased burden on the land, they did not at the same time revise the system which imposed almost the whole of the local burdens in the country upon the owners of land and houses. They should bring in the general wealth of the country in order to relieve that local taxation, if they were going to impose that additional weight and burden upon the land of England.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he had listened with great attention to the able speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and there was no doubt that the right hon. Gentleman had dealt with the fact that there was a deficit of £15,000,000 as pleasantly as possible. On the other hand, as had been said by the hon. Member opposite (Mr. O'Sullivan), taxation pressed unduly on the poorer classes; and he was bound to say that he thought the right hon. Gentleman had shown a great want of courage in dealing with the duties on alcoholic liquors. One would have thought that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in dealing with them, would have done something to diminish the inequalities which existed in respect of the duties charged; but, instead of that, he had done what would have the effect of increasing them. The impression he had formed whilst the right hon. Gentleman was delivering his speech was that he was going to put the increase of duty upon beer, and not upon spirits. It might be a question whether they should have an additional tax placed upon them, whereas the case with regard to beer was quite different. Beer was notoriously the national drink in England, and the inequality with regard to it was so monstrous that it had seemed to him impossible that the right hon. Gentleman should not have done something to remedy it, and that he would have raised a great part of the money required by placing additional taxation upon that article of consumption. It might be questioned whether, as the hon. Member for Limerick had said, there were five gallons of spirit in a

barrel of beer; but whether it contained five or six gallons of spirit, it was clear that infinitely less taxation was paid on the alcohol contained in beer as compared with the alcohol contained in spirits. Therefore he had been astonished when he heard the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer state to the Committee that he was about to place 20 per cent additional duty on spirits, and only 15 or 16 per cent upon beer. That appeared to him to be so gross and monstrous a wrong that he could not but express his surprise at the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman. It might be that spirits would bear an additional duty if it could be collected without the increase of smuggling, and he, for one, would not object to that; but he did say that they, as Scotchmen and Irishmen, and all who, like the worthy Alderman (Mr. Alderman Lawrence) who had spoken that evening, wished to see fair play, should insist that there should be something approaching to equality—not an exaggeration of the inequality which now existed. He thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not find that the worthy Alderman, although he took up another point, was the only one who thought that the right hon. Gentleman would not get through his Budget arrangements without immense dissatisfaction being shown towards his proposals by people of every class, especially in Scotland and Ireland, for the reason he had already stated—namely, that not only had he done nothing to diminish the existing disproportion, but that he had exaggerated the difference of duty between spirits and beer, and also as between spirits and beer together and wine. Thanks to the beneficent finance of the right hon. Gentleman who was now Prime Minister, those who liked claret and similar foreign wines had the privilege of drinking them at a small cost. He drank claret himself; but what did the Chancellor of the Exchequer now propose? He proposed to admit port and sherry at the same duty of 1*s*. He (Sir George Campbell) believed that, under the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman, whisky would be exported, used in the manufacture of port and sherry, and then brought back again into this country. That, he thought, constituted a grievous inequality; and the worthy Alderman had, in his opinion, done good service in drawing to it the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. With regard to the Income Tax, he would not go at length into the question of that tax, but would say that as it was now becoming a permanent and increasing impost on the country, he agreed with a much higher authority on the subject than himself—namely, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of London (Mr. J. G. Hubbard)—that the Chancellor of the Exchequer must redress its inequalities, and make a distinction between property and income in the application of the tax. He denied that that was now a tax upon property, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman opposite, who might be said to have made the subject his study for a long time past, would keep up his opposition until there was a distinction made between the income derived from property and the income derived from labour. With regard to the matters dealt with subsequently in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, he confessed that, having regard to the very great events before them, it might not be possible to do that which all but Chancellors of the Exchequer were bound to do—namely, honestly to pay their way. He understood the right hon. Gentleman to give the Committee figures to show that the National Debt was only to be reduced by £6,000,000 per annum—he understood that he proposed to raise £7,500,000 by stopping the action of the Sinking Fund. [*Dissent.*] The right hon. Gentleman had certainly proposed to raise one-half of the deficit of £15,000,000 by taxation, and the remainder by other means. He wished to point out that, in his opinion, the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman was not so liberal as it appeared to be, because he (Sir George Campbell) held strongly that the cost of a war such as the Soudan War, which Her Majesty's Government had maintained, and which they now admitted to be a disastrous war, which would not advantage posterity, but would be the source of difficulties to future generations, should be paid for by this generation. If the right hon. Gentleman would take the advice he would venture to offer, and put 2*s*. or 3*s*. additional taxation upon beer, he might get all the money he wanted by a mode of taxation which the country was well able to bear. He

agreed that there was too much taxation placed upon the poor and too little on the rich, and that their policy should be greatly to reduce the burdens on the poor and greatly to increase the burdens on the rich—seeing that, in his opinion, justice was not done in that respect, he contended that the Government were bound to put something more upon the rich and something less upon the poor. Still he thought that they ought to make the poor feel the burden of war; that the labouring classes ought not to get off scot free, and that they should learn the lesson that when the country plunged into war they would have to bear their share of the cost. For those reasons he looked on the tax upon beer as a politic tax, and as one of the best means by which the poorer classes might be made to feel the evils of war.

MR. SALT said, the Budget put before the Committee might be regarded either in reference to its details or in reference to its general features. It was a Budget of great interest and importance; and although he did not intend to trouble the Committee with many observations upon it, or to put the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the trouble of answering at that time any questions he might raise, he wished to point out to him that his statement presented many points of detail which at the proper time would require ample scrutiny and consideration. The right hon. Gentleman had proposed an alteration in the Death Duties. That was a very difficult question, and such as would require time for consideration, and when the time arrived it would be necessary to discuss it with reference to a considerable number of details. When they spoke of making duties on personal property and real property alike, it might be a good thing to do so; but it should be borne in mind that there was a great difference between the character of personal property and the character of real property. The two classes of property had each their special and distinct qualities, and these they should bear in mind when they proposed taxes which would bear heavily upon them. Then with regard to the taxation of corporate property, all he would say was that it did not seem to him to be a very easy thing to carry out, when, as the right hon. Gentleman himself had acknowledged, it must be accompanied by a vast number of exemptions; and he was not sure whether, for the sake of the small sum which the right hon. Gentleman expected to gain by it, it was worth his while to make such a proposal. There was nothing so difficult with regard to taxation as exemption; if they exempted one man some other person would expect exemption too, and it was very difficult indeed to draw a line. He thought it would be found especially difficult to draw a line with regard to corporate property, and to say where exemption was to cease and taxation to begin. Then with regard to the Sinking Fund; when the proposals with regard to the Sinking Fund came before the House, they would be in a better position to understand clearly what the right hon. Gentleman proposed than they were now. Therefore, he would not say more at that moment except that it was a most remarkable thing that a little more than 12 months after the Government had established a system of Terminable Annuities, which the House was told to regard as a matter for congratulation as a means of paying off the National Debt—a little more than 12 months after that place had echoed with sounds of congratulation, they were told that the whole thing was to be suspended for one or two years, and, perhaps, if circumstances turned out badly, for an indefinite period. There were two other points raised by his right hon. Friend as *addenda* to the other subjects dealt with in the Budget Speech. His right hon. Friend spoke about the settlement of Indian Charges. That, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said, was an intricate matter of finance; and he would observe that when the time came to discuss it on the Bill which it was proposed to introduce, something, at any rate, should be said with regard to the Treasury Minute relating to the appropriation of a considerable amount of money which he believed had arisen from outstanding balances. He did not wish to trouble the Committee by going into the question then; but he thought it looked as if further explanation were needed, because a balance appeared to have been appropriated for certain purposes which had neither been contemplated nor sanctioned by Parliament. Then with regard to the farmers' Income Tax, whether they could ascertain what

was the real income of farmers throughout the country was not an easy question. He was himself frequently in the habit of talking with farmers of every class—from the men who farmed five, six, 10, or 30 acres to those who farmed 200, 300, or 1,000 acres. Of course, the smaller farmers were much more numerous than the large farmers, and he believed that it was extremely rare for those of the former class to keep an accurate account of their business. He would go further and say—and he believed his hon. Friend (Mr. Clare Read) would bear him out—that if a man entered on a farm in a certain condition it would be impossible to ascertain what the profits were before a period of four or five years had elapsed; in that respect the business of a farmer was not like some businesses in which the books could be made up and the profits ascertained at the end of the year; it was almost impossible for a farmer to make out the actual sum spent and the actual amount of profit. And with regard to asking them to pay Income Tax on the actual profits, all he would say was that the result would probably be not very satisfactory—namely, that no Income Tax could be claimed from them at all. So much with regard to this view of the Income Tax. He did not wish to trouble the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer with any questions on the subject of the Income Tax that day. He regretted that so much detail had been introduced into the Budget Statement of the right hon. Gentleman. They were in the presence of a deficit of £15,000,000, and possibly in presence of an enormous expenditure of scores and hundreds of millions; and what Gentlemen on those Benches wished to know was how the financial difficulty of the position was to be met. To go into the small details was, perhaps, of little importance on that occasion. As had been said, they must regard the Budget on broad and general principles. He must say that a Budget of this character, coming after five years of finance carried on by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister and the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, was most disappointing and most distressing. In 1880, if anyone, however much opposed to Her Majesty's Government, had told them that a Budget like that could by any possibility be produced in that House, the person who made the statement would have been regarded as a wild dreamer. He would speak for himself alone; he felt bound not to add, by a single word or expression, to the cares and anxieties which pressed so heavily on the right hon. Gentleman. It was possible that foreign affairs might turn in such a direction that a great financial strain might be put upon the country, and therefore he repeated that he would be the last to add to the difficulties with which the right hon. Gentleman had to deal; but it was upon that consideration, and upon that only, that he abstained from treating the Budget of this year as he believed it really deserved to be treated. So long as the interests of the country required it, he, for his own part, should put those interests far beyond any Party feeling or considerations, and give to the right hon. Gentleman, so far as the interests of the country might need it, his loyal support.

Mr. A. M'ARTHUR said, he should wish to say a few words on one point connected with the Budget which, in his opinion, was deserving of consideration. He was one of those who thought it most desirable that all classes of alcoholic drinks should be taxed as far as it was possible to tax them without running the risk of promoting smuggling. But he hoped that in carrying out that policy they would act fairly towards all those concerned in the matter. Although he was not present in the House when the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. Mitchell Henry) spoke on this question, he understood that the hon. Gentleman had stated that he did not believe that any wine contained a stronger percentage of alcohol than 30 degrees, if so much. Now, their Colonies had been for many years past labouring under a serious disadvantage in respect to the question of Wine Duties which they felt very acutely. He was not aware whether the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had directed his attention to the question; but he might mention that in the time of the late Government he had had the honour of being a member of one or two deputations which waited on the Chancellor of the Exchequer of that day (Sir Stafford Northcote), who stated that in con-

sequence of the position of affairs, and especially with regard to Spain, he could not see his way to make any alteration in the duty upon Colonial wine. He (Mr. M'Arthur) was glad to see from the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that evening that the standard for Spanish wines had been raised to 30 degrees. But he understood that some of the Australian wines had a standard of 32, and if the standard for Spanish wines, as had been stated by the right hon. Gentleman, had been fixed at 30 degrees, it would be brought very nearly up to the Australian standard. He thought, especially at the present time when their Australian Colonies had manifested so much sympathy and had shown their desire to assist this country in every way, that it would be very unfortunate if, as he had just said, they were to bring up the standard for Spanish wines very nearly to the Australian standard, and leave their Australian Colonies as it were out in the cold. Therefore, he drew the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer to that point, and in doing so he ventured to express a hope that he would consider it with the object of making it possible for the Australian Colonies to introduce their wines on the same terms as other countries. The Australian Colonists were very large wine producers, and it would certainly be a great injustice if they were to exclude or handicap their wines; it would be injurious to them, and undoubtedly produce on their minds a bad impression. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would take that matter into consideration, and so reduce the standard for Australian wines as to allow them to come into this country on as favourable terms as the wines of other countries.

MR. CROPPER said, there were two points he desired to refer to in connection with the Budget Statement of the right hon. Gentleman. In the first place, he had been disappointed on listening to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to find that the rule which related to the farmers' Income Tax was not to be altered. He could not see any reason for a distinction being made with regard to the Income Tax as between English and Scotch farmers. In other times, when the Irish farmers and the Scotch farmers had less chance than they had now, there might have been some reason for a distinction being made; but at the present time he could see no reason for it. It might be, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer thought, that the English farmers kept accounts; but, for his part, he had a very great doubt on the subject, except with regard to those who farmed on a large scale. As one of the Income Tax Commissioners, he was inclined to think that farmers were of that class which kept no accounts. When they knew that, at the present time, there was great distress and depression in the agricultural interest, it appeared very hard to the English farmers that their competitors should be placed in a position in which they were more lightly taxed than themselves. He hoped that before the debates on the Budget were over, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would deal with that question in a more fair and equitable manner than that in which it had been dealt with hitherto. Further, he wished to say that he, in common with many persons in the country, desired to see some alteration in the Wine Duties. He did not think that, whereas the tax on spirits and beer was to be increased, the duty on wine should practically remain the same. He thoroughly appreciated the excellent remarks which had been made by the hon. Member who preceded him, and he strongly desired that the Australian Colonies should be placed on the best footing possible in respect of the importation of their wines into this country. When they considered that a bottle of champagne, which cost 6*s.* or 7*s.*, only paid 6*d.* duty, it appeared strange that those who could afford to pay for that luxury were not to pay increased taxation, while the man who drank beer had to pay an increased duty to the Government. He trusted that in the debate which would follow means would be pointed out of adopting his suggestion. If the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer were to adopt it, he would add greatly to the popularity of his Budget and draw to his side all classes of the people.

MR. BIDDELL said, there were one or two points on which he wished to offer a few observations. He thought that the proposals with regard to the Income Tax would meet with general approval, because the payers of that impost had really expected a much larger

increase than was suggested. Much had been said as to the taxation of real property, and he regretted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not met one hardship which was felt by the owners of such property. Under the present arrangements no deductions were allowed for repairs. On the generality of farms the cost of repairs amounted to 10 or 15 per cent of the rent, and it was felt by real property owners to be very hard that they were not allowed, when making their returns, to deduct the sum expended upon repairs. He regretted also that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not dealt with the inequality in the assessment of Scotch and English farms, for the right hon. Gentleman himself admitted that the English farmer was taxed to the extent of 25 per cent more than the Scotch farmer. The agricultural interest had taken great pains to call attention to that inequality; but the Chancellor of the Exchequer had always declined to deal with the subject on the ground that it was one of considerable difficulty. He (Mr. Biddell) failed to see the difficulty. With regard to farmers being rated on their absolute profits, he thought there was much more difficulty than the Chancellor of the Exchequer imagined. He (Mr. Biddell) was convinced that no farmer could make a correct balance sheet without engaging a professional man to value everything on the farm. That would lead to great expense, and would in reality be perfectly impracticable. As to the relative taxation upon beer and spirits, he well remembered the great authority on finance, the Prime Minister, saying that it had always been the object of the Government in taxing spirits heavily to check the consumption and at the same time reap as much Revenue from that source as was possible. He (Mr. Biddell) was convinced that the hon. Gentleman the Member for Limerick (Mr. O'Sullivan) over-estimated the alcoholic strength of beer. If the hon. Gentleman would come to Suffolk, he would soon be convinced that there was not a vast amount of alcohol in the beer consumed there. The calculation of the Government was that a bushel of malt made 18 gallons of beer. If that was so, the beer could not be very alcoholic. The Prime Minister had at various times increased the Malt or Beer Duties. The Malt Duty used to be 20*s.* a-quarter; under this Budget, the duty was equivalent to 29*s.* a-quarter. At the same time there had practically been a reduction in the Wine Duties, for better wines would in future come in under a lower duty. He approved of the taxation of cider, for he did not see the equity of the taxing the drink of the Eastern Counties while that of the Western Counties went untaxed. If the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had increased by 1½*d.* or 2*d.* the Tea Duties, the Chinaman only would have suffered from the diminished consumption, whereas the increase on spirits and beer would injuriously affect the farmers of the country in the diminished demand for barley. The right hon. Gentleman also said he would not tax any raw materials. In that he was pretty right; but he (Mr. Biddell) would like to see Customs duty put upon manufactured materials coming into this country. If a 10 per cent duty, for instance, were to be imposed upon such goods, trade would be stimulated and much of this increased taxation would be avoided. He was glad of the change in private brewers' licences, but he thought the licence paid by cottagers might well have been reduced to 2*s.* yearly. It would have made very little difference in the Budget, but it would have done much to promote private brewing. He agreed with the hon. Member for West Norfolk (Mr. Clare Read) that where they found private brewing they found temperance and less temptation to frequent the public-house. It was most gratifying to hear from the right hon. Gentleman that the deposits in the Savings Banks were increasing. He (Mr. Biddell) attributed the fact to the greater prudence and foresight of the working classes rather than to their general prosperity. He quite approved of the increase of the Property Tax, and of the staying of the reduction of the National Debt; but he thought that the minor parts of the Budget might be considerably improved.

Mr. FIRTH said, there were one or two points in the Budget to which he wished to direct the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. As to one of them—namely, the proposed charge upon corporate property—he would make an appeal to the right hon. Gentleman. Two or three years ago, he ob-

tained a Return, to which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had alluded that night, of all land in mortmain. That was a Return of the utmost value, but in its present form it was perfectly valueless. Its size was so great that the cost of printing it was considerable—too great for the Treasury to undertake. At all events, that was the opinion of that economist the hon. Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney), when he occupied the position of Secretary to the Treasury; but those days of economy, in more respects than one, were gone. He (Mr. Firth) should suggest that the printing of that Return was a matter of the truest economy, especially now that the Government had recognized the great principle that property of the kind dealt with by the Return ought to be taxed. Having moved for the Return, he watched its preparation very carefully, and when it was completed he looked upon it as a very remarkable production. He was anxious that more light should be given to it, and he appealed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to order, in the public interest, the printing of the evidence obtained with regard to lands held in mortmain. The right hon. Gentleman expected that a 5 per cent duty upon that property would yield £150,000. In his (Mr. Firth's) opinion, the right hon. Gentleman would find he would get very much more than he estimated. He ventured to suggest to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he might very usefully consider the form in which the Return should be made. At the beginning of the century there were under the control of Corporate Bodies considerable masses of property which had now disappeared altogether, and, therefore, he trusted that the form of Return which the Corporate Bodies would be asked to make would be such as would show the property from which the income was derived as well as the income itself. After proposing to exempt from the tax property acquired within the last 30 years, he would like to know how the right hon. Gentleman arrived at the conclusion that 5 per cent would be a just rate to charge? Those were points on which he should like some expression of opinion from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The hon. and worthy Alderman the Member for the City (Mr. Alderman Lawrence) had suggested that the City Companies were extremely anxious to be taxed. His (Mr. Firth's) impression was that they were extremely anxious to be let alone. According to a report in *The Times* a few weeks ago, a few of the Companies had considered the question amongst themselves. Some of the larger Companies, assuming for the nonce unusual virtue, expressed a willingness to be taxed for the purpose of Succession Duties. He did not wish to misinterpret them, but he apprehended they supposed that if they accepted such a guileless resolution no one would suggest they should be taxed, and that they would be left to pursue their courses perfectly irrespective of any relation to the duties they had to the public at large. He was glad to see they would find themselves mistaken in their resolution, and that they would find themselves mistaken in the result. There was another suggestion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to which he wished to call attention, and that was with respect to the telegraphs. He (Mr. Firth) found that the Telegraph Service did not pay. It scarcely paid its own expenses, and he presumed it could not pay any proper interest upon the enormous and extravagant and unjustifiable amount expended in the purchase of the telegraphs from the Telegraph Companies. He thought that, apart from the improvement which the Chancellor of the Exchequer was about to make in reducing the telegraph charges, he ought to consider the advisability of improving telephonic communication. The great electric problem of holding telegraphic and telephonic communications on the same wire had been solved, and he thought it was due to the public that a great Department like the Post Office should offer telephonic as well as telegraphic facilities. Those were the only matters to which he ventured to allude; they were matters to which he had given some attention, and as to which he should be glad to have an expression of opinion from the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

MR. GREGORY said, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been placed in a very difficult position, but he had discharged his duty with judgment and ability. There were, however, one or two points on which further information was required. He could not see why the right hon. Gentleman should draw a distinction between English and Irish farmers

with reference to the Income Tax. If the two classes were put upon the same footing it would give a good deal of satisfaction to the farmers of this country; it might reconcile them to the increased taxation, and really it would make very little difference to the Exchequer. He was quite in accord with the right hon. Gentleman with respect to the imposition of duties on spirits, for he thought it was a very fair and reasonable imposition to make. But, now, there was another question with which, perhaps, he had some acquaintance—namely, the question of taxation of real property. The new proposals in that respect involved some very serious consideration. He did not quite follow the purport of the right hon. Gentleman's Resolutions on the subject, or the manner of their operation. It was, no doubt, a very intricate and difficult subject, and therefore he (Mr. Gregory) might be excused for saying he wished to reserve full freedom of action when those proposals subsequently came to be dealt with. He confessed he did not understand how the right hon. Gentleman would assess his duties in the case of successive limitations. The same devise might extend to various successions to the same property, and he would like to hear from the right hon. Gentleman whether a new Probate Duty—for that was what it came to—would accrue with respect to each of those devolutions of the property; and, if so, whether in cases of a collateral devise the Legacy Duty would also attach to such devise? [The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman shook his head; but he (Mr. Gregory) did not see anything in the Resolutions to prevent such an operation. He wished, however, to reserve that point for future consideration and discussion. When they considered proposals for new taxes they must look at them in all their incidents. This was, he understood, in cases of direct descent to supersede and in other cases to be an addition to the Succession Duty. Was it to be on the same footing as the Succession Duty? If so, it might operate with the greatest hardship. In respect of the question of the descent of the title to property, there was a provision in the Succession Duty Act which had had an effect which even the framers of the Act never contemplated. For instance, by the construction put upon the words "predecessor in title," there had been imposed on certain successors to a title a charge of 10 per cent, whereas if the property had been personal property the charge would only have been 1 per cent. Such questions as those they should have carefully to consider, and it was for the purpose of showing the necessity of considering them that he had made those observations. The right hon. Gentleman had said he had received, owing to the exertions of the officials of the Department, considerably more Revenue than might have been expected. They had no doubt exerted themselves to the greatest extent to whip up the Revenue, and, perhaps, in doing so, they had acted somewhat harshly and had created a certain amount of discontent. It was not desirable that they should create any unnecessary discontent in the collection of taxation. He did not say that in that case anything the officials had done was unnecessary or uncalled for by their instructions; but he ventured to point out that, for the purposes of the Income Tax, Returns might be allowed to stand for a period of three years, instead of having to be made out every year. He did not think such a practice would lessen the Revenue, and it would, undoubtedly, give great satisfaction to the country. There was also another point which arose from the proposals for new taxation, particularly upon that of real property. It was the rule that time did not turn against the claims of the Crown. This frequently operated with the greatest hardship and, he might add, injustice. He knew at that moment a case where a claim had been made upon a property 40 years ago, and in which not only the duty but 40 years' interest was charged, and that he thought a principle which the House of Commons could hardly continue to sanction. He certainly thought it was time to relieve the public from an imposition of that kind, and for the House to take the matter into its serious consideration. When they proposed a heavy taxation, though the country would readily bear it, the method of its imposition should be tempered with moderation. And it was in vain that they struggled to facilitate the transfer of land if they left the claims of the Crown upon it in their present position.

No one would be safe in taking an estate under the proposal now made until the duties were cleared off.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, that he had pressed upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer from time to time the subject of the taxation of lands held in mortmain, and he was, therefore, very glad that the right hon. Gentleman had abandoned the resolution he had formed last year not to deal with the subject except in connection with local government. He could not, however, join with the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth) in his congratulations to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, because the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman did not show much valour. If he had understood the Chancellor of the Exchequer rightly, he proposed to exempt all lands of a religious and charitable character. What lands held in mortmain in this country by Corporations were not of that character? The hon. Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory) had just addressed the Committee, and he was Treasurer of one of the London hospitals. That hon. Member was, therefore, conversant with the affairs of those Institutions. There were also the lands of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, the lands of the Charity Commissioners, the estates of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge—all those lands would be exempted by the proposal made that night. The value of land held in mortmain in this country was not less than £12,000,000 a-year; and if the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer were carried out as they ought to be the income derived from a tax of that sort should produce not less than £600,000 a-year. It seemed to him that it would be a great hardship upon the landed gentry, and that they would have room for serious complaint, if those great landed Corporations were exempted from taxation, while they, the private landowners, were subjected to taxation and to all local burdens. Such exemption, in the case of religious and charitable institutions, had been spoken of by the Prime Minister as a grant. When the time came he hoped he should be supported by the Representatives of the landed interest in the House—when he made a further objection against the limited proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that night.

MR. EDWARD CLARKE said, he thought that the observations of the hon. and learned Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth) a little while ago showed an interesting characteristic in the history of the Parliamentary Return for which the hon. and learned Gentleman had moved. Coming as it did from an economist, it was one of the most interesting stories the House had heard for a long time. It appeared that the hon. and learned Gentleman had moved for a Return of lands held in mortmain, which his Friends in the Government had promised to give. When the Return was produced it was found to be two feet thick. It was too bulky to be carried about, and it was put on a chair, and occasionally visited by the hon. and learned Member, to see if it was quite safe. The hon. and learned Member now confessed to the Committee that the Return was of no value whatever.

MR. FIRTH: My hon. and learned Friend altogether misunderstands what I said. What I said was that it was of no utility—that is to say, that it could not be used in itself. Its intrinsic value is enormous, but its bulky nature renders it impossible to use it. You cannot get at it.

MR. EDWARD CLARKE said, that his hon. and learned Friend had followed up the statement by saying that the cost of printing it would have been so enormous that even his extravagant Friends on the Treasury Bench would not incur that cost. He did not know whether his hon. and learned Friend had yet offered to repay to them and to the public the cost of that useless set of documents. One part of the hon. and learned Gentleman's speech showed that he recognized the importance of the occasion, for he had said, parenthetically, that the age of economy was past. That was about the only authority they had heard from the Ministerial side of the House which had done any justice to the importance of the present occasion. He thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer had good reason to complain that people had been squabbling about the amount of alcohol there was in so many gallons of beer or of spirits, and the details of a particular tax, failing to realize that this night was one of the most important nights ever known to the financial history of the House of

Commons. It was a most important epoch, for, for the first time in the history of the country, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had come down and proposed Estimates exceeding £100,000,000. The effect of the alteration made in the keeping of public accounts in 1880 was to strike out from those accounts a sum of £100,000 in connection with extra receipts, so that if the Estimates were altered, as they ought to be altered, the result would be that now, at a time when they were at peace with the whole of Europe—he said at a time of peace, because he looked upon the war in the Soudan as only one of those wars which had been the habitual evils of this country since 1880—they had Estimates presented to them of over £100,000,000. With regard to what were called special preparations, no one knew better than Her Majesty's Government that by those preparations they were only filling up, under the pressure of immediate public emergency, the lapses of past years. They knew perfectly well that they were only now restoring to their proper condition of strength those defensive resources of the country which ought to have been kept up to a proper strength for some years past. It was most remarkable, when they had a deficit of £15,000,000—it was put at a figure just below £15,000,000—namely, some £14,952,000—that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should come down and throw over all the old canons of financial action which had been propounded by him during the time he had held his present Office. No one could have sat in the House without remarking the contrast between the speech the right hon. Gentleman had delivered that night and that he had made last year. A year ago he had come down and made a polemical and controversial Budget. He had made the Budget the means of a Party attack, and in that Party attack he had denounced the Conservatives because they had not borne out of the Income of the year the Expenditure of the year. He had denounced them for having left a legacy of debt to their Successors, and for having suspended the operation of the Sinking Fund; but now the right hon. Gentleman, for £7,500,000 out of the £15,000,000 he required, had to resort to the very practice he had denounced so emphatically. The right hon. Gentleman was about to suspend the operation of the Sinking Fund, and to ask for a temporary loan which, if circumstances were unfavourable, would become a permanent loan, and would be left as a legacy to his Successors. The Committee, he thought, should recognize the importance of the position the right hon. Gentleman had occupied that night, and it was a pity that this conversation should go on without the right hon. Gentleman being congratulated upon the fact of his having, at all events, marked a new epoch in their financial history.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said, that he so far agreed with the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down as to think that the discussion had run too much into detail. In regard to increased Expenditure, and the imputations which had been made by the hon. and learned Gentleman, he wished to point out that there had been some Members on that (the Ministerial) side of the House who had been quite willing to act as a check on the extravagance of, and even to fight counter to, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Government he belonged to. But, unfortunately, the spirit of economy which had been manifested by those few Radical Members had not met with the support of the Party opposite. He must confess that the strictures of the hon. and learned Gentleman came with a very indifferent grace at a time when they were called upon to pay for the extravagance in which they had been indulging, seeing that the Party opposite had contributed so largely to that extravagance. The only complaint which had come from the other side of the House, from time to time, in regard to the Estimates, was that the figures were not large enough, that the schemes propounded were not great enough, and that they would be more happy if enlarged burdens were placed upon the people of the country. He (Mr. Illingworth) ventured to join in the expression of opinion which had fallen from all parts of the Committee as to the able statement they had heard from the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer that night. He (Mr. Illingworth) thought that in his scheme the right hon. Gentleman had combined both courage and caution. It was true that he had had a great deficit to deal with; but it was due to him to say that

he had really met that deficit in the main out of the taxation of the year. ["No, no!"] Yes, he (Mr. Illingworth) maintained that in the main the Expenditure of the year was to be met by its taxation. It was true the Sinking Fund was to be suspended; but notwithstanding the Expenditure which had been incurred, it was all to be met from the Income of the year. He was very glad indeed that the right hon. Gentleman had determined upon suspending the Sinking Fund. On previous occasions, hon. Gentlemen on the Ministerial side of the House and on the other side had doubted the policy of that hard-and-fast line for the reduction of the National Debt. 'The present was a time when the country—all classes of the country—were joining in a chorus of complaint as to the poverty which was universal amongst them—at such a time it did seem to him altogether pedantic to adhere to a hard-and-fast line with regard to the reduction of the Debt. It was impossible at such a time to keep up the reduction at the same level as could be done without the burden being felt when the country was in a prosperous condition. The hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock), who did not now happen to be in his place, had replied to some observations made by the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. Mitchell Henry) to the effect that the great majority of the taxpayers of the country who were in business had had lately to borrow money to carry on their businesses at the rate of 5, or 6, or even more per cent. The hon. Baronet had said that the only thing that the Chancellor of the Exchequer did with the capital which he extracted from their pockets was to relieve them from a burden of 3 or $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. Therefore, he (Mr. Illingworth), for his own part, hoped the time was distant when they would revert to that system of paying a fixed sum every year for the reduction of the National Debt. But the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. E. Clarke) had gone on to say that this enormous Estimate of £100,000,000 was produced at a time when they were at peace with all the world. He (Mr. Illingworth) could not admit that they were at peace with all the world. They had been carrying on a war in Egypt and the Soudan——

MR. EDWARD CLARKE: I said at peace with the Great Powers of Europe. I mentioned that we were engaged in a war in the Soudan, which was only one of those wars which we had been habitually engaged in since 1880.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said, that the hon. and learned Gentleman seemed to make a geographical distinction in this question of wars; but that distinction was of no practical value in the discussion in which they were engaged. He (Mr. Illingworth) supposed that a war, whether in the Soudan or in Europe, had to be paid for. [MR. EDWARD CLARKE: Hear, hear!] Well, he was very glad that the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) and other hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House who, for the other 364 days in the year were urging on expenditure, had now put on the white sheet, if it was only for one night in the year, and turned round upon the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer to complain of the heaviness of the expenses which the people of the country were called upon to pay. This war in Egypt and the Soudan had been a most costly business. As had been pointed out by the hon. Gentlemen who had preceded him, it had not been a very fruitful business; but that was the characteristic of most wars, and all that he could say was that if wars were made cheap their very cheapness would add another horror to them. He was thankful that when they were indulging in those wars, they were now and then called upon to face the question of raising the money wherewith to meet the expenditure that was entailed. He was disposed to think that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had laid the burden fairly across the shoulders of all classes of the people. A very small point had been raised—so small a detail as to be scarcely worth noting—on this Budget, and that was the inequality that prevailed between the burden imposed upon the farmers of England, Scotland, and Ireland. He was bound to say that the alternative that the right hon. Gentleman offered the farmer for the present system of assessments was not likely, in his (the right hon. Gentleman's) day at least, to be realized. He believed that, taking the great majority of the farmers, not only did they not make up accounts in that correct and

scientific form that would stand the test of the Income Tax Commissioners, but he believed that it was impossible for them so to make up accounts. The trade of farmers was a fluctuating one—the nature of their business made it almost impossible for them to do so. But, on the other hand, if that were so, the question they had to ask, when the scheme was put forward for the modification of the present system was, was the present system an equitable one? It might be that there was no cause for the distinction which existed between the Scotch and Irish farmers on the one side, and the English farmers on the other. If the distinction were in the proportion of 3*d.* to 4*d.*, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer had told them it was, then he would say raise the amount paid by the Irish and Scotch farmers. ["Oh, oh!"] Well, he made the suggestion on the strength of this fact, that the charge was not a heavy one upon the farmer.

An hon. MEMBER: Look at the enormous rates they have to pay.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said, farmers had no more rates to pay than any other taxpayers. He knew that hon. Gentlemen connected with land enterprize were ready to urge the excessive burden of taxation upon land; but if they were connected with some of the towns in the country, and looked into the question of assessments, and the manner in which the rates were levied, he thought they would be only too thankful that they were not assessed as were the residents in towns. He (Mr. Illingworth) only wished to say that his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer had given them some valuable information in regard to the incidence of taxation as between the direct and the indirect taxpayer. It was true that there had been for many years past a modification going on in this respect, and that taxation had been more extensively levied indirectly than directly. The fact was, that in times past the House of Commons was very little representative of the people, being almost entirely representative of property, and the result was that the taxes had been almost wholly laid upon the working classes, instead of on property, as they ought to be. He believed that there was even yet a great inequality to be overcome, and that there was ground for laying heavier burdens upon realized wealth. The country, he thought, would appreciate the courage which had been manifested by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his dealing with the Death Duties, and he only trusted that the exemptions would not be made too numerous. He did not say that there could not be some argument used for exemptions, particularly where the purpose was purely charitable—in the case of hospitals, for instance; but when they came to ecclesiastical property, he wanted to know why that should be exempted? There was no charity in this case, where national wealth was appropriated by one religious body in the country, and that the wealthiest class of the community, and he did not think their claim for exemption should be considered while much poorer classes were ready to bear their share of such national burdens. He should be glad to support the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold) in the course he had intimated it was his intention to pursue, so far as ecclesiastical property was concerned, believing that there was no ground for those exemptions. Reference had been made to the propriety of making an increase in the Wine Duties. He should probably have to refer to that subject at a later stage, and the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had given them one good reason why that question should not be gone into at that moment. After a long negotiation they had come to an understanding with Spain, a Treaty having been agreed to between the two countries, allowing the introduction of British produce into Spain on more advantageous terms, on condition that a relaxation of four degrees in alcholic strength should be made by this country in respect of Spanish wines. He supposed many of them only looked upon this as a very clumsy way of dealing with their neighbours; but, at the same time the great majority of the House and of the country had supported the view that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was taking; and he believed that the Government were accredited by the commercial community with the efforts they had made to bring to a successful issue those long and tiresome negotiations. ["No, no!"] At any rate, when it came to be urged that, as there had been an increase put upon

the duties on spirits and on beer, the same rate of increase should be put upon wine, the right hon. Gentleman would be able to show that those people were wrong to argue that the people of this country got nothing which could be regarded as a *quid pro quo*. As far as he knew the views of the commercial community in the North of England, this Commercial Treaty was looked upon with great approval.

MR. GORST said, that the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) had made it almost impossible to follow the usual course on the introduction of the Budget. When the discussion had been almost exclusively directed to obtaining elucidations from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in burst the hon. Member for Bradford with talk about economy, in a speech which they had heard over and over again. The hon. Member not only would not himself follow the advice of the Prime Minister, but he made it almost impossible for the Prime Minister himself to follow that advice. Talk about economy seemed that night a little out of place. It was out of place in this Parliament. He remembered that in the last Parliament the economists had had it all their own way. There was then an extravagant Conservative Government in Office. The armaments of the country were bloated, and the Expenditure was extravagant; and every night the sort of speech they had just listened to was made. They had had those speeches made even while the present Government had been in Office. Indeed, the right hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright) had said, prior to the last General Election, that no Government deserved the confidence of the country that could not get on with a sum of less than £70,000,000 a-year. One hon. Gentleman opposite, who had enlarged upon that theme before his constituents, had been good enough to tell the House how sorry he was that he had done it when he knew that even a Liberal Government could not carry on the country at a smaller expense. Now, that night they had a Budget of which the ordinary Expenditure amounted to between £89,000,000 and £90,000,000. The Conservative Party had not acted that night as their opponents used to act in the last Parliament. They did not come forward and say—"You ought to carry on the Government of the country at a less cost." The hon. Member for Bradford came forward and found fault with them for not complaining of the Government for bringing in those large Estimates. But the Conservative Party did not find fault with the Government on that head, because they knew that whether a Liberal or a Conservative Government was on the Front Bench opposite it was necessary to pay the legitimate expenses of the country. They knew that in a country like this Expenditure must go on increasing from year to year. Even if the hon. Member for Bradford himself were Chancellor of the Exchequer, he would find it impossible to carry on the Government of the country for £70,000,000 a-year. He would be obliged to bring in increasing Budgets, and to admit the increasing Expenditure, and would not be able to govern the country either for the £70,000,000 spoken of by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham, or the much larger amount of £89,000,000 or £90,000,000 mentioned by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Under those circumstances, would it not have been better with the Budget under discussion if the advice of the Prime Minister had been followed, if Liberal Members had refrained from the discussion of details on the first night, confining themselves to questions to elucidate the statement, and putting by patriotic speeches on economy to a more convenient season? He rose for the modest purpose of putting a question to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to ask for information as to one point of the statement which he had failed entirely to understand. He understood the Chancellor of the Exchequer had to provide, in round numbers, for £15,000,000, and that sum he divided, providing for £7,500,000 by increased taxation, leaving the other half to be provided for. Of that £7,500,000, £3,000,000 he did not provide for at all, he left it a deficit. He used round figures for the sake of clearness; it was about £3,000,000—£2,800,000 was the exact sum. If he were tempted to follow the example of the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth), he might say something about not meeting the Expenditure of the year by taxation within the year; but he would leave that to the adjourned debate, the second reading of the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill or some more convenient season.

But out of the £7,500,000, £4,600,000 was to be provided for by what the right hon. Gentleman called suspending the Sinking Fund. Now, if he understood the right hon. Gentleman rightly, what he called the suspension of the Sinking Fund was the suspending the operation of the Terminable Annuities; that of the whole amount payable in Terminable Annuities, that part which went to the reduction of Debt by the repayment of the capital of the Debt—the extinguishment of the Debt—was to be this year suspended, and that compensation would be afforded to holders of Annuities by the lengthening of the term of the Annuities.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): The Government are the holders.

MR. GORST: But whoever were the holders they were compensated by the increase in the length of the Annuities. Now, he was surprised—for he thought he understood the operation as the Chancellor of the Exchequer described it to the Committee—he was astonished when the right hon. Gentleman came to name the amount that would give him £4,600,000. He recollected pretty well the terms stated in the House last year; but since the Chancellor of the Exchequer spoke, he (Mr. Gorst) had refreshed his memory by a reference to the Library. The Returns he found there rather puzzled him, because, in the Return of the issues from the Exchequer for the service of the National Debt, he found that the amount of payment of capital by the automatic operation of Terminable Annuities had been increasing steadily from year to year during the last 10 years for which the Return was given, and in 1883—the last year the Return included—the amount paid was £6,300,000 in round figures. Well, there was another Return given about the same time which showed the actual operations of the Commissioners for the reduction of the National Debt, and the various sums they had received from the Exchequer for Terminable Annuities, and there was given a complete list of all the Terminable Annuities in existence at that time—the beginning of 1884. He found from that, that the total sum paid to the holders of Terminable Annuities who, he understood, were different Departments of Government—he believed hardly any others were held by the general public—they were all Commissioners for the reduction of the Debt, Trustees in Chancery, and functionaries of that description; but the total was £7,900,000, and of that £1,900,000 represented interest, and £5,900,000, or nearly £6,000,000, represented the payment of capital. Those two Returns were a little inconsistent the one with the other, for the one represented the payment of capital by Terminable Annuities as £6,200,000, and the other as about £6,000,000, but they were sufficiently near. No doubt the difference was explicable, they were sufficiently near not to afford much of a puzzle over the operation. But when this Return set out the amount of payment of capital as about £6,000,000, how was it that the operation the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed during the present year would produce only £4,600,000—less by £1,600,000 than one would naturally expect from the Return furnished to Parliament? No doubt, that could be explained; but he thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer would admit that, so far as his statement went, the explanation was not apparent, and he (Mr. Gorst) would be very grateful to the right hon. Gentleman if, when he came to answer the various observations made in Committee, he would kindly explain how it was that so small a sum comparatively, so much less than would naturally be expected, was anticipated by the operation in Terminable Annuities he intended to effect during the present year.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he was decidedly of opinion that it would have been better if, after the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was concluded, the debate had been adjourned in order that the Vote of Credit might have been taken at a sufficiently early hour to be disposed of that night. The Prime Minister suggested that the Committee should do little more than elicit information from the Chancellor of the Exchequer that evening, reserving a more serious and detailed discussion for a subsequent occasion. That would have been a very reasonable recommendation to follow but for an intimation the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave to the Committee before he resumed his seat. At Question time that afternoon, he (Mr. A. O'Connor) inquired of the Prime Minister whether the Go-

vernment intended to urge on the House any Vote in Committee that day? He imagined he must have been misunderstood; he was not speaking of Committee of Supply, but of a Vote or Resolution in Ways and Means. The Prime Minister said the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be left to exercise his discretion in the matter; and what did the right hon. Gentleman say? He informed the Committee that it was absolutely necessary, for reasons he did not specify, that all these Resolutions should be at least passed by the Committee of Ways and Means that night. Under those circumstances, it did seem desirable to offer such observations as he thought right that evening instead of deferring them to a future occasion. A number of Members had concurred in expressing admiration of the ability, the success, and the courage with which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had submitted his proposals to the Committee; and he was perfectly prepared to admit, and fully appreciated, the singular mastery of his work the right hon. Gentleman manifested. But he failed to see the courage of the performance, and he failed to discover in the proposals anything meriting any very great admiration. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was compelled to admit to the Committee that this Government of "peace, retrenchment, and reform" found themselves now, after they had been five years in Office, and while they were still at peace—for they had not yet declared war even in the Soudan—compelled to come down to the House and propose to Parliament Estimates discovering a deficit greater than had ever been presented to Parliament since the days of the Crimean War. Under such circumstances, he failed to see the consistency of those congratulations taken up so equally not only on the other side, but on the Opposition side, whence might have been expected something like healthy, manly criticism. It had often struck him that Members who took part in discussions on the Budget night were content to deal in a fragmentary and insignificant way with little portions of the Financial Statement which interested them individually, and very seldom dealt with the whole in a comprehensive manner. When the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) passed his criticism upon those who had preceded him in addressing the Committee, it might have been supposed he was about to follow the Budget at large; but he simply followed the example he had condemned, and contented himself with desultory observations upon isolated portions of the Budget. He was afraid his view of the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not find anything like general assent or approval in the House. He entertained opinions on finance and the incidence of taxation in this country, and especially as regarded the present proposals, very much at variance with the majority of the Committee; but that was no reason why he should not—perhaps it was why he should—say clearly what he thought about the Budget proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He had listened with very great care to all that had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman, and took the most careful note he could of his figures and proposals; but he was bound to say that, after having used his best endeavours, he had been absolutely unable to comprehend the statement, and portions of it he failed to follow. When the right hon. Gentleman was speaking about the Death Duties, though he had some professional acquaintance with questions connected with Succession Duties, and therefore was as able as most Members to get a general notion of the drift, he was utterly unable to comprehend the extent of the proposed alterations. Then, again, in reference to the National Debt, though he had gone over all the Returns, and had studied finance accounts from end to end, he could not understand how the right hon. Gentleman proposed to make up the deficit by the suspension of what he called the Sinking Fund. The right hon. Gentleman would, he thought, have done much better, would have treated the Committee much more fairly, if, instead of having all these Resolutions passed at once, he had consented to postpone discussion until something like a clear apprehension had got into the minds of, at any rate, a portion of the House as to what his proposals really were. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had followed, in his statement of proposals, and in laying before the Committee his accounts of Revenue and Expenditure for the past year, and his Estimates for the coming year, the old and recognized rule of adopting a sepa-

rate form of account, and that form, to his (Mr. A. O'Connor's) mind, was a very misleading and difficult form to understand. He could not understand why Finance Ministers, in their explanations of the financial condition of the country, should not adopt the same simple, straightforward, common-sense plan, such as would do equally well for a nation or an individual. In regard to the individual, they could understand there were five, and only five, main sources of income, and the sources of income to a nation corresponded to those of the individual. There were five sources—first, the property which a man owned, and from which he derived an income; secondly, the business he carried on, and which brought in an income; thirdly, debts paid to him by his debtors in return for money advanced; fourthly, the money which he obtained gratuitously either by gift, or legacy, or theft, or good luck, or in any other way; and fifthly, and finally, the income he derived from those who consented to lend him money when he went into debt. Those were the five possible sources of income an individual could turn to, and it was precisely the same with the nation. There were the National property, the Crown property, hereditary sources of revenue, corresponding to the first-mentioned class; there was the corresponding second-class in those Departments of Government which rendered services to the public which were paid for, certain Departments carrying on business and receiving income in connection therewith; thirdly, the payments by those who received advances; fourthly, that source which corresponded to the gratuitous source of an individual's income, the revenue received from the Colonies, or from foreign countries, or what was raised by taxation, which was very often very like theft, or what was received by windfalls of one kind or another; and, fifthly, when all other sources were exhausted, as they were with the Chancellor of the Exchequer this year, they were obliged to resort to the last remaining source of revenue, and incur further obligations. The whole Expenditure of the country, in like manner, flowed out in five channels, corresponding to the five sources of Revenue. There were the expenses connected with the administration of property; there were the expenses connected with those Departments which carried on business at a profit; thirdly, the advances in the way of further loans; fourthly, that which corresponded to the individual's personal expenditure, his riotous living—the national wars—his litigation, or what not, those were corresponding channels of expenditure; and, fifthly, the payment of money borrowed. He never could understand why Finance Ministers could not adopt such a plain common-sense arrangement of figures as he had indicated. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer had done so, he was perfectly certain the Committee and the country at large would be able to follow the financial arrangements very much better, and would be far better able to appreciate the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman. That had not been done, and the consequence was that most Members of the House and most people throughout the country listened to the speech, or would read it as it would be reported in the newspapers on the morrow, and would carry away with them a very hazy notion indeed as to the financial condition of the country and the mode in which the existing difficulties were to be met. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had made certain proposals in regard to taxation—for he passed now to the subject-matter, saying no more about the method—and passing over the first three sources, the property of the nation, upon which he had no observations to make, and the Post Office and other matters upon which he had nothing to say; but with regard to existing taxation and the arrangements which the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed for the future, he should like to say a few words. It seemed to him, with the country in the condition in which it was, with something like 700,000 men, women, and children in the workhouses, and with another 750,000 keeping manfully outside the workhouses, but just on the verge of pauperism, with hundreds and thousands—he might almost say with hundreds of thousands—of men and women without employment—there were 20,000 in Birmingham alone unable to find work—it seemed to him to talk about throwing further taxation upon the industrial classes instead of on the property class, was to mock the struggling classes. A number of taxes were left which, in justice to the people, should have been

removed; they did not bring in very much to the Exchequer—he would not say they were not worth collecting, though some might be dropped without any loss at all, they brought in such small sums; but they had an injurious effect on the commerce and industry of the country, and any enlightened Finance Minister who had taken the trouble to notice the effect of the abolition of a tax of the kind, not only in the time of Sir Robert Peel, but from 1853 to now, would have, had he considered the matter, some doubt as to whether it would not be better to remove those taxes even under the present disadvantageous circumstances. Those taxes were enumerated in the Statistical Abstract of the United Kingdom, which, no doubt, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had carefully studied, and he would refer to pages 56 and 57 for the list of what he meant. It was a list of imported articles, and it showed the amount consumed per head of the population since 1869. There were articles which were imported, and had been for years, free from taxation — bacon, ham, butter, cheese, eggs, potatoes, and sugars. Now, the result of having those articles untaxed was this—whereas in 1869 the consumption of bacon and ham was 3 decimal 68 lbs. per head per annum, the consumption in 1883 was no less than 10 lbs. decimal 96 per annum; butter increased in a similar manner from 4 decimal 52 to 7 lbs. decimal 18; cheese from 3 decimal 52 to 5 decimal 51; eggs from 14 per head to 26—nearly double; and potatoes from 6 lbs. to 16 lbs. per head of the population; corn from 155 lbs. to 250 lbs.; sugar from 38 decimal 83 to 61 decimal 87; refined sugar from 3 decimal 73 to 9 decimal 87. That was to say, when commerce and industry were left unchecked, unfettered by taxation, in every single case there was a considerable increase in the consumption per head, in some cases to two or three times the former consumption. The page also contained a Return showing the history of the articles still taxed, and which taxation he objected to this year—currants, raisins, cocoa, coffee. In 1869 the amount of currants and raisins consumed per head of the population was 4 lbs., and the consumption since then had not increased; cocoa was less than 1 lb. per head, and it was still less than that; coffee was decimal 94 per head, and now it was decimal 89; the consumption had decreased. Thus, while the articles left untaxed had increased in consumption, those upon which the wretched little taxes were placed had not increased at all, the country was debarred from the reasonable use of them, and commerce and industry were injuriously affected. It was the poorer classes alone who suffered from the taxes on dried fruits, coffee, cocoa, and chicory. Similarly in regard to tea, which, in 1863, or, at any rate, before 1869, had the duty reduced to 6*d.* from 1*s.* 6*d.* He would draw the attention of the Government to the fact that whereas in 1869 the amount of tea imported was 139,000,000 lbs., and therefore the tax amounted to that number of sixpences, in the year 1883 the importation was 222,000,000 lbs., and the tax levied was 222,000,000 sixpences. But there was a very great change in the value of the tea—a very great change in the amount of capital invested in tea. In 1869 the tea imported was valued at something over £10,000,000; in 1883 it was valued at £11,500,000—that was to say, in 1869, £10,300,000 worth of tea was consumed, but only 139,000,000 sixpences paid in duty, and in 1883, on £11,000,000 worth, 222,000,000 of sixpences were paid—the value of the tea had increased some 8 per cent, and the taxation at the rate of 70 per cent. In other words, the tea which in 1869 paid 6*d.* per 1 lb. would for the same value in 1883 have paid 9*d.* Therefore, instead of taking credit to himself for not having increased the taxation on tea, the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to have come to the House and proposed a reduction of the duty on tea to 4*d.* in the 1 lb. There were other duties which were simply burdens upon industry and reasonable commercial enterprize, and which any Minister deserving the character of courage, which had been so lavishly accorded to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that night, would willingly have proposed to repeal—for instance, the duty on marine insurance and the duty on life insurance. It seemed to him great unfairness that people should be taxed because they protected themselves against the dangers of the sea and against the consequences of their death. Then he would refer to the tax on solicitors' certificates. He

never could understand why that unfortunate class of men, solicitors, should be called upon to pay to the Government year after year a tax for permission to carry on their business. The Government did not impose any tax upon doctors. He believed the Government brought in a Bill last year imposing a registration fee, but it was a very small affair, and the fee was nothing in comparison with the taxation levied on solicitors. Then there was another question which he had no doubt would in a few years come very prominently to the front—that was the question of licensing every house where spirits, wines, and intoxicating drinks generally were sold. They had had within the last two years a considerable agitation on the subject of Local Option. One step in that direction he believed would be the transfer of the sums paid for licences of houses where drink was sold from the Imperial Exchequer to local funds. Perhaps they might have some distinct information as to whether from that point of view Local Option was desirable or not—at any rate, he thought it would go a long way towards solving the difficulty of the question by throwing out a hint for the consideration of Chancellors of the Exchequer in future years. Coming now to the subject of Debt, he pointed out that the debt of a country, like the debt of an individual, might assume one or other of three forms. It might be that the nation was bound to pay a certain fixed sum by a fixed date, and that was what this country did when it issued Treasury bills; it might be that the debt was never to be repaid in principal, but that only a certain annual interest was to be paid to the creditors of the State, and that was the usual form of most of the Funded Debt of the country; and, finally, there was the intermediate course, in which the interest and principal were paid off together by instalments, which was the form of Terminable Annuities. With regard to the Sinking Fund which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to suspend, he was inclined to agree with what most persons suspected to be in the mind of the right hon. Gentleman—namely, that all this talk about Sinking Funds was absolute nonsense. The Sinking Fund idea was a financial error—a ridiculous delusion, which well-meaning men started in times when ideas were not at all clear with regard to financial matters, and had continued as a sort of financial will-of-the-wisp for some time in the House of Commons—it involved a great deal of work, and was sometimes very useful, perhaps, for the purpose of throwing dust in the eyes of persons who indulged in inconvenient criticism. He regretted that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not boldly continued the plan which he began last year of converting the Three per Cent Stock into Terminable Annuities, which had, at any rate, the advantage that it forced the present generation, the Government, and the House of Commons to pay off debt in a certain given time, and, although it might be true that certain other debt had to be incurred in the meantime, yet if they had not a system of Terminable Annuities there could never be anything like a substantial reduction of Debt at all. In 1881 the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, who was at the time Chancellor of the Exchequer, proposed a system for the reduction of the National Debt which, if it could have been carried on, would have been decidedly satisfactory; but, for some reason or other, that scheme unfortunately never passed through the House of Commons, and no subsequent Bill was introduced to carry out that portion of the right hon. Gentleman's proposal. He was not, as a rule, an admirer of the Prime Minister's schemes; but, from a financial point of view, he thought that the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman in 1881 was a good one, and that it was to be regretted it had not been carried into effect. There was just one other point in connection with the question of Debt to which he desired to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman and the Committee. Hon. Members would be aware that every now and then Treasury bills were paid off, and that certain others were issued. Now, Treasury bills were for either three or six months. The Chancellor of the Exchequer knew that the three months' bills were more costly than those at six months—that was to say, he had to pay a higher rate upon them—and therefore why the right hon. Gentleman should increase the number of Treasury bills at three months and decrease the number of six months' bills was a point which

he was entirely unable to comprehend. That might be one of those small points which sometimes tested the capacity of Chancellors of the Exchequer, and he thought that the increase of three-months' Treasury bills during the time in which the right hon. Gentleman had held the Office of Chancellor of the Exchequer did not speak to his carefulness in that matter of finance. He was aware that there was the existing deficit to deal with; notwithstanding that, he would still venture to propose to alleviate the taxes which pressed on the poor as forming a burden on industry and commerce which was much more serious than the small sums which those taxes brought into the Exchequer. He would be asked how he proposed that the deficit should be supplied. Well, his proposal was not likely, as he had said before, to meet with much acceptance in that House at the present time—it would, perhaps, be more heard of in the next Parliament than in this—he was certain that before many years had passed it would be forced into the forefront of finance and politics. There was an immense area of land unemployed in this country; he knew not how many acres there were in that condition, but the number was very great. There were in the South of England, for instance, many landlords who had farms which they could not let; they could not sell them; they could not get tenants on their own terms who would work the soil, and they could not turn it to any proper account themselves. He asked whether it was beyond the power of legislation to touch that subject, to provide machinery by which some of the idle hands in the country could be brought to work on that land? To whom did that land belong? It belonged to the whole human race; but a large portion of the land of this country was in the hands of a certain privileged class; that privileged class did nothing themselves, but extracted from the industrial portion of society an enormous rent—an enormous tribute for leave to live and work and die on the face of England; those men, whenever they chose, could turn out, and had turned out, many and many an industrious tenant. Over the face of the South-Western counties of this country there was an enormous number of farms unoccupied. Why should the landlords be allowed to hold those lands without the State deriving any Income Tax from them? Because they were empty, and they were able to plead that fact as a reason why they should not pay Income Tax. Well, then, what was his proposal? There were for Income Tax purposes two Schedules, and under Schedule A there was a certain tax on the value of land. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer now proposed to make the Income Tax 8*d.* in the pound. The greater portion of the amount to be derived from that tax would be drawn from the industrial classes, tradesmen, manufacturers, and professional men, and the smaller portion of it would come from land. Why should that be? The people who were allowed to enjoy an exclusive beneficial ownership of the land of the country should, he thought, be called upon to pay a consideration to the Exchequer for that exceptional enjoyment and privilege. If it were necessary to increase the Income Tax and raise further Revenue, why did not the Government raise it from those who possessed this land from which the industrial classes were kept off? Therefore he suggested the consideration whether it would not be fair and just, however unpopular it might be in such a form as this, that, instead of having incomes all round taxed at 8*d.* in the pound, an Income Tax of 2*s.* in the pound should be put upon the value of the land—that was to say, 2*s.* upon the rent paid for land, or upon the value of the land in the occupation of the owner. That, after all, would only be a tithe of the annual value, and would be reverting to what was the old Constitutional custom in this country. Time was when the land had to bear the expenses of the country, when the Crown was dependent on the revenue derived from land, and it was only when feudal government was done away with that the present system was established. If a gradually increasing tax were placed upon land the country would become the sole rent receiver, and the money, or consideration tax, or whatever it might be called that was paid for occupation, would be paid, not to a small privileged class of idlers, but to the community who were the real owners of the land. If they taxed land as he suggested, the Government would be able to raise their £11,000,000 with-

out difficulty, and the landowners now unable to turn their land to account would, in many instances, be glad to get rid of it. The land would get into the market and then into the hands of men who would make a good use of it, and it would be made available for relieving the distress and pauperism in the country. Finally, he wished to say a few words on the extraordinary proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer in regard to the taxation of alcohol. They were told that whereas Spanish wine of a strength of 26 degrees had hitherto paid a duty of 1*s.* a-gallon, the same duty was to be levied on Spanish wine henceforward even of a strength of 30 degrees. But, while the right hon. Gentleman was prepared to admit Spanish wines with an increased amount of alcohol without raising the duty upon them, he was about to charge a very considerably increased duty, amounting to 8 or 9 per cent, on the alcohol produced in Ireland and Scotland. The right hon. Gentleman proposed to raise the tax on Irish and Scotch spirit from 10*s.* a-gallon to 12*s.* a-gallon, and the tax upon beer from 6*s.* 3*d.* to 7*s.* 3*d.* a-barrel; but he proposed, at the same time, to reduce the tax on Spanish wine in the proportion of 30 to 26. A more extraordinary proposal, he supposed, was never submitted to the House of Commons. The right hon. Gentleman was going to benefit Spanish producers at the expense of Scotch and Irish producers; they were, in other words, to be burdened for the benefit of Manchester.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had made a most interesting speech, and one which the Committee ought to have listened to with advantage, because he had produced with remarkable force all those remarkable doctrines as to the ransoming of property in land which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain) had expounded to the electors of Birmingham and Ipswich in the course of the autumn. And if the Committee had listened a little more attentively to the hon. Member, and had respected the elaborate care and attention with which he had worked out those doctrines, they would, he thought, have been able to see clearly the ultimate results which the doctrine of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade would produce to the country. He thought, however, that the hon. Member was, perhaps, not following the right hon. Gentleman, but that the President of the Board of Trade was a follower of the hon. Member for Queen's County, who was only a little ahead of him. He could not but appreciate and admire, although he could not imitate, the great generosity which had that evening characterized the Members of the late Tory Government, for they had not taken advantage, as they might well have done, not only in their own interest, but in the interests of the public, of the opportunity to comment upon some of the leading features of the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. But he supposed they were reserving themselves for one of those opportunities which ex-officials regarded as decent and proper, and that they left to Members below the Gangway, to whom generosity was unknown, the duty of criticism. He should not have intruded on the Committee were it not with the full assurance that Her Majesty's Government would not proceed at that late hour with any other Business of great importance, and if it were not for some remarks which were not his own, but which he asked to be allowed to lay before the Committee. The Prime Minister had been kind enough the other night to allude to himself and to his hon. Friends the Members for Hertford (M. A. J. Balfour), Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff), and Chatham (Mr. Gorst) as young Members of the House, and he was sure that his hon. Friends deeply felt that compliment. For himself, he did not know whether he could claim altogether the position of a young Member of the House, having sat in it for nearly 12 years—however, as a young man, he might say that he had been quite taken aback by the appalling picture which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had painted of the state of the National finances. They had had a Liberal Government in Office for five years; necessarily on that account they had had applied to the finances of the country all the cardinal principles of exact finance, with the clear result that there was now a deficit of £15,000,000 and an Ex-

penditure of £100,000,000, leaving £3,000,000 to be provided for it was impossible to say how. Now that was a very extraordinary state of things, one which would not have been remarkable under the old Tory Governments, but which certainly was not what the country was led to look forward to, or what Her Majesty's Opposition, benighted as they were, were led to look forward to when the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends were installed in Office. He had said that he should offer a few remarks, not of his own, but of a person of far greater weight—politically and financially. What was the first great feature of this Budget? It was the great increase of expenditure. The next great feature was that it did not provide for the expenditure of the year; the next was that it suspended the plan for the reduction of the National Debt; and the next that it presented the House with a deficit to be met of £3,000,000. That that was clear, on the face of the Budget, no one could deny; and as he had listened to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer putting those features before the Committee one after another, he could not help thinking of the series of speeches which were made very recently—only last year—by the First Lord of the Treasury. Not quite a year ago, in August, 1884, the right hon. Gentleman addressed his constituents in Mid Lothian, and he had been fortunate in finding in the Library of the House a corrected and authorized copy of the speeches delivered by the right hon. Gentleman. The Prime Minister defended the four years' finance for which his Government were responsible, and he found that he also defended himself from the charge of having unjustly attacked the late Government. Now this was what the right hon. Gentleman said—

"I found fault with the late Government for the enormous increase of expenditure; I found still more fault with them for having broken every rule of sound finance. I quite admit that under given circumstances an increase of expenditure may sometimes be desirable and unavoidable. But the proposition that I lay down to you is this, that there are certain laws still more important than economy in expenditure, and one of these is that whatever you do you should take care to pay your way."

Now that was a most extraordinary sentence, because it was the only sentence which he had been able to discover in any one of the speeches of the First Lord of the Treasury which had not a shadow of qualification about it. It was clear from that sentence that there were certain laws still more important than economy, and one of them was that "whatever you do, you should take care to pay your way." Now, it would be extremely interesting to know whether the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had submitted this Budget to the Prime Minister before he submitted it to the Committee? He was extremely curious to know, and the public would be curious to know, how it was that the Prime Minister had sanctioned a Budget which neglected entirely that cardinal principle which the right hon. Gentleman had laid down. But the First Lord of the Treasury went further, and said—

"It may be that in some places Tory speakers will take upon themselves to open up this question of finance."

They would, undoubtedly. There certainly was no doubt that Tory speakers, whatever they might have done up to to-day, would certainly, after the Budget of to-night, do as the Prime Minister supposed, and would "open up this question of finance." The right hon. Gentleman went on—

"I say if you wish to have honest and sound finance you must pay your way."

And again there was no qualification whatever. The speech he was quoting from was delivered by the First Lord of the Treasury in the Corn Exchange at Edinburgh on the 4th of December, 1884. [Mr. GLADSTONE: What is the page?] He was quoting from page 29. There was one more remarkable passage which he should like to quote to the Committee; it was from another speech of the right hon. Gentleman, and it was a singular instance of what a Liberal periodical, *The Spectator*, called "The Irony of Providence." The writer of the article, no doubt, knew what he meant; but he imagined that the passage he was about to read would throw some light on the meaning of the article. One of the features of the last Budget introduced by the right hon. Baronet who was Chancellor of the Exchequer in the late Government, was that he suspended the Sinking Fund which he had himself created; and when, after making his Budget Statement, the right hon. Baronet sat down, the present First

Lord of the Treasury rose, and knowing well the position he had at that time acquired in the country, he thus commented on the proposal of the right hon. Baronet to suspend the Sinking Fund in order to meet the financial deficit. The date was the 11th of March, 1880, and the right hon. Gentleman said with a bitter sneer—

"The Chancellor of the Exchequer is called upon finally to offer up a victim upon the alter of—I know not what—evil fortune, or political justice—be it what it may, upon some alter or other he is called upon to immolate his own offspring, the New Sinking Fund, which, some four or five years ago, the House adopted on his recommendation; and, if I recollect right, by very considerable majorities." — (3 *Hansard*, [251] 835-6.)

That was within a few months of the General Election of 1880. That was the way in which the right hon. Gentleman spoke of the suspension of the Sinking Fund under the late Government. [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] The First Lord of the Treasury shook his head; but this was a quotation which he could not in any way evade. The country was now again within a few months of a General Election, and it might be said, having regard to the Budget presented to the Committee that night, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the words of the First Lord of the Treasury was "called upon to immolate his own offspring, the New Sinking Fund, which two or three years ago the House adopted by a very considerable majority." This, no doubt, was what might be considered "the irony of Providence." It certainly was an instance of retributive justice, and he should have shown, if the Vote of Credit had come on that night, that the present position in which the Government found themselves had resulted from the very serious political features of their foreign policy during the last few years. Before returning to the wise and invaluable remarks of the First Lord of the Treasury, he might perhaps be allowed to comment on a remark which had fallen from the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth). That hon. Member complained bitterly of the Tory Party; but he had no comment to make on the Budget. He had no fault to find with it, and it was a most singular feature in connection with the discussion of that evening that, although the Budget presented an enormous deficit, not a single Radical economist had uttered an expression of lament, regret, or mortification at the terrible and unexpected condition of the finances of the country which the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer had presented to the Committee. The hon. Member for Bradford, no doubt, felt that condition of the finance of the country; but he had turned it upon the Tory Party, and said that they had never been able to make any efforts for the country because the country had not supported them. He thought that was a singular statement for the hon. Member to make. He recollected that about three years ago the greatest economist of all the Radical Party opposite—the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands)—got up and moved a Resolution, after long Notice, practically directing, as an Order of the House, a reduction in the charges of Civil Service Expenditure. He made a great speech, and the Tory Party came down prepared to support the hon. Member, who was answered by the First Lord of the Treasury. The right hon. Gentleman accepted the Motion of the hon. Member for Burnley on condition that he inserted words which deprived that Motion of any value whatever. The words were "consistently with the efficiency of the Public Service," and by their addition the object of the hon. Member was frustrated and destroyed. With the permission of the Committee, he would like to refer to another point in the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The right hon. Gentleman had been extremely impressive and virtuous on the subject of not placing the whole of these charges on the class who owned property. It was necessary, he said, in the interest of sound finance—and he quoted Professor Fawcett—that articles of consumption should be taxed in order that the masses of the people might feel that political power brought with it some political disadvantage. How did the right hon. Gentleman work it out? He provided for £6,000,000 or £7,000,000 by taxation, and by his equal distribution of taxation between property and articles of consumption he apportioned £5,000,000 to the former and £1,500,000 to the latter. He should be loth to argue with so great a financial authority as the Chancellor of the Exchequer; but he doubted, and he believed that many others would doubt, that the great and

sound principle of finance so insisted upon by Professor Fawcett, and quoted so grandiosely by the right hon. Gentleman, had been in any degree carried out. Now, the Chancellor of the Exchequer made a remark about having paid off War Charges entailed on the present Government by their Predecessors. That was a favourite argument of the present Government, and no one had resorted to it more frequently than the First Lord of the Treasury. He resorted to it in the speech at Mid Lothian to which he had referred. Excusing the high expenditure of the present Government, he said—

"I do not hesitate to say this, that the main cause of the present expenditure of the country being so high is the Military Charges, which are mainly due to the policy of the foregoing Government and the engagements they have saddled on those who have succeeded them."

He should not think of introducing any elements of discord into the present debate by discussing that subject; but he thought anyone could scarcely charge on the late Government the £6,500,000 which were being taken for special preparations to meet the advance of Russia on India. This was a great feature of the present Budget. There was a deficit of £15,000,000, which arose out of the policy of the present Government, and with which the late Government could have had no connection whatever. There were other charges undoubtedly, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer said they had been bequeathed to the present Government by their Predecessors, and in the same speech from which he (Lord Randolph Churchill) quoted, the First Lord of the Treasury said that—

"The four last balance sheets of the late Government presented an aggregate deficiency of £7,330,000."

Of course, that was a very telling observation to make to an audience in the country; but he would suggest to the First Lord of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer and their followers, who generally took anything offered to them with the devotion of the followers of Mahomet, whether they were not pressing that argument a little too far. Of course, it was not altogether certain that when the next General Election had been held, and when the new electors had been consulted and had given their verdict—it was not absolutely certain that the present Government would be able to occupy the Treasury Bench, and were they not setting an example to their possible Successors with regard to this bequest argument which they might use with effect hereafter? How would the case stand if right hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House took the place of those on the Treasury Bench? They would then begin to talk about the bequest argument; they would find that when they left Office in 1880 the National Expenditure stood at £83,000,000; but they would also find that the present Government had bequeathed to them a National Expenditure of £100,000,000; they would find that when they left Office in 1880 they bequeathed to their Successors a deficit of £7,000,000, and they would find when they came into Office that they succeeded to a legacy of £15,000,000. Those were matters which he thought were not unworthy of the consideration of the House of Commons, and he certainly thought they ought to have the close attention of the country. He would not congratulate the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the clearness and ability with which he had made his speech, because any congratulation coming from him would be altogether superfluous, as he had already received it from the authorized quarters; but he did congratulate the right hon. Gentleman from the bottom of his heart on the extraordinary success with which he had supplied his opponents with arguments for conducting the political campaign which would shortly open, and for having enabled them to prove to the country beyond all possibility of doubt the absolute superiority of Tory finance.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Sir Arthur Otway, I think the time has come when I should endeavour to answer the questions put to me in the course of this debate, and I will do so as briefly as possible. I may say at once that it will not be my duty to reply to any statements made this evening other than those which have been addressed to me in order to elucidate any points in my Statement which may not have been sufficiently clear. The right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) has expressed very clearly what is the custom on these occasions—namely, without entering into a long discussion on financial policy, to

endeavour to obtain from the Chancellor of the Exchequer such explanations of his speech as may be required, and then to go to a formal vote on the several Resolutions placed before the Committee, so that those Resolutions may be reported and a Bill introduced as soon as possible. I say, therefore, having listened with great care to the financial proposals of the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. A. O'Connor), to which he devoted the greater part of an hour, that he will, perhaps, forgive me for not going into those questions, because I do not consider that this is a fitting time for their discussion; and it is, therefore, from no disrespect to the hon. Member that I do not enter upon them. My hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) has asked me whether the Circular which we put forward in regard to the payment of dividends to-morrow is in accordance with custom and legality? My answer is, that it is a Circular in accordance with custom and legality. It has always been the practice, when Resolutions for raising taxes have been adopted by Parliament on an occasion like the present, that those taxes should come into operation on the following day, and the necessary instructions have always been given by the Treasury. It is particularly necessary that this rule should be followed on the present occasion, because it is very rarely the case that the Budget is postponed until the last day of April, and on the 1st day of May very large sums have to be paid from which Income Tax has to be deducted. With regard to the duties on spirits, wines, and beer, several hon. Gentlemen who have spoken to-night appear to think that the taxation of those articles has hitherto been placed on the same footing—that is to say, that some regard has been had to the quantity of alcohol in wine, beer, and spirits respectively—and that if the taxation on spirits were increased there must necessarily be an equivalent increase of taxation on the alcohol in other beverages. I say at once that that has never been the principle adopted by Parliament. The principle on which the Spirit Duties proceed is perfectly well known, and it has no regard to the quantity of alcohol contained in other articles on which duties are imposed. But I have been asked whether the proposals I am now making are not unfair towards Ireland as compared with Scotland and England? I will explain to the Committee the effect of the proposals we have made so far as the relative payments by Ireland and by England are concerned. Spirits are consumed per head in England to a less extent than in Ireland or Scotland. Beer is almost exclusively drunk in England—that is to say, the amount of beer drunk in Ireland or Scotland per head is far less. But if we add together the consumption of the three countries so far as beer and home-made spirits are concerned, the additional sum which I estimate will be received under the Budget from spirits and beer will fall to the extent of 73 per cent on England, 14 cent on Scotland, and 13 per cent on Ireland. Now, I think that these percentages cannot be said to be unfair to Ireland; and I shall be glad to show to the hon. Gentleman opposite, if he wishes it, the foundation of my statement. Foreign spirits are almost entirely consumed in England; and if they are included the proportions falling on Ireland and Scotland will be much less. My hon. Friend the Member for Stockton (Mr. Dodds), whom I thank for his kind words with regard to the Budget, has asked me, with respect to the taxation of corporate property, to what extent property held for charitable purposes will be affected by our proposal? I must ask my hon. Friend to leave that question until the Bill is printed, when he will see what proposals we make with regard to the taxation of charitable property. One or two hon. Members have referred to the Wine Duties, and have said that if the duty on beer were to be increased we should also increase the duty on wine. Now, I was very careful to state to-night that since the year 1860 the ordinary fiscal principles which have been applied to the taxation of articles of consumption have not been understood to be applicable to the article of wine. The duties on wine have for the last quarter of a century been connected with our commercial arrangements with the great wine-growing countries. That has been a cardinal point in our finance for the last 25 years. The reduction in the Wine Duties from 6*s.* to 1*s.* and 2*s.* 6*d.* per gallon, which took place in 1860, was contemporaneous with a great increase in the Spirit Duties;

but the two operations had no connection whatever. Then I am told that if you increase the duty on beer you should also increase the duty on wine, because wine at the present moment, in comparison with beer, pays a lower duty. Now, Sir, that is a mistake. The present duty on wine averages above 25 per cent of its value, whereas the duty on beer is only 20 per cent. Taking into account, again, only alcoholic strength, the duty on beer is not nearly as high as that on wine. The hon. and learned Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth) has asked some questions with regard to the taxation of corporate property, and whether I would agree to the printing of a Return, of which I must confess that I know little or nothing. I cannot undertake to print the Return without seeing more of it; but, if I find it desirable, I will do so. Reference has also been made to the telephone business which we have been asked to acquire, and so improve our telegraph revenue. But I certainly am not disposed to take over the business of the Telephone Companies until I know much more, not only as to their present, but as to their future solvency. This is, therefore, a matter for serious inquiry, respecting which I cannot off-hand satisfy my hon. and learned Friend. The hon. Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory) has asked several questions involving points of technical detail with reference to the proposed increase of taxation on the succession to real property. I think it is hardly worth while, on the present occasion, to reply to highly technical questions; but on this subject the House will be shortly in possession of full details. My hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) also spoke of the proposed exemptions in the tax on corporate property, and perhaps he will do well to wait until he sees the Bill and recognizes the difficulties that surround it. When the Bill is before the House we shall be very glad of whatever assistance he can give us in debating it. The hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) asked me some questions as to Terminable Annuities. He quoted from some Return, but he did not tell me exactly what it was. [Mr. GORST: The Return of 1884.] I do not think that is a Return of mine. I do not think it is the Return that professes to give the Terminable Annuities under the three heads laid down in 1883. If he will refer to the Return of 1883 he will find that these Terminable Annuities were divided under three heads, and that the amount of capital to be paid off under them was altogether about the sum I named for this year. There are other Terminable Annuities and other methods of reducing the Debt now in force; but with these I do not propose to deal. When Life Annuities are granted Stock is cancelled, and Annuities are granted instead; but with these I do not propose to interfere. Nor do I propose to touch the New Sinking Fund, or the Stock cancelled under Land Tax and other operations. All these methods with which we do not propose to interfere cancel Stock to the extent of something like £2,000,000 a-year. It will be found that the amount which we propose to raise to make good the deficiency of the present year is not far from the amount of Stock cancelled under these three heads; so that in point of fact, though not in point of form, what we shall have to intercept this year will be as nearly as possible the exact amount of Funded Debt cancelled this year; but if we interfered with these three processes we should cause great inconvenience, so that we only interfere with the Terminable Annuities under the Act of 1883, leaving the other processes alone. I said in my original statement that it was extremely difficult to understand, not the Terminable Annuities, which are perfectly simple, but the other operations by which the Debt is reduced or Stock cancelled, and that therefore I would lay on the Table a Treasury Minute, which would explain the operations. I have been asked a question, which really has nothing to do with the Budget, by the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. A. O'Connor). Upon the operations he refers to I can give him further details if he wishes; but the result of what we have done we conceive to be satisfactory. I shall be glad if the Committee will now pass all these different Resolutions, in order that they may be reported as soon as possible, and that we may found our Bill upon them. The effect of passing them, I repeat, where they relate to questions of Customs and Excise, or Income Tax, will be to enable us at once to raise the new duties, though, if the Budget pro-

posals are absolutely rejected, there will be no authority for the additional payments beyond the statutory rates of duty, and those who have paid on the increased scale will be entitled to be repaid the excess. It is absolutely necessary that what I propose should be done with regard to these duties. With respect to the Death Duties and the Corporation Duty, the present rates of duty will not be increased until the Bill has received the approval of Parliament. If I have not made myself clear, and any hon. Member will put a question to me, I shall be very glad to give every explanation in my power.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, that he only rose in consequence of one of the last observations of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. As he understood, the right hon. Gentleman stated that the Resolutions upon which a Bill containing an alteration in the Death Duties would be founded would not be passed that night.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): No, no!

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: The Resolutions upon which to found the Bill will not be passed to-night?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I am afraid I have not made myself clear to the noble Lord. The Resolutions will be passed to-night. We shall ask for them in order to found a Bill upon them. We cannot introduce a Bill without Resolutions; but those relating to the Death Duties, the Corporation Tax, and the Stamps on Bonds, will not be acted upon until the Bill is passed.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, then he wished to put a question upon that, and he should have done so before the right hon. Gentleman rose, only that he had seen the Chancellor of the Exchequer had risen immediately upon an hon. Member sitting down in order to reply, and he (Lord George Hamilton) did not desire to interfere between him and the House. He understood the proposal to increase the Death Duties was for the purpose of equalizing the payments which those inheriting real and personal property respectively made. The right hon. Gentleman estimated that he would get by his increase on equalizing the Death Duties an additional sum of £200,000 a-year. Now, that £200,000 was only a 75th part of the deficiency which he hoped to supply. He also asked the right hon. Gentleman if he had considered what the effect of his proposal, if it were logically carried out, must necessarily be? As he understood, every person who inherited real property, or had an interest in real property, was hereafter to pay exactly the same sum as a person who inherited an equivalent sum in personalty?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Practically the same.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: Very well. He wanted the right hon. Gentleman to consider what the effect would be as regarded a large number of humble persons who under recent legislation had acquired and would hereafter inherit an interest in real property. Take the case of the tenants in Ireland. Every single tenant in that country had an interest in real property—that was to say, an interest in the farm which he occupied.

MR. GLADSTONE: No, no; that is personalty.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: Let them follow it out. The landlord had a certain property. That property was estimated to be of a certain value. But the whole of that value did not belong to the landlord. A certain portion of it belonged to the tenant, unquestionably, and under recent legislation the Government had transferred that portion from the landlord to the tenant.

MR. GLADSTONE: I say that that is a personal interest.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: No; it was not a personal interest. Under the legislation of the Land Act a certain portion of the value of a farm was transferred to the tenant, and if the landlord was assessed upon his interest in that holding it would fall short of the full value of the holding. Well, that being so, the interest was one which was derived from real property. It was an interest which was recognized by law, and which could be bequeathed by law; and it was an interest upon which the tenant could raise money. Now, he understood that that interest was not to be subjected to an increased Death Duty. Then who was to pay the increased duty on that portion of the property which did not belong to the landlord? [*A laugh.*] The Prime Minister laughed; but the property had a certain value,

and only a portion of it belonged to a certain individual. Who was to be taxed for the remainder? Somebody must be taxed; and it was plain, if it was not the landlord, that it was the tenant. Upon that matter he wished to have a clear statement from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. There was a movement taking place in the country by which the number of proprietors was being increased; but if this proposal of increasing the Death Duties were pushed, as he understood the Chancellor of the Exchequer intended to push it, to its full conclusion, it was clear that all those who had an interest in land would be subjected to a taxation from which they had previously been exempted. [The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER dissented.] The Chancellor of the Exchequer shook his head; but would he say who had to pay that tax?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, that the interest of the tenant in his holding was personal property, in the same way that the ownership of a lease was personalty. Whenever a person who was in the enjoyment of leasehold property died, and that property passed to somebody else, the new inheritor, whoever he might be, had to pay on the amount as personal property. The landlord's interest in it did not come to be subjected to duty until the landlord died.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: This is not leasehold property.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, that the two did not come under the charge at the same time. The leaseholder's property was charged when he died; the landlord's property when he died.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I am sorry to trouble the right hon. Gentleman once more; but he was understood to say that the Estimates which had been presented to the House do not even now, with the Vote of Credit, represent the expenses which the Government contemplate. It was understood that there would be an Estimate for the expense of protecting our coaling stations abroad. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will explain whether that expense is included in the estimated Expenditure for the year?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): No. What I said was that, in describing the Expenditure of this year, my noble Friend (the Earl of Northbrook), in "another place," said that as to future years there might be certain expenditure connected with the protection of our military and commercial harbours for which no provision has been made. I merely made that remark as a caution, and, I think, a very necessary caution. The only item that I referred to as not included in the Estimates was a margin of £200,000 for Supplementary Estimates.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I should also like to ask whether we are to have a Supplementary Estimate for the expenses of Sir Charles Warren's Expedition to Bechuanaland? I do not understand that any provision for this Expedition has been made in the Vote of Credit, nor does it, so far as I can gather, come in the Estimate for the present year. As the Expedition is now doing its work, some provision should be made for the expenditure this year.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I am sorry that I have not made myself clear to the right hon. Gentleman upon that point. What I intended to say was that the expense of that Expedition—namely, £500,000—is provided for in the regular Army Estimates.

COLONEL NOLAN said, he did not think the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had answered the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. O'Sullivan) on the very important question of the extraordinary increase of taxation upon Ireland. They should remember that the taxation pressed very heavily upon that country. It should also be borne in mind that in England the people had the consolation of knowing that it was their own Ministers who put additional taxation upon them; but in Ireland the people knew that none of their Representatives belonged to the Administration, except one Law Officer, who had nothing to do with the imposition of this taxation. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had diminished the case of the Irish Representatives by the very simple and obvious expedient which all Chancellors of the Exchequer adopted when they were mistaken. He had underrated the result of the tax. He had put the figure down at some £900,000; but he (Colonel Nolan) should not be surprised if it amounted to £3,000,000 or £4,000,000. There were £3,000,000

paid on spirits in Ireland, and if they increased the duty 20 per cent he did not believe that would diminish the consumption very materially. The duty was already so high that the people who could afford to drink spirits would go on drinking them, even though they had to pay a halfpenny per glass more. A man would be almost as able to pay 3½*d.*, which would include the increased duty, as he was to pay 3*d.* The duty would be 2*s.* There would be 64 glasses in a gallon of whisky, which was sold by the glass in Ireland, and that would come to 2*s.* 8*d.* There was no middle money. The publican could not put on a farthing, and therefore he would be sure to put on a halfpenny, so that they were now putting on every glass of whisky in Ireland an extra halfpenny, and that he (Colonel Nolan) considered a very serious thing. This one commodity was already frightfully overtaxed. He did not believe there was too much alcohol drunk in Ireland. He had no doubt that that which was consumed was unequally distributed—that was to say, that he had no doubt that some people drank too much, and that other people were too poor to pay for it, and drank too little. He did not agree with those who condemned the use of alcoholic beverages. The best medical authorities said that a certain amount of alcohol did good, instead of harm; and he must confess that his own experience confirmed that view. He felt it his duty to enter a warm protest against the manner in which Ireland was being treated in this matter. He could understand the reason of it—it all came of the fact of Ireland being subject to England, and of her having no Representatives in the Cabinet. Ireland was not allowed to have any voice in the question of going to war. The question was not submitted to the House of Commons. Members were told that it was unpatriotic to ask Questions, and the result was that Irish Members, even in the House, had no control whatever over the question of peace or war. Not only were the Irish Members without a voice in these matters, but also in matters so closely affecting them as the imposition of increased taxation upon commodities in general use in their country. The Government picked out one of those commodities and put the heaviest tax upon it. Already it was taxed 150 per cent over its value, and that tax was now to be increased to 300 per cent. Every time a man in Ireland drank a glass of whisky he would have to thank the English Prime Minister, the English Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the English Cabinet, who had brought up its price to such an enormous amount by their taxation consequent upon their spirited foreign policy. He did not wish to raise a quarrel with the hon. Member for West Norfolk (Mr. Clare Read), who really represented the agricultural interest so well in that House. The hon. Member said it was a pity that when any agricultural question was introduced the interests of England, Ireland, and Scotland should appear to be opposed to each other. He (Colonel Nolan), however, thought that beer was getting on better than spirits. He had lived a sufficient length of time in England to know that the English people were fond of their glass of beer. He did not think it was as wholesome as whisky; but still he thought that a certain amount of alcohol taken in the form of beer very good and proper. But he wished to point out that the alcohol in beer was only taxed at 40, while that in whisky was taxed at nearly 60. Already they were taxed four times as much in Ireland, in proportion to the population, as they were in England, and it was now proposed to still further increase that enormous disproportion. The result of the action of the Cabinet would only be to make the Irish people more and more feel that they were made to bear the brunt of wars entered into by the Government, and which were not by any means popular in Ireland. The question was not merely between Ireland and England, but between the working classes and the rich; the poor paid nine times as much in the shape of taxation upon their beverages as the rich paid upon their wine. It appeared to him that this was rather a rich man's Budget; certainly it was more an English than an Irish Budget. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had declared that the Wine Duties stood on a special basis, because they were the outcome of Fair Trade arrangements with foreign countries. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman objected to the phrase; still he had pointed out that the Wine Duties, as they at present stood, had been fixed in consideration of certain advantages

which we had received from the foreign countries in which the wine was produced. If the interests of foreign counteies were to be considered, surely the Irish people had a right to demand consideration for their interests. But how did the Irish people know that any representations they made would be attended to? Who had they on the Front Ministerial Bench to speak for them? It was true that they had the Solicitor General for Ireland; but did anyone suppose for a moment that that hon. and learned Gentleman ever interfered in any question which was not of a legal character? He would reserve his opinion with regard to the question of taxing corporate property, simply observing that that proposal might be made most oppressive in Ireland. If it had not been for some answers the right hon. Gentleman had given to the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) and the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold)—whom he (Colonel Nolan) had been astonished to find introducing this question—it would have seemed to him that such bodies as looked after the schools in Ireland would have to carefully consider this matter. He was glad to hear that on that question Ireland had nothing to fear from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He trusted he was not mistaken, and that in Ireland all those who managed those schools would find that they had no additional taxation to pay.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, that the Irish people would gain rather than the reverse in the matter referred to. With regard to the larger question of the duties upon beer and spirits, he would ask hon. Members to defer raising it to the second reading of the Bill which would have to be founded upon the Resolutions. The Government were anxious to get the Resolutions passed, so that the Bill might be set up without delay.

MR. R. H. PAGET said, the right hon. Gentleman had given them figures with regard to taxation of property covering four different series of years. Would the right hon. Gentleman be good enough to lay upon the Table of the House, in the form of a Return, the figures he had given them with the details showing how those figures had been arrived at? In those figures he had contrasted the incidence of taxation on articles of consumption with the incidence of taxation on property. He had assured the Committee that the figures had been decided upon after mature consideration, and might be relied upon as perfectly correct. He (Mr. Paget) did not dispute that; but it would be interesting to go into details as to how the figures were made up. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman to be good enough to lay on the Table of the House a Return of the groups of figures showing those details. There was one other question he should like to put to the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman's explanation a few minutes since was that he proposed to place real and personal property, so far as it was possible, on a footing of perfect equality; and he (Mr. Paget) wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he was prepared to introduce that equality in the manner in which the Income Tax was levied on realty and on personalty? On real property Income Tax was levied on gross rental; but not so on personalty. The point was one to which he wished to direct the attention of the right hon. Gentleman; because, to be consistent, and to put those two descriptions of property on a footing of perfect equality, they must make a change in the incidence of the Income Tax as it fell at present upon land and upon houses. It fell at present upon the gross rental without any deduction; and in the case of land, and still more in the case of houses, the actual receipts could never reach within a very large percentage of the gross rental on which the Income Tax was charged. If those two descriptions of property were put upon a perfect footing of equality, and funds and railway shares and other stocks were taxed in the same way as the rental of houses and land, a change must be made in the incidence of the tax upon realty. The right hon. Gentleman had recommended the farmers of England to show their accounts, and to allow their Income Tax to be charged upon the profits which they really made. Would he extend that to those farmers of England who were yeomen farmers, owning their own land, so that they might treat the whole of their interest in that land as a business? Would they be allowed, where they could show a profit, to be charged Income Tax on that profit; and where they could show that there had been no

profit at all, would they be permitted to enjoy the same treatment that was given to the owner of every other kind of property? The man who farmed his own land had to pay the landlord's tax whether he made a profit or not. The only exemption he could claim was that of the occupier's tax.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, that was a question as to the incidence of Schedule A, and he had no reason to believe that the incidence of Schedule A was not perfectly proper. He was not prepared to admit that it should be altered. As to the other question put by the hon. Gentleman, he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) had recommended that the incidence of taxation on real property on transference on the occasion of a death should be made as far as possible the same as the incidence on personalty; but he had said nothing about the Income Tax. As to the Return asked for, he thought it might be possible to present it; but he would consult those who would be able to help him in framing it. It would certainly be a useful Return.

MR. MAC IVER wished to raise an emphatic protest against that portion of the Budget which related to the Spanish Wine Duties. He hoped to state at greater length on another occasion his objections to the proposal to reduce those Spanish Wine Duties, and all he would say now was that it was most mischievous, and that it would have to be very carefully considered. It was part of a general commercial arrangement with Spain which would, no doubt, suit the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) and certain other hon. Members who represented constituencies in the North of England; but it would not suit the country at large. They would not get equal freedom under it, and if such proposals were carried out it would be found that they would place their Australian Colonies under a very great disadvantage with regard to their wines. Under those circumstances, he felt bound to enter an emphatic protest.

MR. CAUSTON wished to know whether the extra 1*s.* per barrel added to the Beer Duty was to be regarded merely as a temporary war tax or as a permanent increase of the duty?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he did not propose to make any limitation. The Resolution would simply raise the Beer Tax from 6*s.* 3*d.* to 7*s.* 3*d.* per barrel.

MR. BIGGAR wished to offer a few remarks upon the Budget generally, and especially upon that part of it which dealt with those unfortunate liquor taxes. At present they had nothing to do with the question as to whether the money was really to be spent or not; or whether, if spent, it was to be spent in the Soudan or in Afghanistan. All that they had to deal with that night was the fact that a certain amount of money had to be raised, and the question was whether the way in which it was proposed to raise it was the right way. There was one part of the Budget of which he very much approved—that part which related to what were called the Death Duties. He did not know whether it was likely to be carried out in its details in a judicious way with which no fault could be found, especially in the provision which related to corporate property; but he confessed that it seemed to him that this business of the Death Duties was likely to be a pretty smart tax upon the owners of landed property. He had not much sympathy with hon. Members who represented the landowning interest; but he thought they were now going to bear quite as large a proportion of the taxation as they were entitled to bear. The Death Duties had been threatened for a very long time; but now it seemed as though, in what was probably a temporary Budget, put on for a special object under exceptional circumstances, a change was to be made in the Death Duties which was almost certain to be permanent, and a tax would be put on the owners of real property which they would never get rid of. There was no great harm in laying it upon the landowners pretty heavily. The hon. Member for Mid Somerset (Mr. R. H. Paget) had raised a very important question with regard to the incidence of the Income Tax—namely, the question whether it should not be charged upon gross value instead of upon net value. He (Mr. Biggar) had always thought that the Income Tax should be raised upon the net value, because the difference between the net income and the gross income never went into the pocket of the person who paid the tax upon it. At the same time, secured property, such as land was supposed to be, ought to pay a higher rate

than uncertain incomes made out of personal exertions. Still, on the whole, under the present Budget he thought the owners of property would have to pay quite up to the limit of their fair share. As to the indirect taxation proposed under the Budget, he was glad to see some portion of the proposals; but he was very much dissatisfied with other parts. He was glad to find that no increase of taxation had been put on tea and coffee, and that sort of thing; and as to the increased taxation upon alcoholic drinks, he thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer should have imposed something upon non-alcoholic drinks. Tea and coffee already paid duty to a certain extent, and there were a good many other so-called non-alcoholic drinks which had a proportion of alcohol in them. He remembered a story told of an old lady named Mrs. Brown, of Armagh, who used to sell a teetotal cordial, and when the summer came round, and it grew very hot, she used to put a very considerable amount of whisky into it, for otherwise it would not keep in the warm weather. She used to say that in summer time it sold remarkably well. There was a great number of those things made, and he believed that most of those so-called non-alcoholic drinks contained spirits of wine, or alcohol of some sort. Spirits of wine paid less duty than brandy or whisky, and therefore the sellers of those drinks did doubly well. As to the Beer and Wine Duties, it was a perfect scandal that wine should be charged at a lower rate in proportion to its value and alcoholic strength than whisky or brandy. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had told them that about 1*s.* 9*d.* duty was charged on wine, the total value of which was 7*s.*, while whisky, which was worth untaxed about 4*s.* a-gallon, had to pay 12*s.* per gallon duty. On wine, therefore, there was only a 25 per cent duty upon the full value, while on whisky there was a 75 per cent duty upon the full value. As to beer, it was proposed to raise the duty by another 1*s.* for every 36 gallons, while on whisky the duty was to be raised by 2*s.* upon every gallon. According to the estimate of the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. O'Sullivan), the alcoholic strength in 36 gallons of beer was equal to 500 proof, or the same alcoholic strength as was to be found in five gallons of proof whisky. Yet the 36 gallons of beer were only to pay 7*s.* 3*d.* duty, while the five gallons of whisky were to pay £3 duty. In other words, the alcoholic strength of five gallons of proof spirit was to pay, in the case of beer, only 1*s.* of increased duty, while in the case of whisky it was to pay 10*s.* of increase. No defence could be offered for such inequality of treatment, and he had not the least doubt that when the Scotch Members came to discuss the question, an endless amount of time would be occupied over those Whisky Duties, with the probable result that the scheme of the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have to be amended. The argument of the Chancellor of the Exchequer with regard to wine was perfectly unreasonable and preposterous, for it practically amounted to giving a bounty to foreign producers, and levying a special tax upon home manufacturers. Free Trade was all very well; but Free Trade to their opponents, and a heavy tax on home productions, was contrary to all their ideas of what Free Trade ought to be. That part of the Budget ought to be amended, and if it were not amended pretty soon, a great deal of time would have to be spent in discussing it, and the result would not be at all satisfactory to the Government. The explanation of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not by any means satisfactory. The right hon. Gentleman had told them that it had never been the custom to charge duty on whisky, beer, and wine in proportion to their alcoholic strength or value. But that was no reason why it should not be done. The House ought to take advantage of the present Budget to try to put the relative taxation of those different articles on a more reasonable, satisfactory, and honest foundation. He (Mr. Biggar) certainly must protest against the manner in which the duty was laid upon Irish spirits.

SIR JOSEPH M'KENNA said, he did not wish the opportunity to pass without entering his protest against the increased duty which was to be put on whisky. It was a tremendous increase, considering the way in which that article had been surcharged with duty since 1853 to the extent of 200 per cent. Formerly the duty was levied, in the case of beer, upon dry malt; and it was not so obvious then as now what was the amount of duty according to alcoholic

strength. But now it was found that the duty on beer, according to the alcoholic standard, was 1*s.* 10*d.* per gallon of proof spirit, or for as much alcohol as would be found in a gallon of proof spirit. But there was a duty of 10*s.* per gallon upon Irish whisky, or upon the same amount of alcohol as went free, in the case of beer, for 1*s.* 10*d.* Beer was the national beverage of England; but whisky, in one form or other, was the national beverage of Scotland and Ireland. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had said it was not the rule to apply the same scale of taxation to those articles. It certainly was not the rule, because before 1853 the duty on malt raised the tax on beer to about 12*s.* 6*d.* per gallon of alcoholic strength, and since then the duty had been reduced from 12*s.* 6*d.* to 1*s.* 10*d.* per gallon on the proof spirit contained in beer, while the duty on whisky had been raised in Scotland from 3*s.* 6*d.* to 10*s.* per gallon, and in Ireland from 2*s.* 8*d.* to 10*s.* per gallon. That was a measure of injustice such as had not been equalled in the Budgets of any other country in Europe. The ordinary consumption of whisky in Ireland was 6,000,000 gallons for 5,000,000 people—not a large consumption, certainly, for it showed that less alcohol was consumed in Ireland than either in Scotland or England. England consumed the largest quantity, and yet Ireland was to be the most heavily taxed, and was to be made to pay for this war, which she had had no hand in bringing about. The taxation on this one article alone in Ireland, without the addition which it was now proposed to place upon it, cast upon the country a burden of no less than £300,000 a-year. But what was the addition to be made to the duty upon beer in England? It was only 1*s.* on every barrel of 36 gallons, which was exactly one-third of 1*d.* on each gallon. Was not that oppressive in the last degree? Did it not betray an absolute cowardice on the part of the Government, when they ought to do justice between the people of the Three Kingdoms? Was there any reason why alcohol, in whatever vehicle it might be contained, ought not to pay the sum which it paid before the year 1853? What was the object in changing the old arrangement? The right hon. Gentleman the present Prime Minister was Chancellor of the Exchequer when the change was made, and that right hon. Gentleman then explained that the change was to establish equality of taxation. But there never was a greater or a grosser fallacy palmed off upon the House than was put forward on that occasion. The duty on spirits was raised by degrees from 2*s.* 8*d.* per gallon in 1853 to the 10*s.* per gallon at which it stood now. The English papers had leading articles about the poverty of the Irish, and attributed it to their improvidence; but the fact was that the people of Ireland were poor because they were taxed most outrageously. Any people in the world would be impoverished if they were treated in the same manner. The true way to measure the income of a country was to consider the amount of its Income Tax. The taxation of Great Britain, which included Scotland as well as England, would be measured by an Income Tax of 2*s.* 6½*d.* in the pound, while the taxation of Ireland could be measured by this—that it would take no less than 5*s.* 3*d.* in the pound to discharge Ireland from Imperial taxation, whereas before 1853, 3*s.* in the pound would have discharged her from Imperial liabilities. He entered a solemn protest against this species of legislation for raising the taxes of the country. Ireland was miserable and poverty-stricken, and that fact was due solely and entirely to the unfair rate of taxation cast upon her in proportion to her means when compared with England.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND said, he did not know whether it was intended to take a division; but if so, he should certainly vote against the Government, not because he had any particular objection to whisky being taxed, for the people who were taxed would get something from the taxation. The people of Ireland were to be taxed more heavily upon whisky, and they would feel it more heavily; but that was because they consumed more of it. But why was that increase to be made at all? The Government were going to tax alcohol in Ireland because of their taste for blood; and he, as an Irish Catholic, thought it his duty, and the duty of every person who had the interest of humanity at heart, to object to taxation which was merely for the purpose of enabling the Government to

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carry on a war. Much as the people of Ireland were opposed to wars and to the unnecessary shedding of blood, he believed they would consent to have their bread heavily taxed, provided that would bring about what a good many people in Ireland devoutly wished—the end of English rule, by plunging Great Britain into a war with some first-rate Power which would bring it to a sense of its duty to Ireland. But to tax the people for such a war as the Government had been waging in the Soudan and in the Transvaal, and for paying the expenses of such Expeditions as that of Sir Charles Warren, who had been sent out to try and get up another war with the Boers, in obedience to the Jingo spirit of the country—to do that, in his opinion, was nothing short of an infamous swindle. He hoped a division would be taken, not only as a protest against the proposed increase of taxation, but to show that Ireland did not derive any benefit whatever from, and was entirely opposed to, any extra taxation merely to enable the Government to carry on bloody and unnecessary wars.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

(1.) *Resolved*, That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, there shall be charged, collected, and paid for the year which commenced on the sixth day of April, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five, in respect of all Property, Profits, and Gains mentioned or described as chargeable in the Act of the sixteenth and seventeenth years of Her Majesty's reign, chapter thirty-four, the following Duties of Income Tax (that is to say):

For every Twenty Shillings of the annual value or amount of Property, Profits, and Gains chargeable under Schedules (A), (C), (D), or (E) of the said Act, the Duty of Eight Pence;

And for every Twenty Shillings of the annual value of the occupation of Lands, Tenements, Hereditaments, and Heritages chargeable under Schedule (B) of the said Act,—

In England, the Duty of Four Pence;

In Scotland and Ireland respectively, the Duty of Three Pence;

Subject to the provisions contained in section one hundred and sixty-three of the Act of the fifth and sixth years of Her Majesty's reign, chapter thirty-five, for the exemption of persons whose income is less than One Hundred and Fifty Pounds, and in section eight of "The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1876," for the relief of persons whose income is less than Four Hundred Pounds.

(2.) *Resolved*, That Stamp Duties, at the like rates as are charged on Affidavits and Inventories by "The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1881," shall be charged and paid on accounts delivered of property to be included therein according to the value thereof:

The Property to be included in the account shall be property of the following description, viz.:—

(a.) Personal estate and effects of any person dying on or after the first day of May one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five, which by reason of the local situation thereof are not included in any Affidavit or Inventory under the provisions of "The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1881;"

(b.) Money which, by virtue of the will of any person dying on or after the first day of May one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five, or upon the death of any person so dying, either immediately or after any interval, is or becomes charged upon or made payable out of any real estate otherwise than by way of annuity;

(c.) Real estate directed to be sold by the will of any person dying on or after the first day of May one thousand eight hundred and eight-five, or held on trust for sale upon the death of any person so dying:

Provided, That, in respect of any legacy payable out of, or a succession to, any property according to the value whereof Duty shall have been paid on an account in conformity with this Resolution, the Duty at the rate of one pound per centum imposed by the Act of the fifty-fifth year of King George the Third, chapter one hundred and eighty-four, or "The Succession Duty Act, 1853," shall not be payable.

(3.) *Resolved*, That, in addition to the Successions chargeable with Duty under section ten of "The Succession Duty Act, 1853," there shall be levied and paid to Her Majesty in respect of every Succession as defined and mentioned in that Act, upon the death of any person dying on or after the first day of May, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five, where the Successor shall be the husband or wife of the predecessor, a Duty at the rate of Three Pounds per centum upon the value of the interest of the Successor:

And, in addition to the Duties chargeable under such section, there shall be levied and paid to Her Majesty in respect of every Succession therein referred to, upon the death of any person dying on or after the first day of May, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five, according to the value thereof, the following Duties (that is to say):—

Where the Successor shall be the lineal issue or lineal ancestor of the predecessor, a Duty at the rate of Two Pounds per centum upon the value of the interest of the Successor;

In all other cases mentioned in such section, a Duty at the rate of Three Pounds per centum upon the value of the interest of the Successor:

Provided, That no Duty in conformity with this Resolution shall be payable upon the interest of a Successor in Leaseholds passing to him by will or devolution by Law, or in pro-

perty included in an Account according to the value whereof Duty is payable under "The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1881," or in conformity with the foregoing Resolution, nor shall such Duty be payable by a person in whom any reversionary property expectant on death shall be vested by alienation for value in money or money's worth prior to the first day of May, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five.

Provided also, That where by means of any disposition, personal property is so settled that it, or the income thereof, is to be enjoyed upon the death of any person dying on or after the first day of May, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five by the husband or wife of the predecessor during his or her life, or for any other limited interest, and subject thereto by any lineal issue or lineal ancestor of the predecessor for an absolute interest, the Duty of Three Pounds per centum upon the value of the property shall be immediately charged upon and paid out of such property; and, by the payment of such Duty, any claim to Duty under "The Succession Duty Act, 1853," and in conformity with this Resolution, upon the Succession of the said lineal issue or ancestor, shall be deemed to have been fully satisfied and discharged.

(4.) *Resolved*, That, in addition to the Legacies chargeable with Duty under the Act of the fifty-fifth year of King George the Third, chapter one hundred and eighty-four, there shall be levied and paid to Her Majesty in respect of every Legacy by the will of any person dying on or after the first day of May one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five, charged upon or made payable out of any real estate, and given by way of annuity to or for the benefit of the husband or wife of the deceased, a Duty at the rate of three pounds per centum on the value thereof:

And, in addition to the Duties chargeable under the said Act and specified in the Schedule thereto, there shall be levied and paid to Her Majesty in respect of every Legacy charged upon or made payable out of any real estate and given by way of annuity by the will of any person dying on or after the first day of May one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five, or upon the death of any person so dying, either immediately or after any interval, the following Duties (that is to say):—

Where the same is given to or for the benefit of any lineal issue or lineal ancestor of the testator, a Duty at the rate of two pounds per centum on the value thereof;

In all other cases specified in the said Schedule, a Duty at the rate of three pounds per centum on the value thereof.

(5.) *Resolved*, That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, and making a permanent addition to the Public Revenue, there shall be levied and paid to Her Majesty in respect of all Real and Personal Property which shall have belonged to or been vested in any body corporate or unincorporate during the yearly period ending on the fifth day of April, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five, or during any subsequent yearly period ending on the same day in any year, a Duty at the rate of Five Pounds per centum upon the annual income or profits of such property accrued to such body corporate or unincorporate in the same yearly period, after deducting therefrom all necessary outgoings:

Subject to exemption from such Duty in favour of property of the description following (that is to say):—

(1.) Property vested in or under the control or management of "The Commissioners of Her Majesty's Works or Public Buildings," or "The Commissioners of Her Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues;"

(2.) Property which, or the income or profits whereof, shall be legally appropriated and applied exclusively for the benefit of the public at large, or of any county, shire, borough, or place, or the ratepayers or inhabitants thereof, or in any manner expressly prescribed by Act of Parliament:

(3.) Property which, or the income or profits whereof, shall be legally appropriated and applied exclusively for any purpose connected with any religious persuasion, or for any charitable purpose, or for the promotion of education, literature, science, or the fine arts;

(4.) Property of any Friendly Society or Savings Bank established according to Act of Parliament;

(5.) Property belonging to, or constituting the capital of, a body corporate or unincorporate established for any trade or business, or being the property of a body whose capital stock is so divided and held as to be liable to be charged to Legacy Duty or Succession Duty;

(6.) Property realised or acquired with funds voluntarily contributed to any body corporate or unincorporate within a period of thirty years immediately preceding;

(7.) Property acquired by any body corporate or unincorporate within a period of thirty years immediately preceding where Legacy Duty or Succession Duty shall have been paid upon the acquisition thereof:

The term "body unincorporate" in this Resolution shall include every unincorporated Company, Fellowship, Society, Association, and Trustee or number of Trustees to or in whom respectively any real or personal property shall belong, in such manner or be vested upon such permanent trusts that the same shall not be liable to Legacy Duty or Succession Duty.

(6.) *Resolved*, That, in lieu of the Stamp Duties payable upon any security for money given to a subscriber in respect of a loan raised by any Company or Corporation and transferable to bearer, and upon a Foreign Security transferable to bearer, there shall be charged a Duty at the rate of one shilling for every ten pounds, and also for any fractional part of ten pounds of the money thereby secured:

And, in lieu of any other Stamp Duties, there shall be charged upon a Security given in substitution for a Security duly stamped a Duty at the rate of six pence for every twenty pounds,

and also for any fractional part of twenty pounds of the money thereby secured:

The term "Foreign Security" shall have the meaning assigned to it by the Act of the thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth years of Her Majesty's Reign, chapter four, and shall also include a Security which, though originally issued to the holder out of the United Kingdom, is offered by him for subscription, and given or delivered to a subscriber in the United Kingdom.

Motion made, and Question put,

"That, in lieu of the Duty of Excise now payable on British Spirits under the Act of the twenty-third and twenty-fourth years of Her Majesty's Reign, chapter one hundred and twenty-nine, there shall be charged and paid the Duty of Excise following, that is to say:—

For and upon every gallon, computed at hydrometer proof, of spirits distilled in the United Kingdom, the Duty of twelve shillings;

and so in proportion for any less quantity."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 109; Noes 27: Majority 82.—(Div. List, No. 143.)

(7.) *Resolved*, That, in lieu of the Duty of Excise now payable on British Spirits under the Act of the twenty-third and twenty-fourth years of Her Majesty's Reign, chapter one hundred and twenty-nine, there shall be charged and paid the Duty of Excise following, that is to say:—

For and upon every gallon, computed at hydrometer proof, of spirits distilled in the United Kingdom, the Duty of twelve shillings;

and so in proportion for any less quantity.

(8.) *Resolved*, That, in lieu of the Duties of Customs now payable on Spirits, there shall be charged and paid the Duties following (that is to say):

	£ s. d.
For every gallon computed at hydrometer proof of spirits of any description (except Perfumed Spirits) including Naphtha or Methylic Alcohol, purified so as to be potable, and mixtures and preparations containing Spirits.	0 12 4
For every gallon of Perfumed Spirits	0 19 9

And so on in proportion for any less quantity.

That where a person importing Liqueurs, Cordials, or other preparations containing Spirits in bottle, may have entered the same in such manner as to indicate that the strength is not to be tested, Duty shall be charged and paid at the rate following (that is to say):

	£ s. d.
For every gallon thereof . .	0 16 0

And so in proportion for any less quantity.

And, in lieu of the Duties of Customs now payable on the articles hereinafter mentioned, being articles in which Spirits are a part or ingredient thereof, or in the manufacture of which Spirits are used, there shall be charged and paid the Duties following (that is to say):

		£ s. d.
Chloroform .	. the pound	0 3 7
Chloral hydrate	. the pound	0 1 7
Collodion .	. the gallon	1 8 9
Ether, Sulphuric	. the gallon	1 10 0
Ethyl, Iodide of	. the gallon	0 15 7

(9.) *Resolved*, That, in lieu of the Duty of Excise now payable under the Inland Revenue Act 1880, in respect of Beer brewed in the United Kingdom, there shall be charged and paid the Duty of Excise following (that is to say):—

Upon every thirty-six gallons of worts of Beer of a specific gravity of one thousand and fifty-seven degrees, the Duty of Seven Shillings and Threepence;

and so in proportion for any difference in quantity or gravity:

And, in lieu of the Drawback of Excise now payable under the Inland Revenue Act 1880, in respect of Beer exported from the United Kingdom to Foreign Parts as merchandise, or shipped for use as ships' stores, there shall be allowed and paid in respect of Beer brewed in the United Kingdom on or after the first day of May, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five, a Drawback calculated according to the original gravity thereof (that is to say):—

Upon every thirty-six gallons of an original gravity of one thousand and fifty-seven degrees the Drawback of Seven Shillings and Three Pence;

and so in proportion for any difference in quantity or gravity.

(10.) *Resolved*, That, in lieu of the Duties of Customs now payable on Beer, there shall be charged and paid the Duties following (that is to say):—

For every thirty-six gallons of Beer of the description called Mum, Spruce, or Black Beer—

	£ s. d.
Where the Worts thereof were before fermentation of a specific gravity, Not exceeding one thousand two hundred and fifteen degrees . .	1 10 0
Exceeding one thousand two hundred and fifteen degrees . .	1 15 0
For every thirty-six gallons of Beer of any other description—Where the Worts thereof were before fermentation of a specific gravity of one thousand and fifty-seven degrees . . .	0 7 6

And so in proportion for any difference in gravity.

(11.) *Resolved*, That there shall be charged and paid on licences taken out for a half-year by Brewers of Beer, not being Brewers of Beer for sale, the Duties following, that is to say:—

On a licence, when taken out on or after the first day of April in any year to expire on the thirtieth day of September following, and on a licence, when taken out on or after the first day of October in any year to expire on the thirty-first day of March following—

	Duty. £ s. d.
By any such Brewer who is the occupier of a house of an annual value exceeding ten pounds, and not exceeding fifteen pounds . .	0 6 0
By any other of such Brewers	0 4 0

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Duties of Customs now chargeable upon Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-six, on the importation thereof into Great Britain or Ireland (that is to say):

Tea . the pound . Sixpence."

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he should like to hear what answer the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had to make to the observations which he (Mr. A. O'Connor) addressed to the Committee a short time ago. In the year 1869, when the importation of tea amounted to 139,000,000 lbs., the value of the article was only a little over £10,000,000. In 1883, when the importation had risen to 222,000,000 lbs., the value was only £11,500,000. That was to say, the amount of capital invested only increased by about 8 per cent; but the amount of tea on which the tax was raised had increased from 139,000,000 to 222,000,000 lbs. There was an increase of 70 per cent in the amount levied, because there was a similar increase in the amount imported as measured by weight. The amount in value had only increased very slightly. Having regard, therefore, to the amount of capital invested and the commerce done there was a virtual increase of the tax equal to about 50 per cent. It was as if the tax was 4*d.* per lb. in 1869 and 6*d.* in 1883, though all the time the tax nominally remained the same. To maintain the tax at the present figure was to burden the capital invested in the tea trade with a tax 50 per cent greater than that tax levied in 1869. In reality, the incidence of the tax was very much more grievous on the trade now than it was formerly. He should like to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he contemplated a reduction of the Tea Duty next year?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he was not quite sure whether he followed correctly the whole of the hon. Gentleman's arguments; but he understood the hon. Member to ask whether next year the Tea Duty would be reduced. He certainly could say nothing about what might be done next year with regard to the Tea Duty.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, the point was exceedingly simple. The tax was levied, not according to the value of the tea, but according to its weight. 139,000,000 lbs. were imported 14 or 15 years ago, and 6*d.* in every 1 lb. weight was charged. The weight had risen to 222,000,000 lbs., and 222,000,000 sixpences were accordingly levied. But there had not been a corresponding increase in the value of the tea; there had not been a corresponding increase in the amount of capital invested; and therefore the comparatively smaller amount of capital was now weighted by the nominally equal, but in reality the greater, amount of taxation. In order to maintain the incidence of taxation equal upon the equal amount of capital, he proposed that for the word "Sixpence" in the Resolution put from the Chair there should be substituted the words "Four Pence."

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "Sixpence," in order to insert the words "Four Pence,"—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor,*)—instead thereof.

Question, "That the word 'Sixpence' stand part of the Question," put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

(12.) *Resolved,* That the Duties of Customs now chargeable upon Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-six, on the importation thereof into Great Britain or Ireland (that is to say):

Tea . . . the pound . Sixpence.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That on a day to be fixed by the Commissioners of the Treasury the Duties of Customs now chargeable on Wine shall cease and determine, and that on and after such day there shall be charged the Duties following (that is to say):—

	£ s. d.
Wine containing less than 30·1 degrees of proof spirit, and less of such Wine, the gallon .	0 1 0
Wine containing less than 42 degrees of proof spirit, and less of such Wine, the gallon . .	0 2 6

And for every degree of strength beyond the highest above specified an additional Duty of 3*d.* the gallon."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said, this was a Resolution against which the Committee ought to protest. Wine was the only exciseable article on which a reduction was proposed. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to increase the duty on spirits and beer, which were chiefly consumed by the working classes, while he proposed to reduce the tax on the drink of the wealthy people.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 98; Noes 26: Majority 72.—(Div. List, No. 144.)

(13.) *Resolved*, That on a day to be fixed by the Commissioners of the Treasury the Duties of Customs now chargeable on Wine shall cease and determine, and that on and after such day there shall be charged the Duties following, that is to say:

	£	s.	d.
Wine containing less than 30·1 degrees of proof spirit, and less of such Wine, the gallon .	0	1	0
Wine containing less than 42 degrees of proof spirit, and less of such Wine, the gallon . .	0	2	6

And for every degree of strength beyond the highest above specified an additional Duty of 3*d.* the gallon.

(14.) *Resolved*, That it is expedient to amend the Law relating to the Inland Revenue and the Customs.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

FINANCIAL STATEMENT (1885-6).

Statement *ordered*, "of Income and Expenditure, as laid before the House by the Chancellor of the Exchequer when opening the Budget." — (*Mr. Hibbert.*)

Statement *presented* accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be *printed.* [No. 174.]

METROPOLITAN STREETS ACT (1867) EXTENSION BILL.—[Bill 137.]

(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Secretary Sir William Harcourt.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that the Metropolitan Streets Act of 1867 defined the limits in which the police should have certain powers to regulate the traffic of the Metropolis—the radius was four miles from Charing Cross. The population had largely increased since then, and six miles to-day was equivalent to four miles in 1867. The object of this Bill was contained in the last clause—it was that six miles should be substituted for four miles. It was necessary for the safety of the public that the jurisdiction of the police should extend to the proposed increased radius.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. H. H. Fowler.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

MEDICAL ACT (1858) AMENDMENT BILL.—[Bill 130.]

(*Dr. Lyons.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Dr. LYONS, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, its object was to provide increased facilities for the registration of membership of the College of Surgeons in Ireland. The Bill was approved by the Royal University of Ireland, and by the University of Dublin, and the Members for the latter University had put their names to the Bill. It had also been examined by the Department of the Privy Council, and to meet their views he had undertaken to introduce a few verbal Amendments.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Dr. Lyons.*)

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR confessed that the Bill had come upon him by surprise. It was now 20 minutes to 2 o'clock in the morning; and in his opinion the hon. Gentleman (Dr. Lyons) would best consult the interests of the Bill and the interests of the House by postponing the second reading till another day. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had not had time to master the details of the measure; and certainly the remarks of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Dublin were pitched in so low a key that they did not reach the part of the House in which he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) sat. He could say with perfect confidence that, with the exception of the hon. Gentleman himself, no one in the House at the present moment had the least idea of what the Bill

proposed. It was too much to ask them at 20 minutes to 2 o'clock in the morning to pass the second reading of a Bill of the meaning and purpose of which they had no idea; and in order to give the House an opportunity of considering the Bill more carefully, and, at the same time, to give the hon. Gentleman an opportunity of making some of them a little better acquainted with his proposals, he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) begged to move that the debate be now adjourned.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor.*)

MR. MUNDELLA said, he hoped no objection would be raised to reading the Bill a second time on that occasion. It had been very carefully considered at the Privy Council Office and at the National University. [*Cries of* "What is that?" *and* "There is no such University!"] It was a Bill in a very small compass, and with the Amendments the hon. Gentleman (Dr. Lyons) agreed to insert it would be a very valuable measure.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: What does it propose?

MR. SEXTON said, he thought the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella) had not given them any reason which would induce the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) to withdraw his Motion for the adjournment of the debate. He (Mr. Sexton) had looked into the Bill, and, so far as he had discovered, it was drawn with a view of shrouding its meaning from the minds of ordinary persons. It might be that by the Bill it was desired to give to the physicians in the Queen's College increased powers. He and his hon. Friends, however, were not disposed to grant the increased powers desired without scrutinizing them very closely. He understood the hon. Member for Dublin (Dr. Lyons) to state as a recommendation of the Bill that the names of the two right hon. and learned Gentlemen the Members for the University of Dublin appeared upon the back of the Bill. Now, those Gentlemen, however gifted personally they might be, were not so highly regarded by public opinion in Ireland as to be entitled to have any claim they might make in the House of Commons pass without examination. The argument of the Vice President of the Council (Mr. Mundella) that the measure had been carefully considered by the Privy Council was one that had no great weight with the Irish Members. He hoped his hon. Friend (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) would persevere with his Motion.

MR. HEALY trusted that after what had been said the Government would not press the Bill now. All that hon. Members wanted was to understand the Bill. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Dublin (Dr. Lyons) had acquired the habit of speaking in the House as if he was addressing himself and not the Speaker, consequently it was impossible for hon. Members to understand a single word he said. If the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council (Mr. Mundella) would kindly say what the Bill was about they would give it their best consideration; but they certainly could not be asked to pass it without understanding it. He would undertake to say that, if Mr. Speaker himself were to take it and read it without explanation, he would be able to form no opinion as to what it meant.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *Monday* next.

INDUSTRIES (IRELAND).

NOMINATION OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [24th April], "That the Select Committee on Industries (Ireland) do consist of Twenty-four Members."

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

MR. SHEIL said, he had an Amendment on the Paper to move that the Select Committee do consist of 25 Members, and that Mr. Kenny be one other Member to serve on the Committee. He presumed, however, that he would be out of Order in moving that Amendment, as he had already spoken in the debate before it was adjourned.

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT: I move that the Committee do consist of 24 Members.

MR. SHEIL said, that the Amendment which stood in his name he had already spoken to, and his hon. Friend the Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell)

had addressed the House upon it at some considerable length. They had understood the other day from Her Majesty's Government that they were determined in no way to give to Irish Members the small concession they asked for—namely, to allow them an addition of one Member on the Committee; and, that being the case, it was the determination of the Irish Party to in no way agree to the appointment of the Committee. Considering the nature of the Committee, six Members to represent the Irish Party was an exceedingly small number. He begged leave to move his Amendment, upon which he should have to take the sense of the House.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "Twenty-four," in order to insert the words "Twenty-five,"—(*Mr. Sheil,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words 'Twenty-four' stand part of the Question."

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, he thought the hon. Gentleman who had moved the Amendment was under a misapprehension when he attributed to the Government resistance to the desire expressed by the Irish Members. On the contrary, they had felt that the matter was one for fair discussion. It appeared to them that the representation already offered to the Irish Members was, on the whole, a sufficient representation; but, inasmuch as there was a feeling among hon. Gentlemen opposite that their number of Representatives should be increased, the Government would offer no further objection to their wishes.

MR. HEALY said, that, in thanking the right hon. Gentleman for this announcement, he could not help making a contrast between the way in which he had met them and the way in which they were met the other night by the Home Secretary.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That the words 'Twenty-five' be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question, as amended, put.

Ordered, That the Select Committee do consist of Twenty-five Members:—Committee *nominated* of,—Mr. TREVELYAN, Mr. WILLIAM HENRY SMITH, Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Mr. CORRY, Mr. WOODALL, Colonel KING-HARMAN, Dr. LYONS, Sir HERVEY BRUCE, Mr. WHITWORTH, Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY, Mr. THOMAS DICKSON, Colonel NOLAN, Mr. CROPPER, Mr. PARNELL, Mr. SAMPSON LLOYD, Mr. ARMITSTEAD, Mr. SEXTON, Mr. EWART, Mr. LEAKE, Mr. JACKSON, Captain AYLMER, Mr. RATHBONE, Mr. MOLLOY, Sir EARDLEY WILMOT, and Mr. KENNY:—Power to send for persons, papers and records; Five to be the quorum.

MOTIONS.

POST OFFICE MAIL CONTRACT (ROYAL MAIL STEAM PACKET COMPANY).

RESOLUTION.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Contract with the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company, for the conveyance of the Mails to and from the West Indies, be approved."—(*Mr. Hibbert.*)

MR. STEWART MACLIVER said, he did not object to the Contract, but he wished to correct a statement in the Treasury Minute which accompanied it. There it was said that if Plymouth were the port of departure for the Mails, it would be necessary to post letters from the North "several hours earlier" than if they were despatched from Southampton. That was a mistake, as anyone would see who looked at the facts of the case and understood them. If the packets continued to sail from Southampton and called at Plymouth for the Mails, they would occupy from 12 to 14 hours on the voyage; and that time would be available to the merchants of the North to post their letters later, not earlier, than under the present system. There would be no sense in the application for Plymouth, if it were to be a disadvantage, as the Treasury Minute stated; and the various Chambers of Commerce which had applied for it would never have done so if they had not been convinced of the benefit which must follow the change which he recommended. He was glad the Treasury had taken power, in this new Contract, to adopt Plymouth for embarking the Mails; and he desired that the Postmaster General should avail himself, as soon as possible, of an opportunity to carry out the views which had been repeatedly pressed upon his Predecessor by the commercial classes in the Northern and Midland counties, and would be found equally advantageous to the Colonists, who were interested in a closer union with England

as their great centre of trade and authority.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH said, that, from the remarks which has just fallen from the hon. Gentleman, he supposed on the part of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, he trusted that they would insist on carrying out the Plymouth Clause.

MR. KENNY said, that this Mail Contract represented a positive loss to the Post Office. He wished to know whether it was a fact that the amount derived by the Government from the conveyance of those Mails did not cover the amount they paid for the Contract?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: That is undoubtedly the fact. The Contract is not favourable, the amount received for the postage of letters falling far short of the amount paid for the Contract; but, of course, we have to consider the convenience of the public.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: What is the amount?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I think it is about £49,000 a-year.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: What is the loss?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I say about £49,000 a-year, the amount of the total Contract is £90,000 a-year. My hon. Friend behind me (Mr. Stewart Macliver) appears to have quoted from the Minute of the Treasury and not from the Contract. The Contract simply states that the Government shall have the power of calling at Plymouth at a cost of £1,250 a-year; but in the Treasury Minute the Treasury points out that letters coming from the North of England to these packets will have to be posted somewhat earlier if the steamers start from Plymouth than if they start from Southampton. My hon. Friend challenged that statement; but that challenge does not affect the Contract. He does not object to the Contract, but to the statement in the Treasury Minute. The subject will be examined, and I will take care to enter fully into the matter, and to see whether that statement of the Treasury can be relied upon or not. I must say that my belief is that it can. That is an issue that I have no doubt my hon. Friend will allow to be raised at some future time.

MR. EDWARD CLARKE said, he was glad to gather from the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General that if the Lords of the Treasury could be shown to be mistaken in the Minute, hon. Members might have what they asked for—namely, have the clause as to Plymouth put into effect. He (Mr. E. Clarke) had only risen to express his belief that they would be able to show that by whomsoever those persons were informed as to delay they were mistaken. Taking into consideration the important reason that time would be saved by this plan, he thought the Government should have no difficulty in adopting it.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I did not say that I would make any alteration if the statement turns out to be incorrect. It will, no doubt, form an element of consideration; but there may be other matters to consider in deciding the question as to the earlier or later posting of letters.

MR. WHITLEY said, that Liverpool and Manchester considered that by the plan proposed they would have eight hours longer to post their letters. He must say that there was a strong feeling in Lancashire in favour of Plymouth.

MR. SEXTON protested against the manner in which Post Office business was transacted in that House. Here they had a Motion on the Paper for the first time——

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: No; it was on the Paper on Saturday.

MR. SEXTON said, that the explanation given, or rather extracted, from the Postmaster General only increased the evil of which he complained. An hon. Friend (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had elicited the extraordinary fact from the right hon. Gentleman that the enormous amount of £90,000 was paid for this Contract, of which £49,000, or nearly half, was a dead loss to the public Exchequer. He would submit to the House that a Contract of that kind involving such a heavy loss to the Treasury was not a thing which should be sprung upon the House. At any rate, the House should not be asked to form an opinion upon it at 2 o'clock in the morning. They had that night heard of a Treasury Minute of which they had never heard before; but the tone of the hon. Member (Mr. Stewart Macliver) in his speech was so low, and his words were so inaudible, that when he had finished the House was no wiser as to

whom it came from, or to whom it was addressed, nor as to what it contained; so that the information which had been gathered from the hon. Member was not very important. He (Mr. Sexton) maintained that at the time when the Postmaster General gave his annual negative to the appeal made to him by Irish Members for a mere bagatelle of £3,000 a-year to facilitate the conveyance of Mails over to Ireland to suit the convenience of 1,250,000 people, they should not be asked to submit to this annual loss of £40,000 on a West Indian Mail Service without a word. From an Irish point of view, that was a very questionable proceeding. Believing that the House should have time to consider the matter, he begged to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Sexton.*)

MR. HIBBERT said, he must protest against the statement that this Contract was sprung against the House, because the Treasury Minute had been before hon. Members for 12 days, and everyone had had an opportunity of considering it. The present Motion had been upon the Paper for three days, and he was therefore fully justified in saying it had not been sprung upon the House. If it had not been so late he should have felt bound to make an explanation in moving the Resolution. He might add now, however, that the whole of this Contract had been most carefully considered by the Treasury. It had been before them for some considerable time, and it was only after very close consideration that they had decided upon this Contract. He should like to draw attention to this fact that, for this Contract—that was to say, No. 2 in the Treasury Minute — the Colonies contributed £23,000; and though, no doubt, there was a considerable loss in carrying the Mails, it must be remembered that those Mails went to all their West Indian Colonies, which Colonies contributed a very considerable proportion towards the expense. Taking that into consideration, the Treasury themselves felt justified in contributing something. The service, as proposed in the new Contract, would be an improvement upon the old service. The effect of the change would be to make 12 knots between this country and Barbadoes and the West Indies, the cost being £9,000 a-year more than the old Contract. They would thus get a good service; and a large number of people connected with the Colonies, in these countries and the Colonies themselves, were in favour of the proposal. Those were the grounds upon which the proposal was made. So far as Plymouth and Southampton were concerned, if wrong information had been given, he was sure the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General and the Post Office Authorities would be glad to make inquiries into the subject, and to make the fullest investigation as to what would really be the best service.

MR. GRAY said, he was sure his hon. Friend (Mr. Sexton) had no desire to prejudice the inhabitants of the West Indian Islands by refusing to them Mail facilities; but the finances of the Post Office were in such an impoverished condition that it was impossible, according to the suggestion of the Postmaster General, to provide proper postal facilities for people at home, and that was the point to which his hon. Friend wished more particularly to draw attention. The people of Ireland were deprived of the Mail facilities they required on account of the financial condition of the Department, which rendered it impossible to spend £3,000 or £4,000 a-year in accelerating a Mail Service which would serve for 1,000,000 persons in that country. Irish Members were driven into the unhappy position of being compelled to consider whether it would be not advisable to leave the people of the West Indies in the position in which they had been before with regard to the Mail Service, if by so doing they could get a part of this increase which it had been proposed to pay on behalf of the West Indies devoted to the acceleration of the Irish Mail Service. The Irish Members were of opinion that, whether the West Indies got an addition or had a knot taken away from them, a part of this increase should be given to Ireland. He would rather give this money to the people of Ireland than to the people of Barbadoes, much as he respected them. If there was only one knot to give he would support the adjournment of the

debate, in order that, if possible, Ireland might obtain a little of it. He would indulge in the hope that the Treasury, with their increased Death Duties, their increased Beer and Spirit Duties, and their other financial arrangements for increasing income, would be able to find the small sum of £3,000 to facilitate the Irish Mail Service. At any rate, in order to give the Government an opportunity, a few days to consider the matter, it would be as well to adjourn the debate.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he hoped the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Gray) would not insist on mixing up the question of the Irish Mail Service with this matter of the acceleration of the Mails to the West Indies. He thought that whenever the Irish question came up for consideration it would be found that, so far as the acceleration of Mails was concerned, Ireland had not been treated illiberally. No doubt, as the Secretary to the Treasury had pointed out, the new Contract would cost £9,000 a-year more than the old one; but the convenience to the Colonists and the people of this country would be greatly increased.

MR. ONSLOW said, the question before the House was the adjournment of the debate, and the right hon. Gentleman seemed to be going into some old arguments with regard to another matter altogether.

MR. SPEAKER: The Question before the House is the adjournment of the debate, and not the original Motion.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he was only answering arguments which had been used on the Question of the adjournment of the debate. He would, however, confine himself to only urging the House not to agree to the Motion for the adjournment. There was no real opposition to the Motion.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he had listened attentively to the discussion which had taken place on the Motion of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury with regard to the Contract for the conveyance of Mails to and from the West Indies; and he desired to say a very few words on the Motion of his hon. Friend for the adjournment of the debate. They had to consider whether it was right or not to decide on the question of this Contract at that hour (2.15), or whether the discussion should be put off to another day. That was the Question really before the House, and to that Question he asked the Members of the Government then on the Treasury Bench to apply their minds. He would ask if the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister knew of this Contract! [MR. HIBBERT: Yes; he approves of it.] Did the right hon. Gentleman, however, know that it was to come on that night; and did he know that the question was to be discussed and decided at half-past 2 o'clock in the morning? Of course, anything which the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury said was entitled from his own high character to immediate credence; but had it not been for the authority of the hon. Gentleman he should certainly have been bewildered to think that the Prime Minister was a party to the settlement of a Contract involving no less than £45,000 at that hour of the morning. It was a most audacious proposition to say that a Contract of that kind was to be swallowed under such circumstances. He did not think that the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Broadhurst) would approve of the course the Government were taking in this matter; and he would appeal to those hon. Gentlemen who were constantly in attendance in the House, and who watched zealously to see that the various Services of the country were conducted upon an economical scale, as to whether that was a proper time at which to rush through the House a measure dealing with no less a sum than £45,000 of the public money? For his own part, had he not taken advantage of the Order Paper of an hon. Friend beside him he would not have known at all what was going on at the moment in the House; and, with the exception of the hon. Member for Plymouth and the two Members for Liverpool, he ventured to say that the whole House would be perfectly ignorant of the character of the proposal under discussion. That proposal which was being put to the House in funereal silence would have the result of placing an annual charge of £45,000 on the finances of the country. He said it was trifling with the finances of the country, and with the House of Commons, to endeavour to force this measure

upon them under such circumstances. He again appealed to hon. Members below the Gangway opposite, in the hope that it would not be left to Irish Members alone to defend the finances of the country from this inroad. It was impossible that the discussion at that time should be as complete and satisfactory as the importance of the subject demanded; and he, therefore, added his appeal to that of his hon. Friend for the adjournment of the debate.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, he would appeal to hon. Gentlemen that, having made their protest, they should consider whether it was desirable to persist in their opposition to the Motion of his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury any longer. His right hon. Friend the Postmaster General had arrived at a decision in this matter; and as no serious objection to the Contract had been put forward he trusted the Motion would be agreed to.

MR. HEALY reminded the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade that when he sat below the Gangway he was not—on that memorable morning in July—satisfied with making academic protests. He remembered that it was 5 o'clock in the morning on that day when the right hon. Gentleman was moving adjournments of the debate and adjournments of the House. It was not by academic protests that the right hon. Gentleman had obtained his present seat on the Treasury Bench; but he must of course leave it to the right hon. Gentleman to say whether the course he was now suggesting to hon. Members on those Benches was consistent with his former mode of procedure.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolved, That the Contract with the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company, for the conveyance of the Mails to and from the West Indies, be approved.

TRAMWAYS PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 1) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. HOLMS, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade, under "The Tramways Act, 1870," relating to Bradford and Shelf Tramways, Cardiff District and Penarth Harbour Tramways (Extensions), Cardiff Tramways (Extensions), Shipley Tramways, Tynemouth and District Tramways, and Worcester Tramways, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. HOLMS and Mr. CHAMBERLAIN.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 143.]

LEASEHOLD BUILDING LAND ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. DANIEL GRANT, Bill for the Enfranchisement of Leasehold Building Land, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. DANIEL GRANT, Mr. INDERWICK, Mr. SPENCER BALFOUR, Sir THOMAS CHAMBERS, and Mr. FIRTH.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 145.]

TURBARY (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. LEA, Bill to amend and define the Law relating to Turbary in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. LEA, Mr. THOMAS DICKSON, and Mr. FINDLATER.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 146.]

LAND TENURE (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. BARCLAY, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Tenure and Occupancy of Land in Scotland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. BARCLAY, Sir GEORGE BALFOUR, Dr. FARQUHARSON, and Mr. JAMES HOWARD.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 147.]

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (CORRUPT PRACTICES) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. RICHARD PAGET, Bill to amend the Law with respect to corrupt Practices at Parliamentary Elections, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. RICHARD PAGET, Sir JOSEPH PEASE, and Mr. BULWER.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 148.]

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ARMY AND NAVY).

Address for "Returns showing the number of Soldiers serving at Home admitted to hospital for, and remaining in hospital on account of, Venereal Diseases in each week from the 11th day of May to the 31st day of December 1884, showing separately the numbers at the fourteen Stations formerly protected under the Acts, at the fourteen Stations not formerly so protected, which were used for comparison, at other non-protected Stations, and at all non-protected Stations, together in each case with the weekly ratio per thousand of strength, and the total ratio per thousand for the period shown:"

"For the Royal Navy, showing for the first and second half-years respectively of the year 1884, the force of Sailors on the Home Station, with the number of admissions for Venereal Diseases to the Hospitals at Haslar and Plymouth, and the number of cases on board ship, together in each case with a ratio per thousand of strength:"

"For the same periods, of the number of Women received into certified hospitals (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 82, of Session 1884):"

"And, showing for each of the years from 1860 to 1884 the admissions of Soldiers to hospital on account of Primary Syphilis, Secondary Syphilis, and Gonorrhœa respectively at the Stations

formerly protected under the Contagious Diseases Act, and at the fourteen Stations not so protected, and used for comparison in the Army Medical Reports."—(*Mr. Bulwer.*)

House adjourned at half after Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 1*st May*, 1885.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Industrial Schools (Ireland) * (95); Oyster and Mussel Fisheries Provisional Order * (96).

Select Committee — Burgh Police and Health (Scotland) * (57), *nominated.*

Committee—Water Companies (Regulation of Powers) * (87).

Committee—Report—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Public Health Act) (No. 1) * (63).

Third Reading — Federal Council of Australasia * (69); Criminal Law Amendment (92), and *passed.*

NORTHFLEET DOCKS BILL,

PETITIONS PRESENTED. RESOLUTION.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY presented Petitions with respect to this Bill, and moved—

"That the Examiners' Certificate of non-compliance with the Standing Orders be referred back to the Standing Orders Committee."

The noble Marquess said that the Bill was in this position—that it had not been before the House upon its merits, as it had been rejected by the Standing Orders Committee. These Petitions asked for leave to re-introduce the Bill. They were from Gravesend, Northfleet, and from workmen who were members of Associations in the Metropolis. There was a Rule of the House that by a certain day in January a sum of money should be deposited by the promoters of a Private Bill. The money was usually borrowed from some Insurance Company or stockbroker, and repaid the next day. In this case it was alleged that the person whose business it was to negotiate for the deposit being made was so seriously ill in January that the deposit was not paid until the middle of March. There was nothing more than that to justify the rejection of the Bill. The promoters complained that their opponents did not give them any notice of their opposition, but reserved their fire until they got before the Committee, and then the Bill was rejected upon a technicality. It was a Bill in which the inhabitants of the locality took a great interest, inasmuch as in the event of its being allowed to go forward employment would be found for a large number of workmen now out of work at the East End of London, for it was a matter of notoriety that thousands of people in that district, although willing to work, had no work to do, and were prolonging their existence in a state of semi-starvation. It would be extremely advantageous to them if work could be found, and if capital were allowed to be expended upon this work; and it was the wish of the Petitioners that all the obstacles raised against the expenditure of this capital should be removed. There were capitalists who were willing to expend the money. No objection was raised to the Bill by landowners or other persons in the neighbourhood, and the only objection came from the East and West India Docks, which might be called, without any disrespect, the rival shop over the way. The people who were suffering were not so much the contractors, but the thousands of workmen to whom employment would be given. It was by a technicality of the very slightest character that this Bill was not allowed to go forward. He did not wish to cast the slightest censure or blame upon his noble Friend at the Table (the Earl of Redesdale), or upon the Members of the Committee themselves; but it had been well said that all self-imposed rules should be sufficiently elastic to avoid inflicting injury out of all proportion to the irregularity they sought to arrest. Punishment was, no doubt, a very good thing; but it should be inflicted with some reference to the magnitude of the offence, and on the right person. But in this case the punishment of stopping these great works was inflicted for a very trivial breach of a technicality, and really fell not on the capitalist, but on the unfortunate men who would be employed. That was the case he had to lay before his noble Friend, and he asked him in this case to temper justice with mercy. It had happened two or three times that these Standing Orders had prevented the investment of private capital, and that at a very critical period. He did

not in the least appear in the position of a rebel against the despotism of his noble Friend, but he appeared rather as a suppliant to his mercy; and he exhorted him not to press the technicality in this case, when there were hundreds and thousands of starving men looking with anxiety for the decision of the House.

Moved, "That the Examiners' Certificate of non-compliance with the Standing Orders be referred back to the Standing Orders Committee."—(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES) said, he was sure their Lordships would feel that it was with great regret that he rose to oppose the Motion of his noble Friend. He thought the Rules of the House ought to be supported; and if they could be got rid of simply because they happened to be an inconvenience to one party to a Bill or the other, they would practically be of no use. There was one matter with regard to this Bill which he felt he must bring before their Lordships, and that was that a Bill with this very object was brought in last Session, and was dropped. The same Bill was brought in this Session, and the promoters failed to perform the duty of paying up the deposit money on the day fixed by the Rules of the House, and did not do so until two months after that day. The important question in this case was, Why was not the deposit paid? It was said someone was too ill; but it was clear that those parties who were acting as promoters of the Bill were not themselves actively concerned in providing the means of carrying it on. The Standing Orders Committee before which this Bill came was a strong one, and came to a unanimous conclusion against the Bill; and he believed there was, practically speaking, no instance in which the House had set aside a Standing Order in the way proposed. He thought the decision of the Committee was right; and those who were opposed to the Bill would be put to great inconvenience and expense if they were not supported, as they believed the matter had come to an end.

LORD BALFOUR wished to point out that the Standing Orders Committee came to the decision at the end of March; and if there had been a desire to appeal against it, it should have been brought on before the 1st of May. It would be a great injustice to the other side to reverse the decision after such a long period had elapsed.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN agreed that it was unfortunate that at a time when a great deal of distress prevailed an Order of that House should have, even indirectly, the effect of diminishing the amount of money that might be thrown into the labour market. There was, however, no guarantee that if the Order were reversed the Bill would pass and be carried into execution. The breach of the Standing Order that was committed was a very distinct breach. A deposit which ought to have been made in January was not made until March. Two months, therefore, elapsed, during which the opponents of the Bill naturally believed that it had been dropped. It would be a considerable hardship to the opponents of the Bill if they were now to be suddenly called upon to renew their opposition.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON said, he hoped the House would not feel itself obliged to act in strict accordance with the technicalities of the question. The Committee were, of course, compelled to adjudicate according to the strict letter of the law; but the House might take a broader view, and consider the merits of the case as well as the technicalities, particularly when a considerable amount of work could be found for those who were in want of it.

EARL GRANVILLE observed that six of the Peers who had formed the Committee were present, and that not one of them had shown any intention of receding from the judicial decision to which the Committee came. It was necessary that Committees of that character should, in justice to both parties, act according to the Rules laid down; but they did not consider themselves rigidly bound by technicalities, and considered judicially whether sufficient reason existed for suspending the Standing Orders or not. The noble Marquess asked the House to reverse the decision of the Standing Committee, on the ground that the scheme advocated by the promoters of the Bill would provide employment for certain persons who were now suffering from distress. He would remind the noble Marquess that if money was prevented from going in a certain direction for the employment of labour, it was almost always

certain of so going in some other direction, and thus the same result was reached in the end. He hoped that the House would support the Standing Orders Committee in their action in this case.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, the noble Earl seemed to treat with great contempt the fact that he had appealed to their Lordships on the ground that if this Bill were proceeded with work would be supplied for those who were starving. He would leave the noble Earl in full possession of that opinion. He was aware of the necessity of supporting technicalities; but, after all, they were not the Alpha and Omega of the matter. In regard to the present case, he would say that the distress which prevailed should make the House pause before determining to adhere rigidly to technicalities. It was said that the course which he advocated would be unfair to the opponents of the scheme; but it should be remembered that its opponents were, after all, only a rival Dock Company. He feared that by a rigid adherence to their rules in this case, and by stifling an enterprize which was said by the inhabitants of the locality interested to be of great importance, they would not increase the people's estimate of the action of Parliament.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY refused to be guided in his conduct in this matter by the *ex parte* statements of the noble Marquess to the effect that the merits of this scheme were so very remarkable. Anything said on the merits must be an *ex parte* statement. If he were instructed by the opponents to say that the scheme was a very bad one, and if, therefore, he strongly urged the House to maintain its Rules, he thought that was an argument which would not be listened to by their Lordships. The fact was that the Rules had been laid down for the protection of the public; and if they were good rules, as they were ably and fairly administered by the noble Earl the Chairman of Committees (the Earl of Redesdale), they ought to be complied with.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN observed that his noble Friend (the Marquess of Salisbury) never asked their Lordships to suspend the Standing Orders on the ground of the merits of the scheme; but simply told them that the scheme, if carried out, would give a vast amount of employment, and on that account alone he asked to have the certificate of non-compliance referred back to the Standing Orders Committee. He (the Earl of Milltown) trusted, under the circumstances, that the House would assent to the proposal.

On Question? *resolved* in the *negative*.

SOUTH AFRICA—METHUEN'S IRREGULAR HORSE—MILITIA LIEUTENANTS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD HARRIS asked the Under Secretary of State for War, Whether he will take into consideration the advisability of distributing a few commissions amongst Militia lieutenants now serving with Methuen's Horse in South Africa? The noble Lord said, many of those officers volunteered under the idea that their absence in South Africa would not spoil their chance of getting commissions; and he hoped that the noble Earl would be able to return a satisfactory answer to the Question, and that those who were unable to pass the requisite standard equally with those who were would share in those commissions.

THE EARL OF MORLEY: In addition to the 75 commissions granted half-yearly to Militia candidates, Line commissions have been offered to all Militia candidates who have not been successful in the last and in previous competitive examinations in military subjects, but who have obtained at these examinations the number of marks required to qualify them for commissions, provided that they were under 22 years of age on January 1, 1884. These offers have, of course, been made to any qualified Militia officers who may be serving under Sir Charles Warren in South Africa. Six Militia officers serving with Sir Charles Warren are so qualified. Three of them have already received commissions in Line battalions at the Cape, and three more will shortly be gazetted.

LORD INCHIQUIN urged that the War Office would do well to stretch the limit of age a little further.

THE EARL OF MORLEY said, he was afraid he could hold out no hope that that would be done.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH said, that it had always been held by medical men

that 23 was the age at which they would be most fit.

EGYPT — THE SOUDAN — THE FRIENDLY TRIBES.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

VISCOUNT BURY, in rising to ask Her Majesty's Government, Whether, having regard to the announcement made in both Houses of Parliament on 21st April, to the effect that the Forces in the Soudan are to be henceforth considered available for service wherever they may be required, and that the Vote of Credit of £11,000,000 "does not include any provision for further offensive operations in the Soudan," they will give a distinct assurance that ample provision will be made for insuring the safety and rewarding the services of the Mudir of Dongola, and of others who have been in active alliance and armed co-operation with the British Forces in the Nile Valley, as well as of the friendly tribes who have joined the British standard at Suakin? said, that there had been a great many massacres in the Soudan, and a large number of people had perished uselessly there. Inquiries had often been made why they were there, and what they were going to do; and now, when the Nile Expedition was pronounced to be a useless failure and their troops were to be retired, when their Forces on the Red Sea were to be held disposable for future events and to go they knew not whither, the whole subject of this Soudan Expedition, in which they had been engaged so long, seemed likely to remain a matter of hopeless mystery, and he supposed they would never know either why they went there, or what object, if any, they had attained. On the 26th of February the noble Marquess behind him (the Marquess of Salisbury) moved a Resolution, one part of which was—

"That the policy of abandoning the whole of the Soudan after the conclusion of military operations will be dangerous to Egypt and inconsistent with the interests of the Empire."

That question was debated, and a statement was made in both Houses of Parliament which most distinctly declared that the policy of the Government was not to abandon the Soudan, but their object was to overthrow the Mahdi at Khartoum. In reply to a Question put in the other House by an independent Member, the Prime Minister very warmly disavowed the construction put upon his words, that he contemplated abandoning the Soudan as soon as the Mahdi was overthrown. Nothing had changed in the Soudan. They were still confronted by the power, be it more or less, of the Mahdi; they did not know what were his objects or what his resources; and if they were bound to attack him then in Khartoum, they were equally bound to attack him now. If they did not, it was simply because the hot fit had been succeeded by a cold fit, as it had so often been before in the policy of Her Majesty's Government, and that they had, in fact, got tired of their objectless slaughter of those brave men who had been pronounced on the highest authority to be persons "rightly struggling to be free." The strange point was that throughout the whole transaction they were told that they were not at war. They had been engaged since 1880 in military operations; but they never amounted to war. Mark Twain, in one of his books, described an interview he had with a French gentleman who was about to engage in a duel, and whom he said he found immersed in a profound French calm. But he added that a French calm differed in some material particulars from an English calm, and that it induced the French gentleman to tear his hair, to foam at the mouth, and to break up the furniture. At the time of the interview he was engaged in smashing his last chair. He could not help thinking that the phase in which they had been so long involved resembled the calm in which that French gentleman indulged. The whole policy of Her Majesty's Government in the Soudan and in Egypt seemed to have been simply to take the minimum of responsibility with regard to their dealings in that country. No doubt there was a time, after the bombardment of Alexandria, when the fortunes of Egypt remained absolutely at the disposal of England. Three courses might have been pursued. They might have allowed the Egyptian Government to make itself feared, to hang Arabi, and to establish the old form of Government. He did not say that that would have been a right course to pursue. Then they might have assumed the government of Egypt themselves, and established a strong Government on

eloquence of the speech we have heard from the noble Viscount near me. I shall not attempt to go into the lamentable history which he has so well sketched. I fully acknowledge that the noble Earl opposite is the master of the time when he will think it right, having regard to the state of public affairs, to explain the policy of the Government. I regret that there should be so much delay in the performance of that task; and I do not believe that the task will be less easy, or the result more acceptable to the people of this country, by reason of delay. The time for balancing the books must come. We must ask ourselves how much blood has been shed; how much money we have poured out on the deserts of Africa; what we have got to show for the blood of our countrymen and others that has been shed, and the money that has been thrown away; and what we have done for the reputation of England? How can we defend ourselves for the treatment of many whom we have induced to risk everything on our behalf, and whom, when the danger came, we left in the lurch? How can we defend ourselves before our countrymen for having repeated the sad story of Candahar and the Transvaal, and allowing garrison after garrison, tribe after tribe, to be defeated? My Lords, this is a terrible account which must be rendered, and the sooner it is rendered the better. At present, if the policy of the Government in Egypt is to be what it seems to be, I am afraid the opinion passed upon it will be that our friendship has been a curse to every tribe and nation to whom it has been offered, because it has always been followed by desertion.

SOUTH AFRICA—STELLALAND.

ADDRESS FOR PAPERS.

LORD HARRIS, in asking Her Majesty's Government, Whether they are in a position to give the House any information as to the course affairs are taking with regard to the settlement of difficulties in Stellaland? said, that he had no idea of raising a debate, as there was not sufficient information to enable him to do so; but he thought it right to move for Papers. He wished to know what progress had been made in discovering the murderers of Mr. Bethell and Mr. Walker; secondly, whether Montsioa's location had been secured to him; and, thirdly, whether Sir Charles Warren's action was tending to secure the trade route in Central Africa; and, if it was, whether that course was to be considered as tending to any scheme of annexation? Gratitude was owing to Mr. Rhodes for the arrangements he had been able to effect, especially after the somewhat precipitous course of Mr. Mackenzie. He believed Mr. Rhodes had brought about a better feeling throughout Stellaland. A few weeks ago it was stated that Mr. Rhodes had suddenly left Stellaland shortly after the arrival of Sir Charles Warren. He hoped that did not indicate any divergence of opinion between Mr. Rhodes and Sir Charles Warren. He desired, lastly, to know whether the Imperial Exchequer was responsible for the sums advanced by Mr. Rhodes for the Government of Stellaland; and, if that were so, whether the Home Government would also be responsible for the debt incurred in Stellaland? He would conclude by moving for Papers.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Papers respecting the settlement of difficulties in Stellaland."—(*The Lord Harris.*)

THE EARL OF DERBY quite agreed with the noble Lord that the information was not sufficient to justify him in raising a debate, and, indeed, even that in his own possession was not sufficient for that purpose. The unfortunate deficiency of Papers arose from causes over which he had no control. The cable had been broken, and no telegram had reached the Colonial Office of a later date than the 21st of March. The interruption still continued as regarded telegraphic communication; but a series of despatches up to the date of April 8 had reached him within the last two hours. They were very voluminous, and he had not had time to look into them. The noble Lord's inquiry for Papers was perfectly justifiable; but it would be more convenient if the noble Lord would withdraw his Motion. He should be ready to present the Papers before Whitsuntide, so that there would be ample time for a discussion upon them. With regard to what had passed, he could answer some of the noble Lord's Questions. He could, however, give no answer regarding the arrest and punishment of the men against whom

charges of murder had been brought; but with respect to the securing of Montsioa's rights, he knew that was a primary object with Sir Hercules Robinson and Sir Charles Warren, and he had no doubt that whatever Montsioa could fairly claim he would obtain with their assistance. As to the trade route and the security of the line of communication, those were points of which the Government had never lost sight; and, in the new Convention with the Transvaal Government which was come to about 15 months ago, special care was taken to carry the boundary so as not to intercept the line of communication between the Cape and the independent districts North of the Cape. Sir Charles Warren had occupied Bechuanaland with a military force, and had entirely restored order. A Protectorate had been declared, including a large extent of territory to the North, and no armed opposition had been met with; but the question of what was to be done in the future for the country had not yet come before him. It was, in his view, desirable that it should be ultimately absorbed in the Cape Colony, rather than that it should be permanently maintained as a separate State. At the same time, he was not in a position to announce that any immediate annexation would take place. There were various parties to consider, and the Imperial Government could not force territory on the Cape Colony against its will. He need not point out to their Lordships the great inconvenience which would arise if they were required to station a considerable military force in that country. He trusted that before long an organized police would be sufficient for the requirements of the case. He quite agreed with the noble Lord that the affairs of Bechuanaland were a very proper subject for discussion in that House; but it was impossible to discuss them without further information than they now possessed.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON trusted that the Papers which were promised would contain all that information which it was so desirable their Lordships should have upon the subject. It was a serious matter that the cable should be broken at this time; and he would be glad to know whether it would be repaired within a short period of time? His noble Friend (Lord Harris) had referred to another point which the noble Earl (the Earl of Derby) had not alluded to—the difference of opinion that unfortunately was stated to exist between Sir Charles Warren and the High Commissioner at the Cape. He regretted extremely that there should be any difficulty whatever between two high officers of such character and position, who were discharging functions of so delicate, not to say critical, a nature. He hoped that the Papers would show what the differences were, and how all matters stood.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

WATER COMPANIES (REGULATION OF POWERS) BILL.—(No. 21.)

(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee, read.

Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee on the said Bill."—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said, the Bill had been very fully considered by the Select Committee to which it had been referred, and he had to thank the noble and learned Lord (Lord Bramwell) and the other Members of the Committee for their assistance during the seven days that the Committee sat. He might shortly sketch the effect of the Bill. In future, every Water Company would be obliged to furnish to its consumers a claim or demand note, before the delivery of which it would not be able to enforce its demands. Within 21 days after this note had been delivered it would be in the power of every consumer to object to the whole or any part of the details, and he would be bound to specify what his objections were, and to state the sum he thought he ought to be charged. The amount admitted by the consumer was deemed to be the minimum, and this the consumer was liable to pay forthwith. If he failed, the Company would be entitled to serve a 14 days' notice, after which the supply might be stopped. In regard to the disputed portion of the claim the Company would have to take the case for decision by a Court of Summary Jurisdiction. These provisions would apply to the ordinary supply of water, and not to water supplied under some agreement.

A new clause had been placed in the Bill which was of great importance, and which provided that where the owner, and not the occupier, was liable by law or by agreement to the Water Company for the payment of the water rate, it should not be competent to the Company to cut off the supply on any ground whatever. On the other hand, the rate would be made a charge upon the premises, or, as an alternative, the Company might receive it from the occupier, who would be entitled to deduct it from his rent. This would provide against what was a very serious inconvenience now suffered by many poor tenants whose landlord undertook to pay the water rate, but who failed to do so. At present the unfortunate tenants suffered in such cases, and were deprived of the first necessary of life because their landlord and the Company fell out with one another. This would no longer be the case. He believed the views of the Water Companies with regard to the Bill had been very much modified during its passage through Committee, and that they were now convinced the measure was not so unjust or revolutionary as they had supposed.

Motion *agreed to:* House in Committee.

Amendments (proposed by the Select Committee) made: The Report thereof to be received on *Monday* next.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—RESOLUTION.

LORD DENMAN moved—

"That this House sits on Mondays at Five o'clock in lieu of a quarter past Four o'clock."

He had, he said, sat in the House for 27 years under the old system, and had a preference for the old arrangement under which the House never sat until 5 o'clock, rather than for the three years during which, besides, he had seen the present system tried. In the debate on the Motion of the noble Earl (the Earl of Camperdown) the Leader of the House had said that if the House rose before 5 o'clock, noble Lords would be able to go into the country by the train. He (Lord Denman), before the change, had heard the Motion for the adjournment of the House more often than any other Peer not a Minister, so did not wish the House to rise early. In regard to Mondays, in particular, there were objections to meeting before that hour; but the Law Lords, who on other week-days had, in consequence of the Motion of the noble Earl (the Earl of Camperdown), sat earlier in the morning, since the change had agreed not to sit till half-an-hour later on Mondays. His own position was this. He had two places in the Midlands, and, whichever of them he happened to be at, he had to sleep five miles from home overnight in order to get to town in time; and he did not like to arrive only to find that the House had adjourned, which often happened.

Moved, "That this House sits on Mondays at Five o'clock, in lieu of a quarter past Four o'clock."—(*The Lord Denman.*)

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said, he thought that before anything further was said they ought to have some further reasons laid before them for the change. He hoped there were not many of their Lordships in a similar predicament to that of the noble Lord.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: The reasons will be found in the Railway Time Tables.

On Question? *resolved* in the *negative.*

CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL.

(*The Earl of Dalhousie.*)

(NO. 92.) THIRD READING.

Order of the Day for the Third Reading read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3ª."—(*The Earl of Dalhousie.*)

LORD DENMAN, who had the following Notice upon the Paper:—After Clause 12, add:—

"No person convicted under this section shall be entitled to vote at any parliamentary or municipal election, and no lodger in his or her house shall qualify under a lodger franchise so long as he keeps the house; and this disqualification shall apply to every lodger therein,"

said, that he could hardly hope to introduce a disfranchisement clause in this Bill; but the Act of 1869 had not sufficiently guarded against the votes of such householders as were proved to exist on the inquest upon the Burton Crescent murder.

LORD BALFOUR said, he hoped the Government would take the opinion of the other House on this Bill, which had been passed by their Lordships on three separate occasions without being sub-

mitted to the judgment of the other House. When a Bill containing such clauses as this contained passed their Lordships' House, it would be at least respectful to their Lordships that the opinion of the other House should be taken upon it. Some of the clauses would never have passed their House except on the demand of the Government of the day. He held the opinion, which he thought was shared by many noble Lords, that to pass a Bill like this, year after year, and not take the opinion of the other House, was reducing their Lordships' House to the position of a mere debating society, and placing it altogether in a very ridiculous position. No doubt they would be told that this was on account of the press of Business in the other House; but when their Lordships had passed a Bill once or twice, he thought they should not be asked to do it again until at least the opinion of the other House had been taken upon it. He was strongly of opinion that if the earlier clauses of the Bill stood alone they would have passed without the slightest difference of opinion; and he protested against their being kept back from what he believed to be beneficent operation because of the other clauses which were totally foreign to them, and as to which there were great differences of opinion. For himself, he wished to say that if no decision of the other House of Parliament were challenged on this Bill, and if it was presented again to this House another year, he should do his best to prevent it passing until that was done, and he knew that other noble Lords shared that view with him.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill *passed*, and sent to the Commons.

BURGH POLICE AND HEALTH (SCOTLAND) BILL [H.L.]

Select Committee on: The Lords following were named of the Committee:

E. Mar and Kellie.	L. Ker.
E. Minto.	L. Ramsay.
L. Balfour of Burley.	L. Tweeddale.
L. Sundridge.	

The Committee to meet on *Tuesday* next at Three o'clock, and to appoint their own Chairman.

House adjourned at a quarter past Six o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 1st May, 1885.

MINUTES.]—WAYS AND MEANS—*Considered in Committee—Resolutions* [April 30] *reported.*

PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Regent's Canal, City, and Docks Railway.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Resolution in Committee*—East India (Unclaimed Stocks) [Expenses].

Ordered—Customs and Inland Revenue.

Ordered—First Reading—Gas and Water Provisional Orders (No. 2) * [149].

First Reading—Honorary Freedom of Boroughs * [153].

Second Reading—Metropolis Management Acts Amendment * [138]; Friendly Societies Act (1875) Amendment * [139].

Committee — Report — Registration of Voters (Ireland) [110-150]; Registration of Voters (Scotland) [132-151]; Metropolitan Streets Act (1867) Extension [137]; Waterworks Clauses Act (1847) Amendment [7-152].

Considered as amended—Third Reading—Highways * [89], and *passed.*

Withdrawn—Private Bill Legislation * [25].

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

REGENT'S CANAL, CITY, AND DOCKS RAILWAY BILL (*by Order.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Dodds.*)

SIR JOSEPH PEASE said, he had placed a Notice on the Paper, which had now been there for some time, of his intention to move—

"That it is not expedient to pass any Railway Bill which involves the payment of interest out of capital during the construction of works, pending the introduction of a public measure on this subject, as recommended by a Committee of this House in 1882, especially where such a Bill practically makes the alteration of the Standing Orders of this House retrospective in their action."

In moving that Resolution as an Amendment to the second reading of the Bill, it was scarcely necessary to explain that it was, of course, a direct attack upon the second reading. He would state to the House at once the position in which he stood in regard to this measure. He had taken up the question entirely as a matter of public duty. Whatever might be the opinion of the Railway Association, which he had sometimes represented in

that House, he did it without regard to any resolution which they might have come to upon this subject. He had nothing whatever to do with the Railway Shareholders' Association. He was not a member of that Association; but, on the contrary, he had declined to become a member of it, as he felt that his own work was more particularly connected with railway direction and management generally than it was with railway shareholders in particular. He had always maintained that it was the duty of a Railway Director to try and hold the balance as carefully as possible between the traffic senders and the shareholders. He had, therefore, declined to become a member of that Association, which, he believed, had sent out a Circular that afternoon, stating reasons why the House should support him in the Motion he had just made. He had been under the impression that the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for Cambridgeshire (Mr. Hicks) stood first on the list that afternoon, and the proposal of his hon. Friend was a direct negative to the second reading of the Bill. His (Sir Joseph Pease's) ground was a somewhat different one; and probably his hon. Friend would be able to explain the different reasons for opposing this Bill much better than he could. His hon. Friend the Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk) had in 1882 also opposed the Regent's Canal Bill upon the same ground as the hon. Member for Cambridgeshire (Mr. Hicks)—namely, that the operations of this Company would probably result in the closing of the old Regent's Canal, and if that were done that the practical effect would be to close some of the important branches of inland navigation, which his hon. Friends considered to be for the public interest to keep open with a view of benefiting the trade of the country generally. His (Sir Joseph Pease's) argument was altogether different. It was an argument entirely based upon principle, and it had nothing to do with the railway accommodation of the district traversed by the Canal Company. He opposed the Bill, because he considered it to be wrong financially to pay interest out of capital during the construction of works. He would now endeavour to explain the position in which the matter stood, and he hoped that he would be able to lay a clear statement before the House, so that the whole matter might be thoroughly appreciated. The line was about 18½ miles long, and it ran from Paddington along the old Regent's Canal bank—which would be familiar to many Members of the House—as far as Islington, reducing the width of the Canal navigation in certain portions. The Canal was protected, as far as he could see, by clauses in the Company's Act of Parliament. Those clauses were undoubtedly inserted in the first instance, whatever might ultimately become of them, for the purpose of protecting the traffic upon the Canal. At Islington, the Railway divided itself into three distinct lines. No. 1 branched off south to the Barbican; No. 2 branched off north to the Midland and Great Northern Goods Yards; and No. 3, which was the main line, ran eastward from Islington, over Plaistow Marshes, to the Albert Docks. The Act authorizing those lines was passed in 1882, and the ordinary shares authorized by that Act were set down at £8,100,000, and the borrowing powers at £2,390,000; making a total of £10,490,000. Of this sum, £1,500,000 had been relegated to the Regent's Canal purchase, and of that £1,275,000 had already been applied to the purposes laid down in the Act of Parliament. As he understood the present Bill, it authorized the raising of an additional share capital, with the consent of Parliament, to the extent of £660,000, which was to pay interest out of capital during the construction of the works. The total amount of capital involved, which would be handed over to the care of the Directors of the Regent's Canal Company, would thus be about £11,150,000. Now, immediately to the north of this line was the North London Railway, which had cost £3,900,000, and towards which the North-Western Railway Company was a contributor to the extent of £168,000. Over the line of the North London Railway the North-Western Company had power to run, and there were junctions with the Midland, the Great Northern, the Great Eastern, and the London, Tilbury, and Southend Railways, which, together with the North London Railway, all had thus access to the Albert Docks. Immediately to the south of the western end of this line, from the Harrow Road, at Paddington, to Aldersgate Street, close to its termination at the Barbican, was

the Metropolitan main line, over which ran the Great Western Company. This railway had four lines of rails all the way from St. Pancras to Moorgate Street Station. The Midland and Great Northern Companies ran over two of these four lines of rails, the Metropolitan having constructed them for their special traffic. That line ran parallel with the Regent's Canal line, and had been made at a considerably less cost than the estimate for the corresponding section of the Regent's Canal line. The cost of the three miles of railway had been less than £3,000,000, or about £1,250,000 less than the estimate of the line proposed to be made by the Regent's Canal Company. Where the east end of the Canal lines ran through Plaistow Marshes, there already existed the Great Eastern line, the London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway, and the North London line, all being more or less in connection. These were the Companies with which the new line, when made, would have to compete for all its traffic. He did not wish to enter at all into the merits of these railway systems; but they were there already, and they were lines with which the new line would have to compete for the traffic of the locality. After entering upon this competition, could it go on paying 4 per cent? He put it to the House plainly whether they thought it at all likely, judging from past experience, and with the competition of the Metropolitan Railway, that this line would pay the original shareholders? What, however, he particularly objected to was that the House of Commons should take upon itself to guarantee, as it were, 4 per cent for the payment of interest out of capital while the works were in the course of construction. In his humble opinion, the House would not be justified in authorizing the payment of 4 per cent, while the works were being constructed, unless they were perfectly and morally satisfied that after the railway was opened the same rate of dividend would be continued. The sole object of this Bill was to create £660,000, which was to be drawn from shareholders' subscriptions, and then returned to them during the construction of the works, and to be called interest out of capital. Instead of holding their own money, and using it as they liked and as they desired, the shareholders were to intrust it to the Canal Company, and to receive it back again, little by little, as the Directors were prepared to pay what they called interest out of capital during the construction of the works. He could not conceive how any advantage whatever could be obtained by this class of shareholders. There might be some advantage in this process to the financial arrangements of the Directors; but it was absolutely without any advantage, as far as he could see, to the deluded innocents who consented to receive their money back again out of their own capital. The old Canal shareholders got £130 for a £100 share. That, so far as he knew, was a fair and proper arrangement. But there was one curious transaction to which he should like to call the attention of the House, because it showed how some of these schemes were got up. The Canal Directors secured seven years' purchase on their fees, notwithstanding that some of them, as it was stated before the Committee on the Bill, were already 75 years of age. Beyond the Canal shareholders there seemed to be very few shareholders, and the only object the Directors had in bringing the Bill before the House was to secure additional shareholders. He could not find that there were any landowners who wanted the Bill. There might be some Local Authorities in favour of it; but no residents, as far as he could ascertain, were asking for it. In the three years which had elapsed since the Bill of 1882 was passed there had been no shareholders registered who were willing to take hold of the scheme and work out the railway. When the Bill was brought before the House of Commons in 1882 it contained a clause—No. 117—authorizing interest to be paid out of capital. That clause was struck out by the Committee of the House of Commons as a condition precedent to the passing of the Bill at all. That took place on the 23rd of May, 1882, and Clause 201 was put in to provide that no interest should be paid out of capital during the construction of works. On the 20th of July, 1882, the Bill was in the House of Lords; and Mr. Pope, the eminent Queen's Counsel, who had charge of the Bill, in addressing the Committee of the House of Lords, said—

"The promoters of this measure are responsible, and respectable, and enterprizing magnates of the City of London."

True; but the learned counsel went on to tell their Lordships that such a Directorate, and such a scheme, would be abundantly able to raise the sum required (£8,000,000). It must be borne in mind that this statement was made after the clause providing for the payment of interest out of capital was eliminated from the Bill by the Committee of the House of Commons. He believed that the right hon. Gentleman in the Chair would have a lively recollection of the proceedings of that Committee, as he had happened to be a Member of it. It was, therefore, after the Committee of the House of Commons had designedly and pointedly struck out the clause, and after their Lordships had been assured, as positively by counsel as they could be, that without any such clause the Bill would be in safe and good and rich hands, and that the money would be forthcoming, that the Bill passed the two Houses. Therefore, he alleged that the promoters of the scheme, after this circumstance had occurred, in asking that the decision of Parliament should be set aside, were not keeping good faith with Parliament, seeing that the Bill had been readily accepted by the Company without this clause. A new Standing Order had been passed in 1883 by the House subsequently to the promotion of this Bill. It was proposed by the Committee that there should be general legislation upon this subject. Such legislation had never been attempted. The new Standing Order said that the Committee on the Bill might, in certain cases, if they thought fit, allow interest. The Committee before whom this Company made their proposal was a strong Committee. It had the whole of the facts before it, and went fully into the question, and yet the result was that the clause was omitted. The promoters of the Bill alleged that they were acting in conformity with the Standing Order on the interest question adopted by the House of Commons in 1883. This was manifestly not the case. The Standing Order in question was not retrospective; and, moreover, provision was made that interest should only be permitted when the Committee charged with the inquiry into the merits of the Bill reported in favour of such a practice. In this case, the Committee decided just the reverse; and it would be most unjust to the numerous Canal Companies, and other opponents who then opposed the Bill, if a question of this magnitude, after having been decided by a Committee, where opponents could be heard, was to be re-opened before another Committee, where the same opponents would have no right to be present. This was a case in which the Committee clearly decided that interest should not be paid out of capital. The present Bill was a Finance Bill; and no inquiry as to works, or the position of the Company, or the probability of paying dividend hereafter, had been made, or could be made. As a practically unopposed Bill, it would go before his hon. Friend the Chairman of Ways and Means; but that was not what was intended by the Standing Order. It was intended by the Standing Order that every application of this kind should be thoroughly investigated by a Select Committee, in order to see whether there was a reasonable prospect of being able to pay 4 per cent during the construction of the works, and whether the same amount of interest was likely to be paid after the line was opened to the public. In 1883, under much more special circumstances, the House declined to pass a provision of this kind in the case of a Bill brought in on behalf of the Hull and Barnsley Railway Company to enable them to pay interest out of capital. His hon. and gallant Friend who sat not far from him, the Member for Wycombe (Colonel Smith), stated the case of that Company with great fairness; and although there were special reasons for passing the Hull and Barnsley Interest Bill, the House considered the principle a bad one—namely, the principle of paying interest out of capital, and they declined to pass the measure. The decision come to at that time had, he thought, been amply justified by subsequent facts. He was not concerned in these railways; but he was concerned in maintaining commercial integrity, especially in the railway world; and, looking at this as a matter of principle, he might say that all our great financiers had objected to the proposal to pay interest out of capital. Mr. Hume and Mr. Ricardo were both opposed to it—Mr. Ricardo saying that when the Directors wanted £2 10*s.* they called it £2 15*s.*, and paid 5*s.* back again. Sir Charles Wood, Sir

Sir Joseph Pease

James Graham, and Sir Robert Peel were all opposed to it. He came now to our own times, and there had certainly been some great men who had left the House of Commons for the other branch of the Legislature who were strongly opposed to this principle. What did the Lord Chancellor say on the 26th of June, 1883, in the House of Lords? He said—

"I cannot help thinking that we ought to proceed with great care, for it is a very serious thing to change, without ample deliberation, a Rule founded on the sound principle of letting it be understood that when Parliament sanctions a certain amount of capital it means what it says, and not something else. If you are to permit the deduction of £20 per cent from £100 of nominal capital as a dividend, that will reduce the real capital to £80 instead of £100, and will be a delusion; it is simply returning to the subscriber 25 per cent out of the money which he has nominally invested. He might just as well keep the £50 in his pocket, and let the capital be called £80."—(3 *Hansard,* [280] 1541.)

The Marquess of Salisbury, who, whatever his politics, was a man of astute intellect in regard to railway matters, and had solved some of the most difficult railway problems that had been brought forward, said—

"Considering the enormous amount of property affected, this is one of the gravest Resolutions this House could pass as regards it. There is an obvious objection which must strike everyone, for it is really a proposal to enable a certain number of investors to practise upon themselves a species of wholly innocent self-deceit, and to take, in the form of interest, what is really a little of their own capital returned to them. This is entirely a question whether the kind of railway, which its friends call a contractor's railway and its enemies call a bogus railway, is a kind of railway which it is desirable to multiply."—(*Ibid.* 1544.)

Earl Granville said—

"A good many years ago, Parliament came to the conclusion that it was unsound in principle to sanction a nominal payment of interest, which was only a return of a portion of the capital."—(*Ibid.* 1545.)

Lord Kimberley also said, in the course of the same debate, that the proposal to repeal the law which prohibited the payment of interest out of capital was neither made by nor supported by the Government. Our whole Statute Law was opposed to it, and every Bill passed by Parliament, with this power in it, was a repeal insomuch of wise and good Statute Law. Our financial laws had been well tried, and were, for the most part, founded on sound principles. They declared that it was unwise and financially immoral to pay interest out of capital. The Limited Liability Companies were prevented by law from paying interest out of capital during the construction of works. Our financial laws had done much to build up the commercial standing of this country. There was no reputation in trade so high as that of an Englishman; and wherever he went he received the highest credit for the manner in which he carried out his financial engagements. To repeal these laws in whole or in part, unless some very good cause were shown, would be an infraction of principle for the sake of expediency; and was there in this case such an expediency as ought to be allowed to conquer principle? Surely, when they were framed upon right principles, these laws ought to be kept as they were. Whenever the House pursued a different course, they established dangerous precedents in regard to the credit of the commercial community. Whenever this plan was resorted to, the House might be quite certain of two things—that the rich and knowing would not make the investment, because they did not see its soundness; but that the poor and ignorant would be led into it. Those who had money to invest, and who were looking out for substantial investments, would not touch shares of this description; and it was only by putting forward proposals of this character that Companies were able to induce poor and ignorant persons, with a little capital in hand, to become shareholders. He did not wish to say anything in any way to hurt the feelings of his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Wycombe; but he had mentioned the case of the Hull and Barnsley Railway, and he would refer to it again. When that line was brought out, his hon. and gallant Friend fairly and boldly stated to the House that it was a line which promised 5 per cent to the shareholders. He found, from the list of shareholders, that it was contributed to by persons all over the country—from Hull, Birmingham, London, York, Harrogate, Bedford Square, Nine Elms, Barnsley, Cornhill, Manchester, Easingwold, and many other places, who were described as fish curer, gentleman, broker, spinster, shipbroker, innkeeper, cabinet maker, manager, painter, artist, builder, architect, far-

mer, engine driver, city agent, bank manager, bank clerk, and cooper. Those were the class of persons who were deceived by these investments; and although in this case, during the construction of works, the shareholders received 5 per cent, in whole or in part, there was hardly a man in Yorkshire who imagined that the line, although paying 5 per cent during construction, would even pay 2 per cent to the shareholders when at work. His right hon. Friend below him, the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain), when a similar question to this was raised on a previous occasion, spoke of the shareholders as being able to take care of themselves. He (Sir Joseph Pease) thought he had proved to the House by the list he had read that, in the instance he had referred to, that was scarcely the case; and he, therefore, thought that the law ought to make the matter perfectly clear. Could it be for a moment believed that when this Regent's Canal line, nursed as it was by other lines, was opened, it would pay the dividend proposed to be paid during construction? It was well known that the dividends on all the great railway properties in the Three Kingdoms together were not worth much more than 4 per cent, or, at any rate, not more than £4 3*s.* 4*d.* The money invested in railways during the last 10 years amounted to £210,000,000; and if this particular investment was a good one, there could be no reason for supposing that the necessary amount of capital would not be readily subscribed. Nevertheless, out of £280,000,000 of ordinary Stock, £60,000,000 did not pay 2 per cent. The principle was bad; the expediency was bad; but it was worse still when it was as clear as reason could make it that the dividend paid during construction could not be maintained when the line was opened. He had now stated all that he considered it necessary to lay before the House on this subject. He believed that his right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade would contend that competition generally was good; but in this case, as soon as competition was entered upon, they would have no 4 per cent, but if competition became combination away would go all the arguments of his right hon. Friend in favour of competition. He thought he had proved that this Bill was not in accordance with the Standing Order which at present existed; that it went against the decision of their own Committee on the original Bill—that the principle of paying interest out of capital was fictitious and a trap for the unwary, and that no sound undertaking required this expedient; and, therefore, he hoped the House would affirm to-day—as it had affirmed in 1883—a principle which all our leading financiers and statesmen had approved. He begged to move the Amendment which appeared on the Paper in his name.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it is not expedient to pass any Railway Bill which involves the payment of interest out of capital during the construction of works pending the introduction of a public measure on this subject, as recommended by a Committee of this House in 1882, especially where such a Bill practically makes the alteration of the Standing Orders of this House retrospective in their action,"—(*Sir Joseph Pease,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

SIR GABRIEL GOLDNEY said, that it was altogether impossible for the House to enter into the details of a Bill of this kind. He considered it a monstrous thing that people should not be allowed to take care of their own money, and invest it in such concerns as they thought desirable, and in the mode which they thought most expedient. He understood that the object of this Bill, and of the Standing Order, was to enable a certain class of persons, who had funds at their disposal for investment, to have interest paid to them during the time the works were in progress. But the proposition of the hon. Baronet opposite was that persons who were disposed to make investments of this sort should not have their money returned in the shape which they themselves desired. The hon. Baronet said he wished to protect the poor by throwing the mantle of that House over them, and preventing them from adopting their own independent action in regard to the investment of their own money. If a man chose to say—"I have £100, and I desire to invest it in an undertaking which I think will be profitable; but I cannot forego the income which that £100 now brings me in, and, therefore,

I must have some return while the works are being carried out," why should he not be able to give effect to his wishes? It was a principle that was now carried out in the ordinary affairs of life. Take, for instance, the case of a farmer. A farmer had £3,000 to invest in land, and he said—"While the crops are growing I must have something to live upon, and something to enable me to clothe myself with." The proposition of the hon. Baronet amounted to this—that the farmer must invest the whole of his £3,000 in the farm, according to some great principle, and he must not use any portion of it in any other shape, but must wait until the proper time came round for realizing a profit upon his produce. Until that moment arrived the farmer would be required to starve. But, altogether apart from that point, he was prepared to support the construction of this particular railway. He knew nothing more than what the hon. Baronet had himself stated; but he gathered, from the remarks of the hon. Baronet, that the line was designed for the benefit of the working classes. The House was aware that the Commission, in which his hon. Friend the Member for Finsbury (Mr. W. M. Torrens) took an active part, and which contained among its Members some of the highest persons in the land, was engaged at this moment in ascertaining what measures could be carried out for improving the condition of the working classes. He understood that this line was designed mainly for the purpose of connecting certain outlets with the City of London, and to facilitate the conveyance of the working classes, who, of necessity, must be employed in the Metropolis, to and from their homes to certain points at a cheap rate—an object of great importance in connection with the problem of how to house the labouring population properly. The only argument against the line was that there were certain other railways with which it might run in competition. He thought it was a most important object to house the working classes cheaply, and to do so comfortably, with a fair amount of space in their dwellings, and in situations where they could obtain the advantage of fresh air. That in itself was, to his mind, a far higher moral object than the principle of preventing the general public from using their own money as they pleased, by providing that they should receive no portion of it back again for a certain number of years while the works were being constructed. If the House read the Bill a second time, the Standing Order would be fairly considered by a Select Committee upstairs. That was all that the Bill asked; and the hon. Baronet was endeavouring to throw a mantle of Parliamentary prevention over persons who wished to cut their cloth according to their own fashion, and to enter into what, according to their own judgment, they regarded as profitable investments. He trusted that, for the sake of laying down an abstract principle, the House of Commons would not consent to stifle a Bill which ought to be inquired into through the ordinary tribunal established by the House.

COLONEL GERARD SMITH said, he opposed the Amendment, for he contended that the Bill ought to be allowed to go before a Select Committee, instead of being disposed of on the second reading. The object of the hon. Baronet (Sir Joseph W. Pease) was, no doubt, a laudable one; and among other reasons which the hon. Baronet assigned in support of it was the ground that the Bill was unopposed. The hon. Baronet, however, was entirely in error in that respect, seeing that there were four strong Petitions against the measure. He, therefore, ventured to submit that the time of the House would be saved by allowing the Bill to go to a Committee upstairs in the usual way, instead of fighting it on the second reading.

SIR WHITTAKER ELLIS said, he wished to make one or two remarks upon the Bill, and upon the Amendment proposed by the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Joseph Pease). The hon. Baronet appeared to take exception to the principle of paying interest out of capital while an undertaking was in the course of construction. Now, he (Sir Whittaker Ellis) submitted to the House that there was no great undertaking in this country which did not pay interest during the construction of works. Why was a railway to be treated differently from a public street? If the Board of Works were making a new street, they raised the money to pay the cost of that street, and to make provision for the poor who were unhoused by their operations, and to compensate others

who were disturbed in their business arrangements, and the money so raised paid interest until the new street was opened. He ventured to say, if the Board of Works were to propose not to pay interest until a new street was opened, they would find that it would be necessary to pay a very much higher rate of interest on the money required, or they would have to issue their bonds at a much lower rate than they were able to do under present circumstances. Then, again, take the case of the new block of public buildings which Her Majesty's Government intended very shortly to commence. He took it that the Government would have to obtain the money necessary for the erection of the new offices from the public, and that they would pay interest upon the money they obtained while the buildings were being constructed. In that case the principle was entirely analogous, and he could not understand why the Amendment of the hon. Baronet had been placed on the Paper. He had been appealed to by a great many persons to vote against the present Bill, and he had written to some of them to know why they did not wish the Bill to pass in its present form. They told him that if interest was to be paid out of capital while the works were being constructed there would be a great many more railways laid down than there were at present. Now, he did not know whether the House or the public would care to prevent the construction of great railways; and certainly it would be a monstrous thing that a railway should be treated differently to other undertakings of a similar character. If a man built a house, he had to use his capital during the construction of that house; and if he lost the interest on the money he was thus utilizing, if he understood finance in a proper way, he would necessarily add that lost interest to the cost of the house. With the provisions that were contained in the amended Standing Order, No. 167, there was no reason whatever why this or any other railway should not be allowed to pay a reasonable rate of interest while it was being constructed, and it would be a great injustice if the line were not permitted to be made. The clause in the Bill provided that only 4 per cent per annum should be paid; and it would be monstrous to prohibit this railway, or any other railway, from paying interest in that way during the progress of the works. There was one other practical point which he wished to put to the House; and it was that if they debarred this Railway Company from paying interest and adding it to capital during construction, they would compel the Company to issue their bonds and securities at a very much lower rate per cent than they would otherwise obtain for them. What he meant was that, instead of getting 90 per cent for their issue, they would have to take 80. He opposed the Amendment of the hon. Baronet, because he thought it was undesirable that public enterprize should be checked for the benefit of the shareholders of the large existing undertakings.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, he rather regretted that his hon. Friend behind him (Sir Joseph Pease) should have thought it necessary to move this Amendment. He knew that his hon. Friend was a man of great public spirit, and he was sure that he was controlled by a sense of duty. But at the same time he thought he would be able to show that the course proposed by his hon. Friend was inconvenient, and would be attended with considerable disadvantage. They were not now dealing with one of those bogus Companies about which his hon. Friend was so very anxious. This was a very large and important concern, involving a capital of something like £10,000,000, and it was intended to connect the whole of the Docks at the East End of London with the Great Northern, the Midland, and the North-Western Railways, and therefore it was an enterprize of first-rate importance in regard to the convenience of trade. There was another consideration which at that moment was not altogether unworthy of the attention of the House. If this Company went on and capital was raised, a very large amount of employment would be given to the working classes of London; and just now, when there existed so much depression of trade, it would be a serious thing to throw any obstacle in the way of such employment being afforded. What was the reason his hon. Friend proposed that day to take the unusual course of refusing to allow a Select Committee to consider the provisions of this Bill? It was, he said, because the Company proposed to pay interest out of capital. The hon. Member, then, was proposing by a side-wind to

reverse the solemn decision of the House, because the whole question of whether such Companies should be allowed to pay interest out of capital was decided in June, 1883, when, by a majority of eight, the House passed the amended Standing Order permitting that practice. It was quite true that about a fortnight later the Hull and Barnsley Railway Bill was thrown out on the second reading; but that was because the Hull and Barnsley Railway Company did not comply with the Standing Order, but proposed a larger rate of interest than was sanctioned by the Standing Order. What happened? It did not prevent the construction of the Hull and Barnsley Railway, because the Company obtained powers in the subsequent year that enabled it to evade the decision of the House by raising Debenture and Mortgage Stock, which attained practically the same result as paying interest out of capital, and he believed the works were now approaching completion. Why, as a matter of principle, should that privilege be denied to Railway Companies? It was not denied to numerous other undertakings. There were numberless undertakings in which it prevailed. It prevailed without exception in foreign trade, and in almost every commercial speculation. For instance, there had been a very large enterprize entered into on this principle in reference to the refinement of sugar in Brazil. There was a State guarantee given, and that guarantee applied to payments during the construction of works. The Indian Railway Companies had a guarantee from the Government for the payment of interest during construction. His hon. Friend, speaking with the authority and position of one who represented the great established railway lines, was very hard on the new undertakings which required a provision of this kind to induce their Stock to be taken up. After all, it was a great convenience to the shareholders. In some way or other a man who had not got a large sum of money at his bankers upon interest, but had to contrive to be able to live, must provide something like an annual income, and by an investment of this sort it was very convenient for him that payment of interest should go on during the construction of the line. His hon. Friend told the House he was not now acting in the interest of the widows and orphans, but in that of high financial morality. But there was another explanation, not of the action of his hon. Friend, but of the opposition offered by some of the other opponents of the Bill. Now, he himself happened to be a shareholder of the South-Eastern Railway Company, and in his capacity as a shareholder he had received a Circular signed by the Secretary of the South-Eastern Company; and in his capacity as a Member of Parliament he had received another, both of those documents containing this statement—

"This Bill is promoted by a Company of which Mr. J. S. Forbes is Chairman, and it seeks power to pay interest out of capital upon £10,000,000. If the precedent for such an objectionable practice be once set in this case, it will be followed by many more instances of a similar character. The result will be loss and ruin to vast numbers of shareholders, without any compensating advantages to travellers or traders. You will materially help the Directors who are assisting to oppose this Bill if you will kindly write at once to your Representatives in Parliament, requesting them to oppose this Bill on second reading."

He had not written to his Representatives in Parliament; but he thought that Circular threw a great light upon this opposition. The interests of these great lines were opposed to competition. Were the interests of the country opposed to competition? There had been a great agitation lately in favour of a reduction of railway fares, and the only chance of obtaining that reduction was in the existence of competition, actual or potential. Everything, therefore, that tended to check competition and to keep up a monopoly helped the Companies in resisting any attempt on the part of the public to gain a reduction. He confessed that he was more anxious to protect the public than the foolish investor, even if the result was to establish competing lines; and he thought that the House would do wisely in passing a Bill of this kind, the proposal of which was undoubtedly a *bonâ fide* one, and one which involved a large and important addition to their means of communication.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that if one thing would have done more than another to prevent the encroachments of the great Railway Companies and keep them perfectly in check, as far as the fares were concerned, it was the adoption of the strong and unanimous recom-

mendation of the Joint Committee of the Lords and Commons which sat about 20 years ago, and of which he had had the honour to be a Member. That Committee recommended that the Canals should not be allowed to fall into the hands of the Railway Companies; but he was sorry to say that that unanimous recommendation of the Joint Committee had not been acted upon when Private Bills came before the House. He thought it would have been very much better if the Committee, which sat upon this Bill two or three years ago, had borne that recommendation in mind, and had kept up this Canal, instead of allowing it to fall into the hands of the Railway Company. If the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had the question really at heart, he might yet do much good by putting the Board of Trade in action, whenever it was desirable, to give effect to the recommendation of the Joint Committee.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, the right hon. Gentleman had appealed to him. He thought the right hon. Gentleman could not be aware that there was in the present Bill a provision for keeping open the navigation of the Regent's Canal.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that the Canal was practically handed over to the control of the Railway Company, and the Proviso referred to by the right hon. Gentleman would have very little effect except in misleading the House. ["Oh!"] He did not for a moment suggest that the right hon. Gentleman himself intended to mislead the House; but what he felt was that the statement of the right hon. Gentleman was calculated to mislead many Members who were not aware of the real provisions and scope of the Bill. The question came before the House in this way. This clause, having reference to the payment of interest out of capital, had been in the original Bill, and when the Bill was before the House of Commons it was thrown out. Therefore, although in the first instance the Railway Company tried to get the benefit of the clause, the House would not allow them to have it; and when they were questioned upon the subject when the Bill was before the House of Lords, their Chairman said that he had no fear about being able to raise the money, whether the Standing Order was enforced or not. He added that the Company probably might have a little more trouble in persuading people to subscribe; but that was all. What had been the result? The Company got the Bill without that clause, and they had not been able, during the last three years, to persuade people that this was such a good undertaking that they ought to invest their money in it. If any hon. Member would look at the Preamble of the Bill now before the House, he would find that the Railway Company had itself inserted that fact in the Bill. They said—

> "And whereas by the Act of 1882 it was provided (Section 201) that the Company should not out of any money by that Act authorized to be raised pay interest or dividend to any shareholder on the amount of the calls made in respect of the shares held by him, but that nothing in the said Act should prevent the Company from paying to any shareholder such interest on money advanced by him beyond the amount of the calls actually made as was in conformity with the Companies Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845."

The next paragraph said—

> "And whereas the practical effect of the said Section 201 of the Act of 1882 has been to render it impossible for the Company to raise any part of the capital (other than the Canal capital) required for the execution of their authorized works, and it is expedient that the said section be repealed and the Company be authorized, subject to the provisions hereinafter in that behalf contained, to pay interest or dividends upon the amount paid up from time to time in respect of shares or stock in their capital, and for that purpose to raise further money by shares or stock as by this Act provided."

The Bill now came before the House in this way—the Company had obtained a railway which they thought would attract investors. But although it had been before the public for three years the public refused to invest; and, accordingly, the Railway Company had arrived at the conclusion that unless they could get the insertion of this particular clause to enable them to pay interest out of capital during the construction of works their undertaking was not likely to be a success. The Company said that there was a Standing Order in existence which would enable them to do this, and that they ought to have the benefit of it; but he would point out that the Standing Order was not retrospective; that the original Bill had been carefully considered by the House; and that, notwithstanding what had fallen from hon. Gentlemen in support of the Bill, there was no certainty

and no guarantee that if the House allowed the second reading to pass, the Company would not be in a position to buy up the opposition with which it was threatened. In that case it would become an unopposed Bill, and would not come under the consideration of a Select Committee at all. Therefore, this particular question of whether interest was to be paid out of capital would run the risk of being virtually withdrawn from the cognizance of the House. He had been glad to hear the hon. Baronet the Member for South Durham (Sir Joseph Pease) take such strong ground, because he believed that if they held out inducements to people that they were to have interest at 4 per cent until the railway was made, there were a great number of persons who did not thoroughly understand the matter who would be misled. They would invest their money in the belief that they were certain to receive a fair rate of interest for a good many years. He was now speaking entirely in behalf of a number of persons of small means who were constantly having prospectuses of this kind sent to them. He happened to have been Trustee for a number of poor ladies at different times, and they had sent to him many prospectuses offering them, as an additional inducement to invest, the payment of interest at the rate of 4 or 5 per cent out of capital during construction. What was the result? They invested their money, and they received 4 or 5 per cent during the time the works were being constructed, and then, when they expected their income to be increased, they found that it was suddenly diminished, and that what they had received in one pocket had been, in reality, taken out of another. He thought, as a matter of commercial honesty, that the House of Commons was bound to protect that class of people who were so easily induced to invest their money in these undertakings. He, therefore, hoped that the House would assent to the Amendment.

MR. RITCHIE said, he was bound to say that the main argument used by his right hon. Friend was not one which had impressed him very strongly. The right hon. Gentleman commenced his remarks by telling the House that it would be very much better if Parliament would prevent Canal Companies from being bought up by Railway Companies. But that was not the question which the House had to consider at the present moment. The Committee of the House of Commons had, as he understood, permitted this operation to be carried out after a full and adequate examination; and, so far as the Bill itself was concerned, they were told that it made adequate provision for keeping up the navigation of the Canal. That, however, was not the point which the House had to discuss. The main argument used by his right hon. Friend was that the Company, not having been able to persuade people that their undertaking was a good one, desired now, in order to induce the public to invest, to obtain a clause empowering them to pay interest on capital during the construction of works. Surely his right hon. Friend must have a poor idea of the intellect of the investing public if he imagined that a power of paying 4 per cent during the progress of construction was likely to convince those who had formerly thought the undertaking a bad one that it was now a remarkably good one. That was the main contention of his right hon. Friend; but he thought it was not sufficiently strong to induce the House to throw out the Bill. This was a Bill in which considerable interest was felt in the East End of London upon two grounds. In the first place, it would connect the Docks in the East End with the great railways in a way which would prove beneficial to the East End of London. There was another ground which to his mind, at the present moment, was of even greater importance. It had already been touched upon by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade. During the present time of distress he had several times formed part of deputations which had waited upon Ministers of the Crown with reference to the employment of the working classes; but it had been very properly pointed out by the President of the Board of Trade that it was impossible for the Government themselves to take any step in the direction indicated. At the same time, the deputations had been reminded that there were great undertakings before Parliament which it was hoped would, if carried, provide employment for the working classes. This was certainly one of those undertakings, and he imagined that it was in the mind of the right hon.

Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade when he gave that advice. It was an undertaking which the House of Commons had declared to be a good and sound one, and one that ought to be carried out. Hitherto a difficulty had been experienced in raising the necessary capital, because the Company were unable to pay a small percentage of interest out of capital during the construction of works. That had nothing to do with the question whether the undertaking was good or bad. There was a vast number of people who could not afford to subscribe to an undertaking unless they received some interest in the meantime before the scheme was in operation, and it was for that reason that the capital in this instance had not been subscribed. If the Bill were passed, it would undoubtedly give ultimate employment to a large number of persons. It was a good undertaking in itself, and he could not imagine that any of the arguments which had been used against it that day would induce the House of Commons to throw out the Bill.

SIR ARTHUR OTWAY said, he did not propose to enter into the merits of the Bill, or to discuss the question raised by hon. Gentlemen who objected to the Bill as to the financial morality of paying interest out of capital during construction; but he must tell his hon. Friend the Member for South Durham (Sir Joseph Pease) that he was mistaken if he supposed that there was a general concurrence in the views he had expressed. That question had been fully investigated by a Committee, which had reported to the House. Their Report showed that their opinion was very different from that which the hon. Baronet had expressed. He (Sir Arthur Otway) could hardly see anything financially immoral in a proposition which at the present moment governed commercial undertakings abroad, and was adopted with the sanction of Her Majesty's Government in reference to their own Dependencies in India. Nor did he propose to enter into the other questions which the hon. Baronet had brought under the notice of the House. His hon. Friend had been quite eloquent on behalf of the cooper, the painter, the managing clerk, and the spinster, who were about to be deluded into investing their money on the promise of being paid 5 per cent during the construction of the works. His hon. Friend was quite in error as to the amount proposed to be paid as interest; it was 4 per cent, and not 5.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE said, he had been referring to the payment of interest under the Hull and Barnsley Bill; and he had stated that the proposal to pay so high a rate of interest had probably induced many investors to subscribe.

SIR ARTHUR OTWAY said, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) had also been eloquent on behalf of certain poor ladies for whom he was Trustee; but the point which he (Sir Arthur Otway) wished to bring before the House was that there was already a Standing Order deliberately sanctioned by a Committee which dealt with the subject. This proposal had been discussed in connection with several Public Departments, and it was considered absolutely necessary to do something to prevent the constant violation of the Standing Orders of the House. When he first took the Office of Chairman of Ways and Means, he found that the Standing Order was constantly evaded; and after much consideration he came to the conclusion that it was desirable, and even necessary, to deal with the matter by amending the Standing Order. The hon. Baronet the Member for South Durham (Sir Joseph Pease) seemed to forget altogether the protection afforded to the public by the existing Standing Order of the House. The Select Committee before whom the Bill would come would have it in their power to refuse their sanction, if they thought fit, to the payment of interest out of capital. Moreover, a Report of the Board of Trade was required, and there was no prospect of the public being deceived, or for any deception of any kind, he apprehended, to be practised. All the circumstances would have to be made known. In fact, so far as the public were concerned, every protection was afforded to them by the Standing Orders which now existed; and he thought that the House, having amended the Standing Orders only two years ago, seeing that no complaint was made of the way in which they worked, would be acting most unwisely if they were now to reverse their recent decision. His hon Friend had certainly made one statemen which, if correct, would be importan

He had said that the Bill would be an unopposed Bill, and, therefore, that there would be no Committee to decide whether it was proper that this privilege should be conceded or not. That was, no doubt, a very important point; and if the Bill came before him as an unopposed Bill, all he could say was that a measure involving such large and important considerations would not be one that he would undertake to adjudicate upon. As a matter of fact, however, the Bill was not unopposed, and it would go upstairs to a Select Committee, who would be perfectly competent to decide the various questions involved in it, and would be able to say whether this was an undertaking to which the privilege of paying interest during construction should be applied or not, or whether the sanction of the House should be refused to it. Therefore, there was on this point also no ground for the apprehensions of his hon. Friend. It was not necessary that he should detain the House by going into details further; but he thought he had said sufficient to induce the House to read the Bill a second time.

MR. HICKS said, that, as one who had opposed the Regent's Canal Bill in the first instance, he would ask the indulgence of the House while he explained the ground of his opposition, and while he called attention to one or two points which had not been fully raised. Of late years the House had been extremely jealous of the absorption of the inland navigation by Railway Companies; and in regard to this very Company, so recently as 1882, a Select Committee refused to sanction the payment by it of interest out of capital. When the scheme first came before the House for the purpose of taking possession of the Regent's Canal, and converting it into a railway, an opposition was raised to it on the ground that if this Canal, the head of all the English navigation, were once allowed to fall into the hands of the Railway Company, the North, North-East, and West of England would be cut off from the Metropolis. It was then said that the great object of the promoters of the Bill was to make a cheap railway for the purpose of taking the labouring classes from the East End of London into cheaper districts, where they would be able to reside more economically, and enjoy purer air. On the faith of that representation the House passed a Bill, and it went to a Select Committee, who, in consenting to the measure, refused their sanction to the clause for the payment of interest out of capital. That was in the year 1882. What had happened since? In the very next year, this Company, which professed to make a railway for the purpose of carrying passengers at a cheap rate, came to the House to ask for fresh powers to enable them to raise their rates and charges for carrying goods. Thus they tore a portion of the mask from their faces. It was still, however, to be a goods line or a passengers' line, and nothing was said about the way in which the money was to be raised. But now, at the end of three years, finding that they had been unable to raise the money, they came again to Parliament and asked for power to override another important Rule of the House, which prevented them from paying interest out of capital during the construction of works. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade told the House that they ought to grant this privilege for two reasons, one of which was that the principle was sanctioned in connection with foreign undertakings, and the second that it was also done in connection with the East India Railways. He did not think the House ought to be governed by foreign precedents; and as to the East India Railways, unless he was very much misinformed, the dividends were not guaranteed during construction, but were guaranteed in perpetuity after the construction was complete. He therefore failed to see what that argument had to do with the case. It was an attempt to throw dust in the eyes of the House. This was a proposal to pay dividends out of capital during the construction of the railway; but there was no guarantee whatever of any payment after the works were completed. Then, again, another reason assigned by the President of the Board of Trade, and a reason supported by his hon. Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie), was that there were a great many persons out of employment in London to whom the construction of this railway would give employment. They all knew that there were many of the working classes out of employment

in London, and the circumstance was much to be lamented. But, he would ask, was this the first time that Her Majesty's Government had heard that the working classes were suffering from want of employment? Had it never occurred to the right hon. Gentleman, or to Her Majesty's Government, that there was another way of getting out of that difficulty? Had they never heard of the great distress which prevailed among those who suffered from the Sugar Bounties; and would not the Government at once seek in their Budget to put a duty upon foreign sugar? By so doing they would give abundant employment, and very much relieve the deficit which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had to meet—a deficit which the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had described as "grossly immoral."

MR. SPEAKER: I must ask the hon. Gentleman to confine himself to the Question before the House.

MR. HICKS apologized for appearing to have wandered from the subject, and said, that he was only replying to the remark of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade that the Bill would find employment for a large number of the working classes. What he ventured to ventured to say was, that if they could find employment for the sugar industries by not allowing sugar to come in upon foreign bounties, the labourer of the East End of London would find abundant employment and the deficit would be avoided.

MR. GILES said, he had had some little experience of public Companies, and he ventured to protest against the Amendment of the hon. Member for South Durham (Sir Joseph Pease) upon general principles. If it were adopted it would put a stop to the progress of all public Companies. The hon. Baronet said that he brought it forward in the interest of the innocent and unwary, who might be deceived into subscribing to these public Companies if interest were guaranteed during the progress of works. But there were £700,000,000 subscribed to railways on similar principles, the holders of which must all have been innocents when they subscribed. The large and wealthy Railway Companies had no occasion to exercise this privilege, as when they wanted to carry out new lines they borrowed money on debentures or on preference stock, and paid interest thereon from the date of borrowing, which practically amounted to the same thing as that of new Companies paying interest during construction.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 187; Noes 117: Majority 70.—(Div. List, No. 145.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill read a second time, and *committed*.

QUESTIONS.

—o—

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—LONDONDERRY ASSIZES—SPECIAL JURORS.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How many special jurors were summoned by Sheriff Mr. Thomas Chambers for last Derry Assizes; how many cases were to be tried; what was the character of the attendance; and, did Mr. Baron Dowse and Lord Justice Fitzgibbon make any comments on the subject?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Sheriff informs me that 48 special jurors were summoned, and that the attendance was a fair average. There were six special jury cases to be tried. Mr. Baron Dowse made some observations on the difficulty of getting a jury; but the Sheriff explains that the difficulty arose from the fact that both Courts were trying special jury cases at the same time, and that the right of challenge had been fully exercised in both cases.

MR. HEALY: Would not the right hon. Gentleman consider the question of applying to one of the learned Judges for the information instead of to the Sheriff? The Sheriff is the person whose conduct is impugned.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not think that is necessary.

MR. LEWIS: Is not 48 the statutable number of jurors?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I cannot say.

VACCINATION (FRANCE)—MORTALITY ARISING FROM THE OPERATION AT VILLEFRANCHE D'AVEYRON.

MR. HOPWOOD asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whe-

ther the attention of his Department has been called to the announcement of a vaccination disaster at Villefranche d'Aveyron, in France, in *La Ligne* newspaper, dated 23rd March last, where it is reported that, of forty young people vaccinated by one medical man, nine died within forty-eight hours after the operation; if not, will he be so good as to make inquiry into the case?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL (who replied) said: We were not aware of any such statement in the French newspaper referred to. If the hon. and learned Member will furnish us with a statement of the facts on trustworthy authority, we will consider whether any inquiry is necessary.

PUBLIC HEALTH (METROPOLIS)—SMALL POX AT WEST HAM.

MR. HOPWOOD asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been directed to the prevalence of small pox in the sub-district of West Ham; whether the death rate has reached the rate of nearly 7,000 per million; whether the inhabitants of the district are vaccinated as numerously as in any district in or near London; whether 3,000 per million is assumed to have been the rate of mortality from small pox in the last century; and, whether, in fact, some defect in sanitary precautions is the cause of such disease and mortality?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL (who replied) said: We are aware that there has been a severe epidemic of small pox in the West Ham sub-district. The population of the district increased from 44,000 in 1871 to 101,000 in 1881, and is now very much larger. The number of deaths from small pox in the district during the present year has been 318. There are, however, in the district two small pox hospitals, one belonging to the Guardians of the West Ham Union, and the other to the Managers of the Metropolitan Asylum District. A considerable proportion of the persons who died in the district from small pox were brought into the district from the outside. The Returns for the last three years show that the number of children unaccounted for as regards vaccination has been greater than in other districts in the neighbourhood of the Metropolis. It has been estimated that the rate of mortality from small pox in the last century, during a period of 30 years, was 3,000 per 1,000,000; but it is obvious that no comparison can fairly be made between the average death-rate during a period of 30 years in the whole of England and Wales, and the number of deaths in four months during a severe epidemic in a particular locality. There has been insufficient hospital accommodation in the district; but, apart from that, we are not aware that defects in sanitary precautions have been the cause of the disease and mortality.

INLAND REVENUE—STAMPS UPON RECEIPTS IN PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS BY CHEQUE.

MR. BARRY asked Mr. Attorney General, If he will remove a doubt existing in commercial circles by saying whether payment of an account of over £2 by cheque, payable to order, obviates the necessity of using a receipt stamp?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES), in reply, said, a stamp was required to be affixed to the account under the circumstances referred to in the Question.

BOROUGH FUNDS ACT—EXTENSION TO IRELAND.

MR. GRAY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is his intention to redeem the pledge given by the Irish Government to introduce a Bill to extend the Borough Funds Act to Ireland?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Government are prepared to support the Bill which the hon. Member has brought in on this question, subject to an Amendment which I believe the hon. Member does not object to.

MR. GRAY: Owing to the Bill being blocked, will the right hon. Gentleman consider whether he can give me some facilities to press forward the Bill?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I cannot make a promise; but I will be very glad to assist the hon. Member.

COLLECTOR GENERAL OF RATES, DUBLIN.

MR. GRAY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How long the office of Collector General of Rates in Dublin has been vacant; and, when the Government intend to intro-

duce a Bill to amend the Collection of Rates Act, Dublin?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: A temporary appointment was made to the post of Collector General of Rates in Dublin pending the probability of legislation affecting the duties of the Office. The Government have not forgotten their promise to bring in a Bill dealing with this subject; but I am not yet in a position to fix the date at which it will be introduced.

MR. GRAY: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether he also bears in mind the undertaking given that the present temporary appointment should not be made permanent until the Bill is introduced?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Oh, certainly.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—PROCEEDINGS FOR ALLEGED TRESPASS AT JOHNSTOWN, CO. KILKENNY.

MR. MARUM asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been directed to, or any report received from the local constabulary, concerning extraordinary proceedings that have recently taken place in the police district of Johnstown, in the county of Kilkenny, that is to say, that Mr. Den. Keatinge, of Woodsfift, a deputy lieutenant and magistrate of the county, is in occupation of certain holdings surrounding his demesne from which the tenants have been evicted some two or three years ago; that the boundary fences of the same are in a very defective condition, rendering them liable to the trespass of stock; that Mr. Keatinge, and his son Mr. Morris Keatinge, holding a Commission in one of Her Majesty's Regiments of the Line, together with a large posse of bailiffs, proceeded from their residence about midnight to those holdings, and distrained certain donkeys, goats, and sheep trespassing thereon; that they escorted those animals to the various residences of the owners, and knocked violently at their doors about one o'clock a.m., some of whom were thus coerced to pay the regulation trespass fines then and there to this local justice, and others, not having cash in their houses, remained indoors, whereupon a large and continued uproar ensued, and the doors of the dwelling-houses were battered and defaced, and, in some portions, smashed in; that especially the residence of the National school teacher of Grane, Mr. Maher, was similarly visited, and trespass for donkeys demanded; and that, owing to the difficulty of arousing the sleeping inmates, shouting and screeching and other noises were made use of, to the disturbance and terror of the inhabitants of the entire locality, extending over a considerable area, and finally the teacher himself was assailed in abusive language, and threatened with eviction; and, whether, even if such distresses are held legal, such unusual mode of proceeding, fraught with danger to the public peace, and adopted by a justice of the petty sessions district in which these dwelling-houses are situate, will be brought under the notice of the Lord Chancellor or Lords Commissioners of the Great Seal.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have directed the police, who had no knowledge of the alleged proceedings, to make inquiries into the matter; but I have not yet received their Report.

ARMY (INDIA)—THE BENGAL CAVALRY—OUTBREAK OF GLANDERS.

DR. CAMERON asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether it is true, as stated in *The United Service Gazette*, that glanders again prevail among the horses of the 6th Bengal Lancers; whether the 6th Bengal Lancers is the same regiment that arrived glandered in Egypt in the campaign of 1882, and which, on the disease being identified by the English veterinary officers, was ordered away from the scene of operations lest it should infect the rest of the Cavalry; whether it is the regiment to which was attributed the infection with glanders of the 7th Dragoon Guards; whether he has yet received any report respecting the European officer and men of the regiment fatally infected with glanders on the voyage of the 6th Bengal Lancers from Egypt to India, concerning whom he promised inquiry on March 5th 1883; whether the regiment has ever been free from glanders since it was despatched, infected, for service in Egypt; and, what is the pay of the salootrees to whom, as he explained to the House on March 5th 1883, the veterinary care of the Bengal Native Cavalry is entrusted?

MR. J. K. CROSS: The Government of India has been asked by telegram whether the 6th Bengal Cavalry has ever been free from glanders, or whether glanders has again broken out. The 6th Bengal Cavalry is the regiment of which one troop was glandered in Egypt during the Campaign of 1882, and it is the regiment to which was imputed the infection of the 7th Dragoon Guards. The Report asked for in March, 1883, arrived in June of that year, and is at the service of my hon. Friend. The deceased officer (Major Logan) had nothing to do with the 6th Bengal Cavalry; he belonged to the 7th Bengal Infantry. No Cavalry horses were on board the ship in which he returned to India; and he died about two months after landing. Sir Anthony Home, the Surgeon General of Her Majesty's Forces in India, having investigated the case, reported that, in his opinion, Major Logan's death was not due to glanders. Though the Government instituted inquiry, no case of a Native having contracted glanders could be traced. The pay of a salootree is 38 rupees a month.

LABOURERS' (IRELAND) ACT, 1883—ANNUAL REPAYMENTS.

MR. O'SULLIVAN asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If he is aware that the different Boards of Guardians in Ireland who have borrowed money from the Treasury for the purpose of building cottages under the Labourers' (Ireland) Act, are still debited in their bonds with the annual sum of five pounds seven shillings and two pence for every hundred pounds for a term of thirty-five years, notwithstanding the assurance given in March last that the Treasury had reduced the repayments of these loans to four pounds sixteen shillings and two pence per annum for every hundred pounds for the term above stated; and, if so, what steps he will take to get these loans brought under the amended terms?

MR. HIBBERT: As I informed the hon. Member on the 4th of March last, the promised reduction in the rate of interest was conditional on the passing of the amending Bill of the Government. The Treasury would not be justified in risking the longer term and lower rate of interest except upon the improved arrangements proposed in that Bill. If the hon. Member wishes to obtain early advantage of the reduction, I should recommend him to use his influence with the three hon. Members opposite me who have blocked the Bill. As the Bill is the result of the labours of a Select Committee of the House, I would appeal to those hon. Members to withdraw their block.

MR. O'SULLIVAN: Will the Bill be retrospective?

MR. HIBBERT: No.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: If the blocks are removed, will the Government press on the Bill?

MR. HIBBERT: I think so. I am told so.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he wished to asked the Leader of the Opposition, in reference to the statement of the Secretary to the Treasury that the Government were precluded from pressing the Labourers' Bill owing to the action of three hon. Members of the Conservative Party, whether the right hon. Gentleman would use his influence with these three hon. Members to cease their opposition to the Bill, which was founded on the Report of a Select Committee that included Conservative Members?

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I have no knowledge of the matter.

NATIONAL EDUCATION COMMISSION (IRELAND)—THE LATE LORD O'HAGAN.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Commissioners of National Education have decided to allow a Return of their attendances at the Board Meetings to appear in their Annual Report; and, whether any appointment has yet been made to the place at the Board vacated by the death of Lord O'Hagan?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Commissioners of National Education have decided not to publish any such Return as that suggested in the first part of this Question. No appointment has yet been made to the Board in the place of Lord O'Hagan.

MR. SEXTON: Why do the Commissioners refuse to give the information given last year?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am only informed that they do not consider it wise to do it.

POST OFFICE—RURAL LETTER CARRIERS—BOOT AND SHOE MONEY.

MR. SEXTON asked the Postmaster General, What steps will be taken to provide the rural postmen of the United Kingdom with boots or boot money?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: The idea of supplying postmen with boots has never been entertained; and there is no intention of taking any steps in the direction indicated.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS—RETIRING PENSIONS.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the Government will consider a transfer of the grant of about £7,000 annually made for payment of retiring allowances to Irish National Teachers (and now about being withdrawn from that fund) to the fund appropriated for the purpose of the National Teachers' Pension Scheme?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It appears that since 1856 Parliament has voted annually a sum to enable the Commissioners of Education to award gratuities to incapacitated teachers. When the Pension Fund — which is quite independent of Parliamentary control—was started in 1879, with a large capital sum from the Church surplus, it was left optional for five years with teachers to join it. A certain number of them elected not to do so; and it is for the purpose of providing for these cases that the annual Parliamentary grant is kept up. The sum estimated for the present year is £1,800. It is intended to continue this provision only so long as there is a necessity for it; but the proposal of the hon. Member is that the Government should deprive a certain number of the teachers of their retiring gratuities, and, at the same time, make a fundamental change in the principle of the pension scheme by tacking on to it an annual Parliamentary grant. The Government could not agree to such a proposal.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES) — PENSIONS—CASE OF SERGEANT-INSTRUCTOR LYNE.

VISCOUNT LEWISHAM asked the Secretary of State for War, If he is aware that the additional pension awarded to Sergeant Instructor Lyne, late of the Royal Marines, under War Office Regulations, which pension he, in October last year, after a delay of over six months, stated would be increased as soon as the necessary Order in Council had been obtained, has not yet been paid; and, whether an Order in Council has only recently been issued, although in October last year the War Office had already submitted the case to the Admiralty, curtly stating that the pension will not be increased; and, if so, what are the reasons assigned by the Admiralty for not complying with the award of the War Office?

MR. CAINE (who replied) said: Orders have been issued for the payment to Sergeant Lyne of the additional pension of 8*d.* a-day. There was a misunderstanding at the Admiralty as to the precise amount of additional pension payable under the Regulations of the War Office, which caused delay; but the additional pension will be awarded retrospectively, so that Sergeant Lyne will not be a loser.

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND) BILL.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What scale of remuneration the Local Government propose to allow to Poor Law officials under the Registration Bill?

MR. SEXTON also asked whether, on the introduction of the Lodger Franchise in 1868, the remuneration for additional duties in that year of the Clerks of the Peace, Town Clerks, and Clerks of Unions in Ireland was defrayed by the Treasury, under 31 and 32 Vic. c. 112, s. 27; and, if so, what was the amount so paid?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: In reply to the Questions of the hon. Members for Monaghan and Sligo, a statement will be made on Monday of the course the Government intend to take on this subject; and with reference to the hon. Member for Sligo's Question, I would say that we have before us the precedent to which he refers.

MR. SEXTON: Are the matters in my Question correctly stated?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Not quite.

MR. HEALY: I do not think the right hon. Gentleman has understood

the bearing of my Question. I do not mean to ask whether it will be a local rate or an Imperial charge; but what will be the scale fixed under the Schedule in the Act?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I think it would be more convenient to make a statement on the whole question on Monday. I am not in a position to say at present what scale the Local Government Board will lay down.

POST OFFICE—MADAGASCAR.

MR. A. M'ARTHUR asked the Postmaster General, Whether, in view of the serious complaints of the British residents in Madagascar as to the infrequent and irregular delivery of the mails from England, and as to the inability of Her Majesty's Consul at Tamatave to afford relief, he will take steps to place the postal communication between this Country and Madagascar, as far as possible, on a more satisfactory basis?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I am very sorry that the mails for Madagascar are not delivered with the frequency and regularity which the British residents in that place could desire; but we avail ourselves of the only opportunity that at present exists—namely, that of the monthly French Packet—to send the mails. To establish an independent British Mail Service would be very costly; and the small amount of correspondence sent to Madagascar would not justify Her Majesty's Government in incurring such an expense as would be necessary on this account.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT—ADMISSION OF SOLDIERS TO THE FRANCHISE.

MR. LEAHY asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the statement made by the clerk of the Naas Union, as reported in *The Leinster Leader* of the 4th instant, that the married soldiers occupying huts in the Military Encampment at the Curragh, in the county of Kildare, are entitled to be put on the voters' list; and, whether this is a correct interpretation of the purpose of the Franchise Act and the Registration Bill?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): It is not quite possible for me, under the present circumstances, to state whether married soldiers are entitled to be registered. I cannot answer that Question without being aware of the special circumstances of the case.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—ENGLISH OFFICERS—PAY AND STORES.

MR. ARCHDALE asked the Secretary of State for War, Is it a fact that the boat lanterns and filters have been taken from the officers in the summer camps in the Soudan, on the ground that they were only intended for the men, and that the officers were to supply themselves with those articles out of their field allowance; whether any provisions have been made to enable them to do so; and, is it a fact that when serving to the south of Wady Halfa the officers of the Egyptian Army's pay is doubled, while no addition is made to the pay of the British Army?

SIR ARTHUR HAYTER (who replied) said: I am sorry to say that at the War Office we have no information on the subject to which the hon. Member's Question refers.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: Will the Secretary of State make inquiries?

SIR ARTHUR HAYTER: I will make inquiries as to the third Question; but as to the other two, they will probably be rectified on complaints being made by the officers themselves.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—POLICE FORCE AT ESKER.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the police stations at Esker, between Bangher and Clonfert, are charged as extra police; and, if so, what is the nature of their duty; and, what are the circumstances which render it necessary that the district in question should be burdened with an extra police force?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The police at Esker Station are not charged as extra police to the locality; and their duties do not differ from those of the men at any other station in the county.

POST OFFICE—PROFESSOR S. P. THOMPSON'S VALVE TELEPHONE.

MR. KENNY asked the Postmaster General, If, since October 1884, he has had an opportunity of examining the

valve telephone of Professor S. P. Thompson; and, if so, what Report have the officials of the Post Office made upon it?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: No opportunity has been given to the officials of the Post Office up to the present time of examining the valve telephone of Professor Thompson.

PUBLIC HEALTH (IRELAND) — CONTAMINATION OF DRINKING WATER BY THE POLICE AT ORANMORE.

COLONEL NOLAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the police at Oranmore lately made a drain from the barrack cesspool into the stream from which the inhabitants of Oranmore draw their drinking water; if the Local Officer of Health and the Board of Guardians strongly objected to this contamination of the drinking water, and if the Board of Guardians succeeded in closing up this drain; if the inhabitants of Oranmore celebrated this stoppage of the pollution by assembling at the drain and playing music; if, upon this, the police prosecuted, under the Prevention of Crime Act, the Local Officer of Health and some others, and if the magistrates dismissed the summons; if he would direct that, for the future, the Crimes Act should not be used against people who, in their anxiety for pure water, assembled in a manner disliked by the Constabulary; and, if he would inform the police that cases of this kind had better be dealt with under the ordinary Civil Law?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I must ask the hon. and gallant Member to give me Notice of this Question, which appeared on the Paper for the first time to-day.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS — FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE — EAST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE.

MR. DUCKHAM asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether it is correct that an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease has occurred at Kelleythorpe, in the East Riding of Yorkshire, as announced in *The Times* of Tuesday last; and, if so, whether the origin of the outbreak is known; and, whether the further report in *The Times* of yesterday of another outbreak at Hale, in Lancashire, is correct; and, if so, whether the origin of that outbreak is known?

MR. TREVELYAN: an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease was reported on Monday, April 27, on a farm at Kelleythorpe, near Driffield, in a herd of 140 cattle, of which 23 were reported to be affected. The sick animals are now nearly recovered, and no extension of the disease has occurred. The origin of the outbreak is not known. In reference to the alleged outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease at Hale, it appears that the disease is pleuro-pneumonia, which was detected in a herd of 75 cattle on the 24th of April. One animal is reported to have been attacked.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked whether the published statement was true, that an outbreak of pleuro-pneumonia had occurred in Boston, and that 140 cattle had had to be destroyed, involving a loss of £2,800?

MR. TREVELYAN: I am not sure as to the number; and I would rather the hon. and gallant Gentleman would give me Notice of the Question.

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS BILLS.

MR. GREGORY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he is aware of the difficulty that must arise in carrying out the registration of persons entitled to vote in counties under the new franchise, unless the operations of the clerks of the peace and overseers in the different districts are facilitated by the early passing of the Registration Bill; and, whether he can give an opportunity for the consideration of that measure as reported from the Select Committee?

MR. GLADSTONE: I am quite aware that the hon. Member opposite has very good foundation for putting this Question, and we are most anxious not to lose a moment in proceeding with the Registration Bill—I mean any moment such as is fairly at our disposal for the purpose. In truth, nothing but the consideration of that urgency would justify our ceasing to proceed with the Report of the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill. What we propose is, to go on to-night with the Irish and Scotch Registration Bills, with a good hope that we may be able to dispose of those measures at the present Sitting. If we should not so dispose of them to-night, we shall go forward with them on Mon-

day, and do what may remain necessary so far as the Committee stage is concerned. But there was an arrangement last night that, if it were not an inconveniently late hour, the Report of the Vote of Credit should be brought on. Probably it may be wished that that should not be long postponed. The arrangement failed last night in consequence of the prolongation of the debate on the Financial Statement of my right hon. Friend; and therefore we should be quite willing to adhere to the same arrangement for Monday night, and not proceed with the consideration of the Registration Bill later than 10 o'clock, in order to bring up the Report on the Vote of Credit. After that we should wish to proceed at the earliest moment with the English Registration Bill, the urgency being very great. Indeed, I am informed that the operation of registration cannot be efficiently performed if there is any serious delay in the passing of those Bills.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I do not quite understand what the right hon. Gentleman contemplates in regard to the English Registration Bill. I understood him to say that if the Scotch and Irish Registration Bills were finished to-night, the English Registration Bill would be taken first on Monday, with the intention of suspending the discussion upon it at 10 o'clock. But supposing the Scotch Bill, which stands second to-day, is not finished to-night, will it be taken first on Monday? If so, does the right hon. Gentleman propose to take the English Registration Bill after the Scotch Bill on Monday, or will he be disposed to take the Report of the Vote of Credit?

MR. GLADSTONE: Certainly; we shall be very glad—and we believe it to be in the public interest, if it should be generally satisfactory to the House—to proceed with all the three Registration Bills in succession in the stage of Committee. At the same time, we desire to consult the convenience of the House as to the mode of proceeding.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: It will be very inconvenient if there is no definite statement as to what is really to be done on Monday; because, when the Committee on the Irish Registration Bill arrived at a certain decision last Friday, the Prime Minister moved to report Progress on the ground of the very important change made in the Bill, stating that he desired to have time to consider the matter, and to convey to the House the intention of Her Majesty's Government. That was an important announcement; and this evening the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant has informed us that the statement will not be made until Monday, as I understood, upon the English Registration Bill. At any rate, my hon. Friend the Member for South Devon (Sir Massey Lopes) has given Notice that he will raise on the English Registration Bill precisely the same question which was considered of such grave importance by the Prime Minister when decided against the Government on the Irish Registration Bill. All we ask for is full notice when the English Registration Bill is really to be taken, in order that so important a matter may be fairly discussed.

MR. GLADSTONE: I have said already that we wish to consult the convenience of the House; and we are very desirous, if the House should be so disposed, to go forward with these measures. It is quite true, as the right hon. Gentleman has said, that I deemed it necessary to take time, in consequence of the vote which was given the other night on the Irish Registration Bill. We have taken time to examine the matter, and we have observed what happened in 1868, and we are prepared to make a proposal which we believe will be equitable and suited to the circumstances of the case. I apprehend, as regards the reference lately made to the 6th clause, that that clause having been amended in Committee on the Bill cannot be again taken up. We must go forward with the clauses, and anything to be done with the Irish Bill must be done on the Report. Should the statement of the Government not be satisfactory to the House at large on Monday, we should certainly make no attempt to force the English Registration Bill on that day, but would postpone it till Tuesday.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL asked after what hour the Scotch Registration Bill would not be taken that night? He would remind the House that the Bill was only circulated on the morning of the day on which it was read a second time, and that a promise was given that an opportunity would be

given in Committee for discussing the various points arising.

MR. BUCHANAN asked whether, if the Bill came on that night, the Government would defer taking the new clauses, which were very important, and of which the Lord Advocate had placed no fewer than six on the Paper that morning?

MR. GLADSTONE said, the Lord Advocate would be better able than he was to answer those Questions. He had had no communication with his right hon. and learned Friend on the subject. At the same time, he understood there was a general unity of feeling prevailing with regard to the Scotch Bill, and if that was so they should be disposed to go forward with it. If that was not so, however, he did not think the Lord Advocate would press the matter unduly at an inconvenient hour.

MR. J. LOWTHER: Do I rightly understand the right hon. Gentleman to state that in the event of any matter of controversy arising on the English Registration Bill it will be placed as the first Order on Tuesday?

MR. GLADSTONE: That is so. On Monday we will not proceed with it if our statement should not be satisfactory to the House.

MR. J. LOWTHER: And it will be the first Order?

MR. GLADSTONE: I think I may say it would be the first Order on Tuesday.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL said, that, seeing the Lord Advocate now in his place, he would ask whether it was the intention of the right hon. and learned Gentleman to proceed with the Scotch Bill at any hour that night; or whether, considering the understanding given out on the occasion of the second reading, that due opportunity would be given for discussing the points that might arise, it would be postponed?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, that if there was anything really contentious in the Bill, of which he was not aware, they should be glad to defer to the wishes of the House. He did not believe it would be found that there was anything contentious.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL: Will the Bill come on at any hour?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): Yes.

MR. HEALY asked whether the proposal in regard to the double lodger qualification was peculiar to Scotland?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): No, Sir. The proposal simply adopts the words of the English Registration Act. It was introduced in the English Act in 1878, and we merely propose to apply the same to Scotland.

MR. HEALY asked the Solicitor General for Ireland whether he would insert a similar provision in the Irish Act?

[No reply.]

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE asked, Whether it was to be clearly understood that the second reading of the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill would be taken on Thursday week?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS), in reply, said, that the second reading would be taken on Thursday week, and the Bill would be in the hands of Members in a few days.

CENTRAL ASIA—AFGHANISTAN.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish to ask the Prime Minister whether any news has been received from Afghanistan?

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir; I am not aware that any information has been received.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND) BILL.—[BILL 110.]

(Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 24th April.*]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

MR. HEALY rose to a point of Order. He wished to ask whether the Chief Secretary for Ireland was correct in stating that the Question, "That Clause 6 be added to the Bill," had not yet been disposed of?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said that it would still be necessary to put that Question.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH remarked that the clause as it now

stood was perfect nonsense; and surely, if the first part were allowed to stand in the Bill, the Government would consent to strike out the last four lines, which really meant nothing at all. After the first part had gone it would be impossible to retain the last.

THE CHAIRMAN pointed out that it would be necessary to leave out the remainder of the clause, seeing that in the shape in which it now stood it was not intelligible. What had already been done was to omit the first part, upon which the second depended.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, he would be prepared at the proper time to omit the remainder of the clause.

Amendment proposed, that Clause 6 be amended by leaving out all the words after "Dublin," in line 21, down to the word "order," in line 26.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

MR. HEALY remarked that what had occurred on Thursday week rendered it undesirable to retain any part of the clause. He would ask the Chief Secretary if he proposed to bring up a new clause?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, that on Monday he would be able to state what it was the Government proposed to do. It would certainly be necessary to bring up a new clause.

MR. HEALY asked if it would be necessary to re-commit the Bill for that purpose?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, he thought it would be necessary to re-commit the Bill.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Clause 6, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

MR. PARNELL said, he had intended to move the omission of the clause; but after the statement of the Chief Secretary he did not propose to do so. He would suggest, however, that the most convenient course would be to strike out the clause altogether, so as to enable the House to discuss the new clause which the Government proposed to bring up in Committee.

COLONEL NOLAN said, that a point of Order had been raised by the answer of the Chief Secretary. Would it now be possible in Committee to put in a new clause? His own opinion was that it would not be possible in Committee, but that it should be done on Report. He should like, therefore, to be informed, as a point of Order, whether the new clause could be inserted in the Bill in Committee, either by re-committal or otherwise? He thought himself that no charge could be imposed upon the Poor Law Guardians in Committee.

Clause *struck out.*

Amendment proposed, to leave out Clause 7.—(*Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

Clauses 8 and 9 *agreed to.*

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN moved, after Clause 5, to insert the following clause:—

(Power to appoint additional revising barristers.)

"The Lord Lieutenant may, if he thinks it necessary, appoint one or more barrister or barristers, of not less than six years' standing at the bar, to act with the chairman or revising barrister of any county or borough in revising the list of voters in such county or borough in the year one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five.

"The chairman, or revising barrister, and the person or persons so appointed, shall arrange for the distribution between them of the business of such revision.

"Every barrister so appointed shall have the same powers and authorities in every respect in regard to such revision as a chairman has under the Registration Acts, and shall be paid as remuneration for his services, *out of moneys to be provided by Parliament*, such sums as the Lord Lieutenant, with the consent of the Treasury, may determine.

"In any county or borough in which more revision courts than one are appointed to sit at the same time it shall be lawful for the clerk of the peace, with the approval of the Lord Chancellor, to nominate a person to attend before any of such courts other than that before which such clerk of the peace himself attends, and to discharge the duties imposed by law upon the clerk of the peace in respect of such revision.

"The person so appointed shall be paid, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, such remuneration for his services as the Lord Chancellor with the sanction of the Treasury may determine."

Clause *brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be read a second time."

MR. HEALY said, that this was a very important clause; and he wished

to remark with regard to it that, while he was perfectly content with the action of Her Majesty's Government in introducing a clause for the appointment of these additional barristers to assist when it was necessary in the work of revision; while he considered it was a very proper thing for them to do, and that they deserved consideration on that account, at the same time it was very necessary for Irish Members to know who those Revising Barristers were to be. If they were to assent to the clause without having that information, they would be, so to speak, "buying a pig in a poke." The Boundary Commissioners had been appointed without their knowing anything about them, and the Nationalist Party were now smarting under their action; and if those Revising Barristers were appointed in the same way they might be quite unable to fight any registration cases that required to be contested. There was nothing which the people in Ireland felt so keenly interested in as this question of Revising Barristers. People were sometimes kept waiting about the Court for a week; and if a man did not happen to be present when his name was called his case was passed over, although if, as was sometimes the case, the Revising Barrister was a fair man, he would allow a little law. In his own neighbourhood the Revising Barrister was a man of over 80 years of age, and quite unable to take cognizance of what was going on in Court; and he believed that 30 years ago he sentenced a man to be hanged for stealing a cow. He would like to know who those barristers were to be? He and his hon. Friends did not care very much about any of the four Provinces of Ireland in this matter except Ulster; and with regard to the matter he did not think that he should be inclined to throw any additional expense upon the Treasury. He thought it would be quite unnecessary to give additional assistance to the Revising Barristers, except in places where there would be contests; and the Government might make up their mind that in Munster, Leinster, and Connaught, the people would be put on the Electoral Roll *en bloc*. But in the Ulster counties the case would be very different. In respect of the other 24 counties of Ireland, therefore, he thought the Government might save their money. In the counties of Cavan and Monaghan there would be no fight; but in Tyrone, Armagh, Donegal, Derry, the Western Division of Down, and in Fermanagh there would be enough work for three or four Revising Barristers in each case; every vote would be regarded as if the Election itself depended upon it. Therefore he repeated that it was in those counties in which would arise a conflict at election time that the Government should provide additional assistance for the Revising Barrister. Take the case of Mr. Piers White. Well, he was an extremely able lawyer for whom he had the greatest respect, and certainly well qualified for the position that had been assigned to him; but it was well known how political rewards were given in Ireland; and if his appointment dated from the time when he jerrymandered the divisions of Irish counties, then he thought that the people of Ireland would have a very strong suspicion in his case. In the same way with regard to barristers to be appointed under this Act. They had no security for the confidence they were asked to place in them; they had no guarantee and therefore could not trust them; and unless they saw their names in black and white, and ascertained what kind of men were to be appointed, they would be passing this clause blindfold. He trusted they would have some statement before the Bill left the House with regard to the barristers to be appointed. It was a question which affected the barristers themselves equally with Irish Members, and it was one on which he contended that all parties interested ought to be satisfied.

Mr. GIBSON said, he was glad that the Government had presented to the Committee an elastic clause like the present, because it was obvious that, as had been pointed out by the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), the work to be performed by the Revising Barrister would vary greatly in the different counties of Ireland. There were some counties in which the work must be very laborious, and where in consequence the work of the Revising Barristers would extend over a period of, perhaps, six weeks, or, at all events, a considerable time, and unless they gave all the assistance they could to the County Court Judge he would not be able to get through his business at all—it would be impossible for him to do the work

well. He was glad to see that the Government proposed to take powers not to appoint one man only in each county, but two or more as they might think fit and the exigencies of the work might demand; and he would not be surprised if it were found that the provision made for some cases, in the first instance, required to be considerably supplemented. He did not ask the Government to create any army of assistance for the County Court Judge and burden the country with the cost, because it would be probably unnecessary; but there should be sufficient assistance to enable him to do his business properly. As urged by the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan there would be strong contests in some places in Ireland, and it was likely that districts where the Legal Advisers of the Crown would seek election would be keenly contested—and it was in such places that additional assistance would be largely required. It was desirable that in every place they should have a clean Register; and it would not be reasonable to expect that the County Court Judge should dispose of thousands of fresh names that would be put on the Register as the result of recent legislation without any assistance or extra remuneration. Therefore, where there was any kind of political contest, it was for the Government to see that the provision of the Act of Parliament was adequately carried out, and that as far as might be there was a pure Register, and that he said in the interest both of electoral law in Ireland, and also in the interest of the County Court Judges. The County Court Judges did not receive large salaries; they had to perform a great deal of the judicial work of the country, and it would not be fair to give them a great increase of work without giving them corresponding remuneration, or what was the equivalent to it—that was to say, taking care that their extra work should not be allowed to interfere with the remuneration they were in the habit of getting and which they had a right to expect. With regard to what had been said as to putting in the Bill the names of 12 barristers of the Irish Bar who commanded universal confidence amongst Parties in Ireland, if that were to be the settlement of the matter accepted by the Government, he would wait compliance with it almost with a feeling of intense curiosity. He was well acquainted with the Irish Bar and had great respect for its members, no matter of what creed or politics they were. He thought it would hardly be possible for the Government to name a considerable number of barristers of six years' standing and upwards to discharge this duty—at any rate the list would be an exhaustive one. He thought that, in the first instance, the Government should only name as many Assistant Barristers as they considered to be absolutely necessary, but reserve power to themselves to extend the list as far as experience showed it to be desirable to do so, and that they should waive all political feeling in their selection. Therefore, if it should be necessary to move a statutory provision in the way indicated, he thought it would be well to trust in this as in many other cases to the discretion of the Executive. The Committee were all watching to see that the Government did not appoint rabid partizans on any side to exercise this function, and it was the duty of the Government to find fair men of good professional character who would be anxious honestly to carry out the provisions of this important Act of Parliament.

MR. SEXTON said, he did not consider that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) had fairly represented the argument of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy). They all agreed that some such provision as that contained in the present clause would be necesary in Ireland in certain cases. The number of those cases could be ascertained with tolerable certainty. He believed that the right hon. and learned Gentleman who had just spoken would not say that, except in the County and City of Dublin and in Ulster, there would be any contest between the two English Parties. The general impression in Ireland was, that neither the Liberal nor the Tory Party would be interested to any extent in any election outside Ulster, except that in the county of Dublin. He did not think that in the other cases the work of the Revising Barristers would be great, or that the salaries of the County Court Judges need be increased. He believed that, except in the case of Dublin, they would be able to get through their business without extra remuneration. In Ulster

they would require assistance—particularly in respect of those counties with regard to which questions had been raised in that House during the passage of the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill—that was to say, the counties that had been jerrymandered in order to procure a Party triumph. In those counties thousands of people would flood the Registers—objections would be taken on various grounds to many of them, and the work of revision would be protracted, and the County Court Judge would want assistance. Probably about 10 appointments would be requisite in Ireland. The right hon. and learned Gentleman thought that the Government should not put the names in the Bill; but the Irish Members had never asked for that. They asked that before the Bill passed out of the hands of Parliament the names should be communicated to the House; or, if the actual names were not communicated to the House, at any rate that a list should be made out on the assumption that 10 appointments were to be made, and that they should have a list of, say, 20 names out of which the Government would make their selection. The right hon. and learned Gentleman thought it would be difficult, if not impossible, to get a dozen names of barristers whose appointment would not provoke general hostility; he (Mr. Sexton) believed it would not be difficult to get the names of such persons, especially amongst those barristers of more than six years' standing whose political passions, it was only reasonable to suppose, had been somewhat mellowed by time. Did the right hon. and learned Gentleman mean to say that those men could not be found? There were more than 400 practising barristers in Ireland, and surely there were a dozen men amongst them who had not taken up any violent position in politics, and who, although they should not command general confidence, might at least be appointed by the Government without provoking hostility. He asked whether the Government would not make the arrangement proposed, and submit a list to the House of persons to assist the County Court Judges in Ireland? The right hon. and learned Gentleman had made a suggestion which he (Mr. Sexton) regarded as worthless, and which he thought the right hon. and learned Gentleman himself suspected was not very valuable. He had spoken of the check that would be afforded by public opinion. But of what use had public opinion been to them? Irish Members had been trying throughout the passage of the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill to reverse the tricks of the Boundary Commissioners in jerrymandering the counties in the North of Ireland. They had public opinion with them—they had 75 per cent of the Irish electorate with them; but public opinion was of no use to them as a check on power, and it was so, because, as the right hon. and learned Gentleman knew, the check of public opinion was perfectly worthless whenever a Party cry was raised on any question in Ireland. Now, Irish Members on those Benches could not accept the check of public opinion, for the reason that it did not operate in that House; and the only security they could accept as being in any way satisfactory was the security that would be afforded by a list of unexceptionable barristers under the Government guarantee.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, he was afraid that what the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had suggested was hardly practicable; he did not know that the course proposed by the hon. Member had been followed in any case of the kind. Where Commissioners were specially mentioned in Bills the case was altogether different; but certainly he could not find that there was any precedent for doing what was now asked for, where it was merely laid down that certain additional officials should be appointed in order to carry out general duties prescribed in a Bill. He need hardly say that the Government would not in those appointments be influenced by any of the motives suggested by the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy). As occasion arose, so would additional Revising Barristers be employed in the counties in which their services might be required, although he was afraid that any assurance which he could give would be of very little value in the eyes of the hon. and learned Member so far as this subject was concerned. The only object and desire of the Government was to have competent persons to do the work impartially and thoroughly. The hon. and learned Member asked if the Government would give a guarantee? Well,

he was afraid they could give no guarantee except the assurance he had given, that they had no intention of doing anything unfair in this matter. If they could find impartial gentlemen qualified for those appointments—and, personally, he should be surprised if such could not be found—they would employ them. But two things were necessary—first, that they should be impartial; and, next, that everybody should think that they were impartial. He was not quite so sanguine about securing the second of those conditions as he was with regard to the first; but he could assure the hon. and learned Member that no effort on their part should be spared to find men, in both respects, suitable for this difficult position. The Government were fully impressed with the necessity of having persons who were free from suspicion, especially in the cases of the counties alluded to by the hon. and learned Member, in which there was, no doubt, a strong feeling as to the state of the Register.

MR. LEWIS thought that if they could not trust the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to select, out of 400 practising barristers, those 12 or 18 persons to act for a week, or a fortnight at most, in certain counties of Ireland, the sooner they displaced him the better. He did not suggest for one moment that the interests of any Party were likely to be damaged by this very important provision. He thought it likely that some 20 barristers, perhaps, would get 50 or 60 guineas for a week or ten days' work, and that, as in his own county so with others, they would not probably be required at all; and the number of counties in which additional Revising Barristers would be needed would, in his opinion, be very limited. No doubt there were some constituencies to be found, even in Ireland, which would return Members who would vote for what was called the English Party, and who represented those who still adhered to the Union. He thought that objections might be offered to their being on the Register by the so-called Nationalist Party; but whatever the duties of the additional Revising Barristers were, they would only extend over a short space of time, and he thought it was reducing legislation to a farce to ask the Government to give before the Bill was passed the names of the persons who might be employed.

MR. H. G. ALLEN said, he thought the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) and the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had gone out of their way in anticipating that the Revising Barristers would be ill-advised enough to be guilty of any act of partizanship with regard to the registration of voters. He thought those hon. Members might feel some interest in hearing from those who had had large experience in matters connected with registration that there was no such thing as partizanship on the part of Revising Barristers in England. He spoke as one who had been a Revising Barrister for many years, and had had much experience not only as to the feeling and disposition of barristers of his own political opinions, which would be little to the point, but with respect to the feeling of those of all parties; and he believed there was no such thing known as partizanship on the part of Revising Barristers from one end of the Kingdom to the other. When a young barrister was appointed to the position his one anxiety was that his decisions should be received with respect—that they should be given according to law, and with an entire absence of partiality to any political Party whatever; his great point was that his decisions should be legally correct, and not such as to be over-ruled by the Court above, and that he should establish his name and reputation in the Courts of Law as a sound lawyer. That, at any rate, was the case in England; and now with regard to partizanship amongst the Irish barristers. The hon. and learned Member opposite (Mr. Healy) desired to have the names of the persons to be appointed to assist in the work of registration in order that their qualifications might be discussed by politicians, a course, in his opinion, that would be derogatory to their position as judicial officers, and not likely to bring about any useful result. He (Mr. H. G. Allen) ventured to repeat, that any such feeling as partizanship was unknown amongst Revising Barristers in this country; and, from what one knew of members of the Irish Bar whom they met in the English Courts of Law and at the social tables in the Inns of Court, he did not think that they differed from Saxon barristers very much in that respect. For himself, he should have thought that the Lord Chief Justice of

Ireland would have been a better authority than the Lord Lieutenant in whom to vest those appointments; but, however that might be, he trusted and felt full confidence that all sinister predictions as to partizanship on the part of Irish Revising Barristers would be entirely falsified. He had made these remarks, because he believed that the revision of voters in Ireland had been hitherto in hands of Chairmen of Sessions and County Conrt Judges, and that the appointment of Revising Barristers, of which there was so much experience here, was, as yet, an untried mode of proceeding there.

MR. HEALY said, the answer to the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just spoken might be summed up in the words—that the British Constitution was the law in England, but not in Ireland. The hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) thought it would be all right if the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland had the appointing of those barristers. But they knew very well that the Government did not care for their opinion, or for the opinion of the majority of the people of Ireland; the only question they asked themselves was, "How will the Tory Party view our conduct?" They had to please the Tories in this matter. And it would be just the same with the Revising Barristers as it had been with the appointment of the Boundary Commissioners. Some hon. Gentleman—a Member of the Tory Party—would probably go to Dublin Castle and see the Irish Solicitor General, and describe a friend of his as being an admirable person for the post of Revising Barrister; then someone would meet the Solicitor General for Ireland in the street and give the individual's name, and say "he is a member of our Club," and in that way the appointment would be made. As to telling Irish Members that the most impartial persons would be appointed, it had no weight with them whatever. He would not go into details; but he should like to hear the Solicitor General for Ireland get up and justify at the Table of the House an appointment made last year. The Solicitor General for Ireland would not deny that he got a Bill passed in the House last year under a promise, and that subsequently that promise was broken, owing to the intervention of Earl Spencer. That was the state of things they had to contend with; and with regard to those appointments, Earl Spencer would take out a list of Freemasons, and barristers who were Freemasons would be appointed; he would look up the men who belonged to Orange Lodges and appoint them. There would be no such thing as deferring to public opinion in the matter. He repeated that that was how those affairs were managed in Ireland; and if the Solicitor General for Ireland would challenge him as to what happened last year in Dublin Castle, he ventured to say that the statement he should make would surprise the Committee a great deal. Under the circumstances, Irish Members felt that they ought to have some guarantee with regard to the appointments in this case. How was the Boundary Commission appointed? The Tory Party got its representative upon it, and likewise the Whig Party; but the Party who had three-fourths of the representation of the country were not allowed to have a single man to represent them on that Commission. When they came to the House next year the work of the Revising Barristers would be a thing of the past, a new Parliament would have been elected, and if Irish Members had cause to complain of the action of the Revising Barristers, and put forward their complaint in that House, the right hon. Gentleman on the Treasury Bench would simply laugh in their faces. Irish Members felt that they could not allow the seats in Ireland to be subject to a second course of jerrymandering; and therefore he again urged upon the Government to consent to give the names of the barristers to be appointed to assist in the work of revision before the Bill left the House.

SIR PATRICK O'BRIEN said, that his experience of such matters was that in former days in Ireland appointments of a legal character were made by the Attorney General or Solicitor General, who exercised the patronage, although the Lord Lieutenant or any other layman might nominally hold the position of making the appointments. He was sorry, however, to see that Attorneys General and Solicitors General did not maintain their position as they had been accustomed to in former days, when they would not have allowed a Cabinet Minister to interfere with them in the duty which they had to perform in that

House. He believed that these appointments would be made by those who were best qualified to make them by their knowledge of the legal position and intelligence of those whom they appointed. He thought that hon. Members opposite below the Gangway were living in a fool's paradise. Ulster had always been the special seat of disorder, at least of political and religious strife in Ireland, and in many constituencies probably throughout the three Provinces hon. Gentlemen opposite would be indulged with a contest. They seemed to think that, with the exception of the county of Dublin, there would be a lullaby all over three Provinces in Ireland at the coming General Election, and that no assistance would be required from the Revising Barrister or the County Court Judge, who in Ireland was always the Chairman of Quarter Sessions, although that was not the case in England. Hon. Gentlemen opposite appeared to think that only one state of political feeling would prevail in Ireland; but he had often heard the name of "progress" used, and when the new constituencies were formed there was certainly no guarantee that a good many of the Nationalist Representatives, as they called themselves, might not be replaced by the labourers themselves. ["Hear, hear!"]

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, it would not be in Order to follow up the allusion of the hon. Member to the labourers' question; but he noticed that it had received a cheer from the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis). He presumed that the hon. Member meant to insinuate that the cause of the labourers had not received sufficient attention from those Benches.

SIR PATRICK O'BRIEN: Until lately.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR imagined that, in the opinion of the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis), the Labourers Bill would already have become law if it had not been for the obstruction of two hon. Gentlemen sitting on his own Benches. No one would dispute the good intentions of the hon. and learned Member for Pembroke (Mr. H. G. Allen); but, at the same time, the observations of the hon. and learned Gentleman showed invincible ignorance. The Irish Revising Courts were altogether the reverse of those in England. The hon. and learned Gentleman said the Revising Barristers of England were anxious to discharge their duties with thorough impartiality, that they avoided everything which bore the semblance of partizanship, and that they were kind and courteous to everybody who appeared before them. It was very different in Ireland, and he would say that there were no tribunals even in that country which gave grosser instances of partiality and partizanship than the Revising Courts there. He was prepared to justify his statement that the only way in which the Irish Courts of Revision could be properly described was by applying to them epithets which were the complete antithesis of those which had been applied by the hon. and learned Gentleman to the Revising Barristers' Courts in England. He would suggest that his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) should enlarge his demand, and not only ask the Chief Secretary to name the 14 gentlemen who were to be appointed Revising Barristers in Ireland, but require that they should be all Englishmen, because in that case the Irish people would have a far better guarantee of the impartiality of the tribunal. [MR. LEAMY dissented.] His hon. and learned Friend the Member for the City of Waterford (Mr. Leamy) dissented from that view. He could fully understand the feeling of his hon. and learned Friend. The hon. and learned Gentleman was a member of the Legal Profession in Ireland; and, no doubt, if he were appointed, they might depend upon the impartiality of the tribunal. But in Ireland it would be impossible to obtain the services of such men, and he (Mr. O'Connor) was prepared to stand by his opinion that the people would have a far better chance of securing fair treatment from English Revising Barristers than from those selected by the Lord Lieutenant and the Attorney and Solicitor General for Ireland. There was too much cause for suspicion that barristers appointed by Earl Spencer would, in collusion with the agents of the Tory Party, manage to deprive a large number of persons of their votes. He might, perhaps, be allowed to refer to a circumstance which occurred some time ago. Under the Registration Law, every person who desired to get upon the Register was

obliged to give personal attendance; and, as his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) well knew from personal experience, a man who preferred a claim was sometimes required to be in attendance for three or four days, yet if he happened to go out of the Court for a few minutes and his name was called in his absence, a partizan Revising Barrister deprived him of his vote. There was another fact he would mention. Sometimes a man whose name was objected to was actually in Court, but, owing to the mumbling way in which his name was read over, he was unable to answer to it, the name was passed over, and in that case also the voter was deprived of his rights. Those were some of the scandals which occurred in Ireland every time a Revising Barristers' Court was held; and yet the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Pembroke (Mr. H. G. Allen), with his kindly feeling, came forward to tell the Committee that the Irish Members were rather too severe in their estimate of the character of the Revising Barristers appointed to act in that country. He thought that his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) was perfectly justified in pressing the matter upon the attention of the Chief Secretary. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), who by that time had acquired perfect command over his Parliamentary demeanour, had used language which no one would better appreciate than the right hon. and learned Gentleman himself; but, nevertheless, there was a public opinion in Ireland, although with perfect certainty they might lay down the rule that whoever might be appointed by Earl Spencer to act as Revising Barrister would not be amenable to it. The Chief Secretary would be able very easily, between that and the further stages of the Bill, to prepare the names of 12 or 14 gentlemen for appointment as Revising Barristers, and if he would not put them into the Bill he might state them to the House. If there were anything like fairness in the selection, the right hon. Gentleman might rest assured that no factious opposition would be raised to them by the Irish Members.

MR. FINDLATER regretted that the experience of his hon. and learned Colleague, for the very short period since he had joined the ranks of the Irish Bar, had been such as to induce him to say that its members were likely to be actuated by partizan motives in discharging the duties of Revising Barristers.

MR. HEALY said, he had not made any assertion of the kind.

MR. FINDLATER said, the Committee had generally understood the hon. and learned Gentleman to say so. No doubt many generalities had been stated; but he had not heard a single case adduced by hon. Members opposite of any injustice done by members of the Irish Bar when placed in judicial or *quasi*-judicial positions. His knowledge of that Bar was much longer than that of his learned Colleague; and he must say that in the whole course of his experience of over 30 years, he never knew anything of the kind to occur. The best proof he could offer of his hon. and learned Colleague's having made a charge, such as he alleged, was that as an illustration of what might be expected from the barristers who would be appointed by the Government, the name of Mr. Piers White had been referred to, and he was charged with having manipulated some of the Northern constituencies when acting as a Boundary Commissioner. He had been acquainted with Mr. Piers White for years, and he was satisfied that everyone who knew that gentleman must have formed the highest opinion of his character and of his ability to do any work that might be intrusted to him. He was a splendid lawyer, with an eminently judicial mind, occupying the very highest position at the Bar, a man of profound culture, and quite incapable of such practices as were attributed to him. If anyone would look at the map of Ireland which had been published some time ago in connection with a certain newspaper in which his hon. and learned Colleague was largely interested, and which purposed to show the constituencies which would return Nationalists at their next Election, they would notice that all of it, with the exception of a small portion at the North-East corner, was coloured green, the national colour; so that, notwithstanding the charges made against Mr. Piers White, it was plain the Nationalist Party expected to carry nearly the whole of the country, and that the imputations were the merest clap-trap. ["Order!"]

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman is now discussing another Bill, and is, therefore, out of Order.

MR. FINDLATER said, that his principal reason for rising to take part in the discussion was to defend the members of the Irish Bar from the attack which had been made upon them. He had had very much more experience of the Irish Bar than his hon. and learned Colleague; and he was proud to say that he had had most intimate and friendly relations with some of the most eminent men at that Bar. He believed there was no member of it who was not actuated by as high motives as the Sister Bar of this country, and who was not altogether incapable of the improper conduct which had been suggested.

MR. HEALY said, that the hon. Member had, as usual, shown his ability to misunderstand a perfectly clear statement. All that was asked was that impartial men should be selected for those appointments, and there was no aspersion upon the character of the Irish Bar in making that request. His hon. Colleague had shown himself incompetent to understand the nature of the argument.

MR. FINDLATER very much regretted that his hon. and learned Colleague had brought in the name of Mr. Piers White as that of a gentleman who had been engaged in "jerrymandering" the constituencies. The hon. and learned Member had referred to that gentleman as an illustration of what the gentlemen appointed by the Government were likely to be. As to the flattering comments of the hon. and learned Gentleman upon his own capacity, he could only say "perhaps he was not such a fool as he looked."

MR. MACARTNEY said, he understood the proposal to be that the names of the barristers who were to be appointed to act as Revising Barristers should be submitted to the House. He wished to know if that was the practice in appointing Revising Barristers in England? If it was not, there could be no reason for doing so in the case of Ireland; and, therefore, there was no ground for the extraordinary proposition which had led to this extremely unnecessary and unpleasant discussion.

MR. SEXTON said, the request made to the Government was not that the names of the Revising Barristers to be appointed in Ireland should be submitted for the approval of Parliament, but that they should be made known to Parliament. So far as Mr. Piers White was concerned, he had not been accused of "jerrymandering" one constituency, but of "jerrymandering" six or seven.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said, he hoped that his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) would press the demand he had made that the names of the Revising Barristers should be made known before the Bill became law. It was true that there were many barristers in Ireland who, if appointed, would act in a fair and impartial spirit; but it was also true that in Ireland, as in other countries, there were barristers who could not be regarded as impartial. As that was specially the case in Ireland, what the Committee had to consider was not whether gentlemen of sufficient impartiality could be obtained, but the character of the person or persons who were to appoint those legal gentlemen. It was proposed in the new clause submitted by the Chief Secretary that—

> "The Lord Lieutenant may, if he thinks it necessary, appoint one or more barrister or barristers, of not less than six years standing at the Bar, to act with the Chairman or Revising Barrister of any county or borough in revising the list of voters."

The simple fact that by this proposal the power was to be placed in the hands of the Lord Lieutenant was quite sufficient to arouse the suspicion and hostility of the Irish Members. He had not the slightest hesitation in saying that the very fact of the appointments being in the hands of a man of the character and position of the present Lord Lieutenant was sufficient to induce the Irish Members to oppose the clause. It was altogether preposterous that appointments of so important a character should be left to the Lord Lieutenant. The Revising Barristers would have to perform most important public duties in connection with matters that were of the highest interest to the Irish representation; and that being the case, the people of Ireland and their Representatives ought to have some influence over the appointments made. The very least the Government could do was to place the names of the persons they proposed to appoint before the House, so that if there were

any objections they might be duly ventilated. Certainly they were bound to oppose the proposal to leave the whole matter in the hands of a man like Earl Spencer, and he hoped his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Healy) would divide the Committee.

Motion *agreed to.*

Clause read a second time, and *added* to the Bill.

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN moved, after Clause 6, to insert the following Clause:—

(Informalities in Registration shall not affect validity of Register.)

"As regards the registers of voters to be made in the year one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five, no election shall be questioned by reason of any error or informality whatsoever in relation to the forming, printing, publishing, revising, or completing the lists of voters, or the register of voters, for any county or borough, or by reason of any matter or thing not having been done within the time limited by law for that purpose. The signature of the chairman or revising barrister, or his deputy, to such register shall be conclusive evidence that such register has been in all respects duly made and revised, at the time and in the manner prescribed by and in conformity with the Parliamentary Registration Acts and this Act."

(Collectors shall give assistance in serving notices.)

"The collectors of poor rate in a union shall assist the clerk of the union in carrying into effect the duties imposed upon the clerk by the ninth section of 'The Representation of the People Act, 1884,' by serving the notices mentioned in that section and otherwise."

Clause *brought up,* and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be read a second time."

MR. SEXTON said, this was an extremely useful clause, as far as it went, and it enacted the important principle that no Register should be rendered invalid on account of any informality. The effect of the clause was to guard against informalities or irregularities in the forming, printing, and completing of the Register by officials; but he thought it ought to be extended by preventing the disfranchisement of persons who through mistake or ignorance did not comply with all the required formalities. He held in his hand a copy of a form issued in Ireland, which was of a most complicated and troublesome character. It referred to—

"Property in respect of which the person making the return is rated or liable to be rated."

An expression very vague, and not easy to understand. Even an educated man might fill that column in in a manner that would not be perfectly formal or in accordance with the Act. The second column required the situation or description of every dwelling to be given "as defined by the Representation of the People Act;" and the third required the "surname and other name" to be given of every man who was on the 15th July in the English Act, but in this on the 20th, and—

"Up to the date of the return, an inhabitant occupier of any dwelling house in the second column."

He wished to know what the meaning was of inserting in the Irish Bill a different day for the qualification to take effect from that in the English and Scotch Bills? It might be a mistake, and, if so, he hoped it would be rectified; but his contention with regard to these forms was that they were too complicated, and that the uneducated Irish voter would not find it easy to fill them up according to law. His hon. Friend the Member for Wicklow (Mr. W. J. Corbet) had shown him a form which he (Mr. W. J. Corbet) had filled up himself, and it was no easy matter to comprehend how such a form was to be filled up with strict accuracy. He was satisfied that a great many mistakes would be made; and he maintained that, unless there was a desire to see a great number of voters disfranchised, they must extend the scope of the forms, simply because in their present condition any man, however fairly and honestly he might desire to fill them up, would find it exceedingly difficult to do so. He complained, further, that the forms, although printed with the same object, were not uniform in substance; and he thought there ought to be a penalty subjecting any Clerk of the Union or other official who proceeded contrary to the Act to dismissal. It was of no use to say that the Clerk of the Union must do a certain thing unless they made the law effective by imposing a penalty.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) pointed out that non-compliance with the forms would not disfranchise the voter or invalidate the election. The clause simply

declared that the signature of the Revising Barrister to the Register should be conclusive evidence that the Register had been in all respects duly made and revised, at the time and in the manner prescribed by and in conformity with the law. The validity of the former would not depend upon anything it was the duty of the Clerk of the Union to provide for, but rather upon the machinery for obtaining the necessary information. He did not think any difficulty would arise from any informality in connection with the printed forms.

Motion *agreed to.*

Clause read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be added to the Bill."

MR. HEALY expressed a hope that the Government would issue stringent instructions to the Union officers. The letter of the Chief Secretary was very good as far as it went, but it did not go far enough. Would the Government take steps to inform the Poor Law officers in Ireland that they would be acting at their own peril if they refused to carry out the requirements of the Act?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, that proper care would be taken to see that the law was carried out.

MR. SEXTON said, he should certainly press a clause for the dismissal of any Poor Law officer who acted contrary to the provisions of the Act.

MR. HEALY wished to point out that unless the agents of the National Party were allowed to see the rate-books in the present month of May, they might as well give up the fight. They had applied to the Clerk of the South Dublin Union for permission to look at the rate-book, but had been refused, although the privilege was at once conceded to the agents of the Conservative Party, even in the presence of the other side. He had those facts in his pocket in a sworn information. He thought, however, it would be better to deal with the matter in a new clause; but he wished to know what undertaking the Government would give that they would have the subject properly attended to, and would support the insertion in the Bill of some provision of this kind? All he asked was that equal facilities should be given to the agents of both political Parties.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN remarked, that if the hon. and learned Member should communicate to the Government the facts in his possession, they would be inquired into. He remembered some days ago receiving a mysterious telegram containing a number of statements which were perfectly unintelligible to him at the time, but which he had no doubt now related to the matter referred to by the hon. and learned Member. He would promise directly he was put in possession of the facts of the case to have them thoroughly inquired into.

MR. HEALY said, that was the third time a complaint had been made to the Government of practices of this kind in connection with the Dublin Unions—not in the time of the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary, but of his Predecessors. It was alleged that names were left out which ought to appear on the books. Chapter and verse had been given to the President of the Local Government Board in Ireland; but it was found impossible to obtain one single atom of satisfaction, and the Clerk of the South Dublin Union was still flourishing and carrying on his malpractices. He wished to know if the right hon. Gentleman would support a clause to prevent those practices in future? He had no wish unduly to trouble the right hon. Gentleman, because he knew the Government were anxious to get on with the Bill; but the right hon. Gentleman would perhaps allow him to read a short extract from a letter on this subject. It was from the County of Dublin Registration Association, and it stated that on Monday week two persons called upon the Clerk of the South Dublin Union and requested to see the Rathmines rate-book. They were told they could not have it, as he was using it himself, and they asked for another book, which they were allowed to see. On the following day they again asked for the Rathmines book, and were again refused, and upon asking when they would be permitted to see it, they were told "Not for a month at least." It was scarcely necessary to remind the Committee that to be of any service at all the rate-books must be examined in the month of May. The letter went on to say that the agents of the Association

spent the two following days at the office of the Clerk of the Union examining other books under the impression that the one for Rathmines was not to be had, when, much to their surprise, they saw two men from the Constitutional Club march into the room in which they were writing with the Rathmines book in their possession. Those circumstances required no commentary from him. He would only add that the National Party had long been complaining of the conduct of the Clerk of the Union.

MR. LEWIS said, the question now under the consideration of the Committee was whether a new clause should be added to the Bill, which provided that informalities in the registration should not affect the validity of the Register; but the hon. and learned Member had been calling attention to some alleged misconduct on the part of the Clerk of the South Dublin Union. He really did not see how they were to make progress with the Bill if those digressions were to be allowed.

MR. HEALY contended that his remarks were perfectly regular, seeing that one part of the clause was to provide that the Poor Rate collectors should assist the Clerk of the Union in carrying into effect the duties imposed on the Clerk by the Representation of the People Act of last year.

THE CHAIRMAN: I understood the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) to put a question to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant in regard to an alleged infringement of the principles of this clause. I see nothing irregular in that.

MR. HEALY said, he would not trouble the Committee further. His only object had been to impress upon the Chief Secretary the necessity of seeing that equal treatment was meted out to the agents of both political Parties in regard to the inspection of the rate-books. If the right hon. Gentleman would make inquiry, he would find that the Constitutional Club obtained possession of the Rathmines rate-book, whereas the Clerk of the Union refused to allow the agents of the Dublin Registration Association to inspect it.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, he would inquire into the matter if the hon. and learned Member would give him the particulars.

MR. HEALY promised to place the right hon. Gentleman in possession of the sworn information.

MR. GIBSON remarked, that it ought to be known that the Clerk of the Union had important duties to perform, which required him to examine the rate-books himself.

MR. SEXTON said, the only comment he would make upon the remark of the right hon. and learned Gentleman was that the necessity for examining the rate-book himself did not account for the Clerk of the Union handing it over to the agents of one Party and refusing it to those of the other. The complaint was that both Parties were not treated alike, but that the rate-books had been dealt with to the advantage of one side and the damage of the other. He would ask, as a matter of information, whether the Government could extend the period for the inspection of the rate-books, so that disfranchisement might not result from want of time?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, that it was intended to extend the time by an additional six days; but he did not think it would be necessary to make provision for any further extension of time.

MR. P. J. POWER wished to point out that already some of the officials in the different Unions in Ireland had taken action in the matter. A Board of Guardians with which he had some connection had three weeks ago moved in the matter, and yet they told him that it might be impossible for them to comply with all the necessary formularies in the time fixed by the Act. And yet the Waterford Union stood in an exceptionally favourable position, seeing that they had already taken steps. Many other Unions had taken no steps whatever, and if those who had moved already found it difficult to comply with the provisions of the law, it would be absolutely impossible for others less favourably situated to perfect the arrangements by the proper date. Under those circumstances, he hoped the suggestion of his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) would receive the favourable consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

Motion *agreed to.*

Clause *added* to the Bill.

MR. HEALY moved, in page 1, after Clause 1, to insert the following Clause :—

"For the purposes of the household qualification created by 'The Representation of the People Act, 1884,' separate rating of a dwelling-house, or part of a dwelling-house, separately occupied, shall not be necessary to entitle the inhabitant occupier of same to be registered as a voter in respect thereof."

Clause *brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be read a second time."

MR. GIBSON said, the proposal virtually amounted to an interpretation of an Act passed only a few months ago—the Representation of the People Act. He altogether protested against it, and would remind the Committee that it was not sought in the same way to interpret the Act so far as England and Scotland were concerned. He should be glad to learn what the Government intended to do in the matter?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, the matter had been carefully considered in regard to Ireland. This law was only extended to that country by the Act of 1884. A doubt had been raised whether separate rating of a dwelling-house, or part of a dwelling-house, separately occupied, was necessary to entitle the inhabitant occupier to be registered, and after careful consideration the Government had come to the conclusion that such a doubt should not exist in Ireland. The question would be rendered quite clear by the insertion of this clause.

MR. GIBSON said, that by this clause they were dealing in a Registration Bill with a question altogether outside registration, and there was no similar clause either in the English or the Scotch Act. He should certainly indicate his dissent from the adoption of the clause, although he would not say that he would put the Committee to the trouble of a division. It was, however, in the last degree unsatisfactory that a matter entirely outside the scope of registration should be illegitimately inserted in a Registration Bill. Whatever might be the merits of the clause, it had no right to find a place here.

MR. MACARTNEY pointed out that it was common in Ireland to have two habitations under the same roof, which were really separate residences of equal value. How would the clause apply to such a case? One of the occupiers might pay his rates, and then be made liable for the other.

MR. LEWIS remarked, that the Representation of the People Act was either complete or it was not, and he could not believe that it was necessary to supplement in another and a distinct Bill the provisions of a measure passed so recently as three or four months ago. The present proposal virtually amounted to the insertion in a Registration Bill of an Interpretation Clause to the Representation of the People Bill.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) concurred with the view which had been expressed by the Solicitor General for Ireland. The only object of the clause was to make the law perfectly clear, and to prevent future litigation.

MR. SEXTON said, the clause simply amounted to a declaration of the law upon a point that was now vague.

MR. MACARTNEY remarked, that what was desired in Ireland was that the law there should be assimilated to that of England and Scotland.

MR. LEWIS said, the House had hitherto sheltered themselves under the ample folds of the Attorney General, who they believed to have been responsible for the drafting of the Representation of the People Bill. They now understood from the hon. and learned Gentleman that after all the labour which had been bestowed upon it by the House and the officials of the Government the provisions of that Bill were ambignous. He deeply regretted that announcement; but he thought it followed that for the sake of safety a similar provision should be inserted in the English Registration Bill. He protested against the attitude taken by the Government, and thought that it was most inconvenient to amend in a Registration Bill any defects in the Representation of the People Act of 1884.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that England and Ireland stood in a different position in regard to registration. The Act of 1878 applied to England and not to Ireland, and the object of this clause was simply to make it clear what the law was, so that no difficulty might

arise when the Revising Barristers held their Courts.

Motion *agreed to.*

Clause read a second time, and *added* to the Bill.

MR. HEALY moved, after Clause 2, to insert the following Clause:—

(Correction of list by Revising Barrister.)

"Where, on the revision of the list or lists of voters for any county, city, town, or borough in Ireland, the matter stated in a list or claim, or proved to the revising barrister in relation to any alleged right to be on any list, is, in the judgment of the revising barrister, insufficient in law to constitute a qualification of the nature or description stated or claimed, but sufficient in law to constitute a qualification of some other nature or description, the revising barrister, if the name is entered in a list for which such true qualification in law is appropriate, shall correct such entry by inserting such qualification accordingly, and, in any other case, shall insert the name with such qualification in the appropriate list, and shall expunge it from the other list, if any, in which it is entered."

Clause *brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be read a second time."

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, this was a clause taken from the English Act of 1878, and the only question which arose was whether it was not desirable to add to the clause as it stood on the Paper Sub-section 13 of the English clause. He would suggest that that addition should be made.

MR. HEALY assented.

Clause, as amended, read a second time, and *added* to the Bill.

MR. PARNELL said, he had intended to move the omission of Clause 6 for the purpose of proposing the insertion of a clause to remunerate Clerks of Unions and Poor Rate collectors for the duties imposed on them by the Registration Acts; but as the Government intended to bring up a clause dealing with the question, he would not move it.

MR. SMALL moved to amend Clause 5 by adding to the end of it words requiring the Town Councils or the Town Commissioners of the Irish boroughs to divide such boroughs into polling districts in the manner most convenient for taking the votes of electors. The smallest of the nine boroughs left in Ireland would have at least 3,000 voters, and it would be very inconvenient indeed to have 3,000 voters polling at the same place. It was therefore advisable, he thought, to give to the Town Councils power to divide the boroughs into polling districts, either alphabetically—although that might, perhaps, be inconvenient—or otherwise.

New Clause:—

(Town Council and Commissioners may divide boroughs into polling districts.)

"Not later than one month after the passing of this Act, the Town Council or Town Commissioners of each of the other boroughs in Ireland shall respectively take into consideration the division of the borough into polling districts, and shall respectively divide such borough into polling districts, in such manner as may be most convenient for taking the votes of electors, and in such manner that as nearly as possible an equal number of voters may be allotted to each polling district,"—(*Mr. Small,*)

—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be read a second time."

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, the hon. Member would observe that in the Bill provision was made for the division, by the Town Councils, of the boroughs of Dublin and Belfast into wards. The reason of that was that those boroughs had already been divided, and, therefore, it was necessary to make provision for them. It was not considered necessary to make provision for the other boroughs; but as Dublin and Belfast were already divided it was necessary to provide for polling places there.

Motion *agreed to.*

Clause read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be *added* to the Bill."

MR. GIBSON said, there seemed to have been some misconception with regard to this clause, as it had been read a second time, although the Solicitor General for Ireland opposed it as unnecessary.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 29; Noes 80: Majority 51.—(Div. List, No. 146.)

MR. SMALL said, he would now move the second Amendment that stood in his name—namely, the insertion of a new clause after Clause 7, for the purpose of providing that—

"The treasurers of the counties of Down and Armagh shall repay to the Town Commissioners of Newry such sums respectively as shall bear to the entire expenses of the revision of the voters' lists for the borough of Newry the same proportion as the number of electors of the borough qualifying out of premises outside the municipal boundary of Newry, in the counties of Down and Armagh, bear to the entire number of electors of the borough, and the Town Commissioners shall not be liable to contribute any sum towards the expenses of the revision of the voters' lists for the counties of Down and Armagh."

It appeared to him that it would be only quite fair that the Town Commissioners of Newry should pay the cost of revising the list of voters as far as those voters were resident within the limits of the borough of Newry, and that it would be very unfair to call upon that body also to pay the expenses of revision in the case of those voters who resided outside the limits of the borough and in parts of the counties of Down and Armagh, and who contributed towards the taxation of those counties. The hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) had a similar proposition on the Paper with reference to the City of Dublin and the county adjacent, the question which arose in that case being exactly the same as that which had arisen in regard to the borough of Newry, except that Newry extended into two adjoining counties instead of one. If this clause were not accepted the town of Newry would not only have to pay the cost of the revision of the borough list of voters, but also a portion of the cost of revising the voters' lists for the two counties of Down and Armagh. That, he thought, would be an injustice to the ratepayers of Newry, and it was to remedy that injustice that he proposed the present Amendment. He had no reason to anticipate that the clause would meet with any opposition on the part of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, inasmuch as it merely dealt with a state of affairs which ought never to have arisen. He hoped, therefore, the right hon. Gentleman would display a more generous spirit than to oppose the clause.

New Clause:—

"The treasurers of the counties of Down and Armagh shall repay to the Town Commissioners of Newry such sums respectively as shall bear to the entire expenses of the revision of the voters' lists for the borough of Newry the same proportion as the number of electors of the borough qualifying out of premises outside the municipal boundary of Newry, in the counties of Down and Armagh, bear to the entire number of electors of the borough, and the Town Commissioners shall not be liable to contribute any sum towards the expenses of the revision of the voters' lists for the counties of Down and Armagh,"—(*Mr. Small,*)

—*brought up,* and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be read a second time."

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, the case of Newry was one that had been very curious to deal with. It was not an analogous case to that of Pembroke, for while the borough of Newry ran into two different counties it did not, in so doing, present anything like a well-defined area. It was proposed that where the borough of Newry overlapped the counties of Down and Armagh, the Grand Juries of those two counties should provide for the cost of revising the voters' list; but at the same time the hon. Member, in making that proposal, had not stated out of what fund the money should come. It would no doubt be hard upon the borough of Newry to have to pay the expense of revision in the case of those voters who resided beyond the municipal limits; but it would be still harder to throw the cost on those who inhabited parts of baronies in the two counties, where the area was part of a county barony but also part of the borough of Newry. In such a case, the question was who ought to pay the expense of revision? Was it to be the inhabitants of the borough, or was it to be the inhabitants of the barony outside, who had nothing to do with the registration affecting the borough? It seemed to him that of the two propositions the more reasonable one would be to throw the expense on the inhabitants of the borough, because the borough would certainly have the benefit to be derived from the inclusion of the additional electors. With regard to the other proposal of the hon. Gentleman, he could not see what connection it had with this subject, and he did not think there was anything to be

found in the Bill that would warrant an arrangement of the kind proposed.

MR. SMALL said, he did not think the right hon. Gentleman fully understood the local bearings of the matter, and there could be little doubt that in the present instance there had been an oversight. The right hon. Gentleman had asked out of what fund the money was to be paid? The answer was, out of the general fund of the county, of course. The borough of Newry was quite willing to continue its liability with regard to anything within the municipal limits; but they asked the county to resume their original liability with regard to anything out of the municipal boundaries. All that was asked by this clause was a simple act of justice, and it was no part of the bargain that Newry should pay the expenses of revising lists of voters for those who resided outside the municipal boundaries. With regard to the second part of the question, he did not think the right hon. Gentleman could really be of opinion that it was quite fair that the borough of Newry should pay for the revision of the county lists.

MR. MACARTNEY said, as a Grand Juror for the county of Armagh, he believed he might state that a bargain was made between the town of Newry and the county of Armagh, in which specific conditions were laid down; and it was now proposed that those conditions should be got rid of by a side wind. It seemed to him that such a proposition was most unfair. With regard to the question as to the difference in the expense being borne by the borough or the county, he thought it only right to point out, as a matter for the consideration of the Committee, that while there were a great many voters for the county of Armagh who resided in Newry, there were no voters for Newry who resided in the county of Armagh.

MR. HEALY said, the hon. Gentleman the Member for Tyrone (Mr. Macartney) had ventured on a mere assumption of his own.

MR. MACARTNEY: I think I remember.

MR. HEALY said, the hon. Gentleman now thought he remembered.

MR. MACARTNEY: I am sure I do.

MR. HEALY said, the hon. Member was improving as he went on, and presently, in all probability, he would swear he remembered; but until the Committee had something better than the statement of the hon. Gentleman before them, he (Mr. Healy) should be very sorry to act upon it. He would, however, offer a suggestion which he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant would be prepared to accept. The Government had proposed to adopt a remedy in the case of Dublin which was very similar to that of Newry; but, as usual, they had not put the matter in an intelligible and practical shape. He had been about to draw the attention of the Government to this question, and to ask them to state what their proposals really were. He thought the Government ought to say at once that they would bring up a new clause, under which it should be provided that no one area should have imposed upon it the preparation of the list of voters belonging to any other area. Surely one set of people ought not to be called upon to bear the expense that ought to be defrayed by another set of people. His hon. Friend the Member for Wexford (Mr. Small) was a member of the Town Council of Newry, and therefore understood the matter with which he proposed to deal; and he (Mr. Healy) felt well assured that unless there was much better evidence of a contract between the borough of Newry and the county of Armagh than the "I remember," or "I think I remember" of the hon. Member for Tyrone, that House would not be disposed to do what would really amount to the perpetration of an injustice towards the borough of Newry. The Government, ought, therefore, to say definitely that one area should not have a claim to make charges of this sort on another area, involving financial relations of a character which he could not understand.

MR. LEWIS said, it seemed to him that the Government ought to deal with questions of this kind, instead of leaving them to be dealt with by Amendments and proposals from all parts of the House. It was for the Government to take the responsibility in regard to those things upon themselves, and they ought to satisfy themselves before the Report as to what ought really be done. But, instead of taking those matters entirely under their own

charge, the Government accepted all sorts of Amendments moved by individual Members. That was a most unsatisfactory way of doing business, and he should oppose the Amendment on that ground.

MR. SEXTON said, he did not propose to supplement the arguments that had been brought forward in reference to the case of Newry; but he desired to point out that with regard to the case of Dublin the grievance was undeniable and required a remedy.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, there was a proposal on the Paper dealing with the matter referred to by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton).

MR. MACARTNEY submitted that instead of proposing the clause as it stood the hon. Member for Wexford ought to propose an Amendment providing that the Town Commissioners of Newry should not be liable for any revision expenses in connection with the adjoining counties.

MR. HEALY said, that was what the clause proposed. He wished to ask the Solicitor General for Ireland whether he would, on the Report, bring up an omnibus clause that would deal fairly with the whole question?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, in his opinion, the cases of Black Rock and Pembroke were quite different.

MR. GIBSON ventured to say that the question under discussion was not a matter of controversy as affecting one side of the House and the other; and they appeared all anxious to do the best they could in regard to it. He understood that some statement had been made to the effect that there might have been a contract on the subject as between the borough of Newry and the adjoining counties. He did not know how far that was so, but, at any rate, they had heard the arguments used on behalf of the borough; and, on the other hand, the other areas that would be affected had a right to be heard, and as the matter was not one of controversy, but one that might be settled between then and the Report in a peaceful way, he would suggest that the clause should be withdrawn, that the treasurers of the counties of Down and Armagh, who understood the question, should be consulted, and that, after it had been thoroughly investigated and a fuller knowledge of its merits arrived at, the Government should deal with it on Report.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, he had no objection to the adoption of the course suggested by the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gibson). The only objection he could see was that the area outside the municipal boundary of Newry was not a very well arranged area in itself.

MR. SMALL said, he was willing to accept the suggestion of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) and to withdraw his Amendment with the intention of bringing it up again on the Report stage, on the understanding that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would consider the matter in the meantime.

Clause, by leave, *withdrawn*

MR. GIBSON said, he had upon the Paper a clause intended to enable the Lord Lieutenant, with the consent of the Treasury, to grant to the County Court Judges such remuneration and assistance for the first sitting for the registry of voters after the passing of this Bill as might be deemed just; but he found that he was unable to move it. He hoped, however, that the Government would take care that the duties of the County Court Judges should not be substantially infringed, and would modify their labours as much as possible by availing themselves of the powers already given for the appointment of a sufficient number of Revising Barristers to obviate any difficulty that might otherwise be experienced.

MR. MACARTNEY hoped the Clerks of the Peace for the counties would not be forgotten.

MR. T. A. DICKSON said, he had now to move the clause which stood on the Paper in his name. The clause was one that dealt solely with frivolous objections to voters, and the point involved had already been fully debated in that House. He thought that the existing state of the Law of Registration in Ireland had been well and truly described by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, when he had said a worse system of registration it would be impossible to find, inasmuch as by its operation in that country, particularly in regard to the number of frivolous objections, thousands of men were deprived of their

rights of citizenship. As the law at present stood, instead of affording facilities to claimants to be put upon the lists of voters, it placed every obstacle in the way of their getting on the Register. The result was that in the Irish Registration Courts claimants attended, day after day, for the purpose of sustaining their claims until they became wearied out and gave up the attempt in disgust, and either went back to their homes, or, as the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) had stated, were absent from the Court at the time their names were called, and thus were struck out of the list, without any means of obtaining redress. Thus, after having waited for several days, and incurring considerable expense, they failed entirely in their object, and went home in disgust. It was pretty well known that for a man to get his name on the Register in Ireland was almost an impossibility and the next thing to a miracle, and any man who wanted to look after his business, and who did not mix himself up in politics, would not attend the Revision Courts and subject himself to all the trouble and worry thereby entailed. The consequence was that the hired and paid objector had only to invest a few shillings in postage stamps, and to send out notices of objection broadcast, and his object was secured, because the persons objected to, although their names might have been passed by the collectors and Clerks of the Peace, would not put themselves to the expense and trouble of attending the Courts for the purpose of substantiating their claims. That House had recently passed a measure designed to enfranchise the Irish people; but unless an amendment of the law as to registration were made so as to put a barrier in the way of frivolous objections, the people of Ireland would not obtain that measure of enfranchisement which it was the object of the Representation of the People Bill to confer. He contended that it was the duty of the Government to give the people it was intended to enfranchise every opportunity of being put upon the Register. The main feature in the clause he now moved was that the ground or grounds of objection should be specifically stated in the notice of objection, and it was also proposed that no person objected to should be required to give evidence in support of his claim otherwise than in regard to the points of objection specified in the notice; but this was not a part of the question immediately before the Committee. He appealed to hon. Gentlemen opposite to assist the Committee in the endeavour to put an end to the frivolous objections against which the clause was directed, and he hoped the clause would meet with acceptance at the hands of Her Majesty's Government.

New Clause:—

Prevention of frivolous Objections.

(Notices of objection shall state grounds of objection. See 28 and 29 Vic. c. 36, s. 6.)

"Any notice of objection given under sections twenty-six or thirty-six of 'The Parliamentary Voters (Ireland) Act, 1850,' to any person on any list of claimants may be given according to the provisions of either of those sections respectively; but, with that exception, no notice of objection given under the said Act to any person upon any list of voters shall be valid unless the ground or grounds of objection be specifically stated therein; and this provision shall be deemed to be sufficiently satisfied by naming the column or columns of the register on which the objector grounds his objection, and any objection grounded upon any one of the said columns shall be deemed a separate ground of objection, and such notice may be according to the form in the Schedule to this Act annexed, or to the like effect, in substitution for the forms numbered (12) in Schedule (A) and (15) in Schedule (B) respectively to 'The Parliamentary Voters (Ireland) Act, 1850,'"—(*Mr. T. A. Dickson,*)

—*brought up,* and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be read a second time."

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN expressed his assent to the clause, and reminded the Committee that the clauses put on the Paper by the hon. Member (Mr. T. A. Dickson) had been embodied by the Government in a Bill that had left that House two years ago.

MR. LEWIS said, these new clauses offered another illustration of the practice by which the Government fathered Amendments without taking upon themselves the responsibility of proposing them. The assumption was that these clauses were to assimilate the law of Ireland with that of England; but the assumption could hardly be made good, because the Government had already assented to an Amendment to this Bill with regard to the receipt of medical relief that made a wide difference between the law of Ireland and that which

was retained in England. The clause now under consideration went far beyond anything that prevailed in England. It was only with regard to county voters that there was any such requirement in the English law, and the reason was that when they were dealing with county votes all sorts of questions as to freeholds and so forth arose. With regard to borough votes, however, the case was more simple, and the questions arising were of a very different order. He thought that that was a remarkable instance of the Government allowing other persons to do what ought to be their business. That being a Government Bill, the House ought to have the benefit of the Government responsibility in regard to important proposals, which ought to be brought forward by their Law Officers instead of being left in the hands of private Members. The effect of this clause if carried would be to run far ahead of the law of England by requiring in the case of boroughs that all notices of objection should set forth the different grounds of objection. The Act of 1878, no doubt, was the Act which regulated the registration in boroughs. He had searched through the clauses in the endeavour to discover anything which required the grounds of objection to be stated, and had failed in his attempt. He thought, therefore, that this was inapplicable to boroughs, at any rate, though there was no ground for it in the counties.

DR. LYONS said, he wished to endorse the observations which had fallen from the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson). On a former occasion when the subject was under consideration he had mentioned a remarkable fact in connection with himself. For 10 years, owing to frivolous objections, he had never been able to get his name upon the Register of the county of Dublin. He had never been able to attend personally, and in consequence of that fact and other circumstances he had never been put on the Register.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) pointed out that the clause proposed would make the law of England and Ireland identical, as would be seen on reference to Clause 26 of the Act of 1878. That clause required that in the notice to be given in the case of borough voters the objection should be stated specifically.

MR. HEALY said, that on a former occasion he remembered the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) making some remark as to this system of objection. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had pointed out that this proposal left too much power in the hands of the officials, and he (Mr. Healy) was to a certain extent inclined to agree with him, and if the right hon. and learned Gentleman brought forward any Amendment for the purpose of providing that Union officials who corruptly discharged their duties should be punished, he (Mr. Healy) would be glad to support him. He thought that a clause of this kind, which gave power to Union officers to put on the Register whomsoever they liked, ought to be tempered with some penal provision to the effect that, if it was found—as had been found in the case of the South Dublin Union—that people were put on the list who were never in the district at all, the officers who were guilty of such misrepresentation should be heavily punished. The Committee was familiar with what had occurred in the South Dublin Union—names had been put on the Register fraudulently, and it could not be for a moment contended that it happened from accident. He confessed that, whatever might have been the state of the case previously, he (Mr. Healy) was not so enthusiastic as to this provision as he was two or three years ago; in fact, he had been not ungrateful to the House of Lords for having rejected the Bill in 1883. He believed it would have been impossible for them to have worked the County Dublin had the House of Lords passed it. In his own case in the county of Monaghan the Register would have been against him under the £12 franchise if this clause had been carried. He certainly viewed with apprehension this power given to the Union officials in Ireland to make themselves Returning Officers in counties and boroughs unless some severe penalty were provided for fraudulent entries. As to one detail of this clause, it would prevent frivolous objections to voters, but it did nothing to prevent frivolous objections in the case of claimants. Yet the next proviso was that all "persons"—claimants as well as voters—should not be required to give evidence except in so far as such

right was called specifically in question by the notice of objection. That appeared to him to be somewhat extraordinary, and he would ask the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland as to this point, whether this was not inconsistent?

MR. T. A. DICKSON said, that having seen the Registration Act worked, he might say that when a man was put upon the voters' list, he could not be struck off unless evidence were given that he had no qualification; but when a man was on the claimants' list, he then had to prove his possession of a qualification, and that made all the difference. A man could not be struck off unless substantial proof were given in Court that he had lost his qualification.

MR. CALLAN asked, how the hon. Member would deal with the supplementary lists, which were most important?

MR. T. A. DICKSON: They are lists of claimants.

MR. CALLAN said, they were not; and that showed how little the county Members understood this question. The claimants' lists and the supplementary lists were quite different. The rule in Ireland was that if a man was on the electoral list he could not be displaced unless it were proved that he had lost his qualification. A claimant could be obliged to prove his claim; but there was another important list — namely, that which was called the supplementary list—a list of those whose names were brought forward for the first time, who had not been electors in the previous year, and who were obliged, even if there were no objection lodged against them and even though they were on the list of poor-rate payers, to prove their claim. Vexatious objections might be raised to that list, and the *onus* of proof should be on the objector, and not upon the person who was not a claimant, but had been put upon the list by the rate collector. His (Mr. Callan's) contention was that, unless there were objections raised to those persons being put upon the list, they should be put on as a matter of course.

MR. H. G. ALLEN said, that the law really was this—and it had been found a very salutary one—that those who came as claimants to be placed upon the list for the first time, never having been on it before, were required, in answer to an objection made generally, to prove their title. After that, any objection made against them must include substantially the specific grounds of objection. When a man had once got upon the Register, it required a very strong case to strike him off. The Amendment before the Committee would assimilate the law of Ireland upon this subject to that of England, and he had much pleasure in supporting it.

MR. FINDLATER said, that he could speak from experience of the necessity of making perfectly sure that, when an objection was taken to a name of a voter being placed upon the list, the person raising the objection should be subjected to the payment of costs.

MR. GIBSON said, he objected to the scheme and scope of this Bill being diverted from what it was stated it was to be by the Prime Minister and those who were responsible for the Registration Bills. They had been told that Registration Bills would be introduced for the three countries to apply the existing registration machinery to the electorate manufactured by the Reform Bill. It was not the intention stated by the Prime Minister and the Government, and it was not in accordance with common sense that in the Bill relating to one of the three countries the opportunity should be taken of not only introducing a machinery registration measure, but also a Reform Registration Bill. The clauses now under discussion were really Reform Registration Clauses, and were, therefore, outside the scope of what the Bill should be. With regard to what had been said by the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Findlater) and his hon. and learned Colleague who sat upon the Opposition side of the House (Mr. Healy), so far as he (Mr. Gibson) could see, the clauses of the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson) did provide that, as to objections taken to names already on the voters' list, those objections should be specific and detailed. That was the way he (Mr. Gibson) took it; he was sure the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland had considered the matter, and had put his own construction on it. The proper reading was that the notice of objection having been given, all the grounds of objection should be specifically and plainly stated. Both Members for Monaghan seemed to

desire that, and therefore he would not take objection to it.

MR. CALLAN asked, whether in the proposed new clause any distinction had been made between the list of claimants and what was called the supplementary list? The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) appeared to be ignorant on that subject.

MR. GIBSON: Oh, no; I understand it perfectly well.

MR. CALLAN said, that the right hon. and learned Gentleman was perfectly familiar with the point, and what he (Mr. Callan) said was that the right hon. and learned Gentleman appeared to be ignorant. In Ireland there were three lists published. First, that of the people whose names were on the Register for the preceding year; and if any objections to the voters whose names had appeared on that list were taken, it was necessary for the objectors to show that the voters had lost their qualification before they could be displaced. But then there was the supplementary list, which was a *primâ facie* list of those entitled to be on the Register. Supposing a man died and his son who inherited his name was put on, or supposing a man inherited or was entitled to be put on by marriage, his name was put on that list. The name of such person would be put on the Register without any proof whatever, and the person would become an elector unless his claim was disproved. But if he received a notice of objection three months before the month of October, the *onus* was put upon him to come forward and prove his claim. The result was that whenever any voter in Ireland died, or any of his connections from whom he inherited, a three-fold objection was made against him, and he was compelled to come and uphold his right. That list was very different to the list of claimants—so essentially different that he should not like to vote with the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan on the question of claimants. On all matters affecting Party in Ireland the Conservatives were able to use an elaborate and efficient organization, and to lodge a number of objections to the supplementary list. Every name that appeared on the supplementary list was objected to, in the hope that the person would not be able to prove his claim. In that manner the hon. Member for Belfast (Mr. Corry) and others of his class succeeded in striking from the Register in Belfast and other places, for their own purpose, the names of a great many artizans. The supplementary list was only a list of those who, by marriage, inheritance, and so on, came upon the list; and he (Mr. Callan) would ask the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland to place his foot down and say that those who came on the supplementary list should be placed in the same position as those who were already on the list of voters. He would ask the hon. and learned Gentleman to express his view upon this matter. The list of the Clerks of Unions should be taken as a *primâ facie* proof of a man's title to the franchise.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, that anyone who had studied the Act of 1850 would know that it included those persons on the Register of the previous year and on the supplemental list.

MR. HEALY said, he did not pretend to understand this matter; he thought that any voter should have a right to object to a perfectly new claimant who had not been on the list before without being obliged to serve notice of objection. He would allow anyone in Court to object. As it was, all three Parties, the Liberals, the Conservatives, and the Nationalists, objected, each being obliged to throw away a 3*d.* stamp. Why should they not allow anyone to object — why throw away those 3*d.* stamps? It only gave the Revising Barristers more work to do. Claimants were bound to be objected to in that roundabout way, because, unless objection had been previously taken, it was not possible to put a question to them in Court. If the Solicitor General for Ireland would refer to the fifth line of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson), he would observe these words—

> "But, with that exception, no notice of objection given under the said Act to any person upon any list of voters shall be valid unless the ground or grounds of objection be specifically stated therein."

But later on they intended to provide that objections against all "persons," that was claimants included, should state the grounds of objection. With regard to the first part of the provision,

he would suggest, as he had already stated, that anyone should have the right *primâ facie* to object to the claim of a person to be put on the Register without it being necessary to provide these 3*d.* stamps. If that were not done, people would object to a claimant without knowing anything about the matter, simply to be on the safe side and to assist the Revising Barrister in doing his duty.

MR. CALLAN asked how the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson) proposed to deal with voters on the supplementary list to whom objection might be taken? Would those persons whose names were in the voters' list of another Union stand in the same valid position as they did in the voters' list of the previous year?

SIR JOSEPH M'KENNA said, the supplementary list might be shortly described as a record for the use of the Clerk of the Union of persons debarred from voting for one cause or another. He wanted those persons who appeared on the supplementary list to be protected in the same way as the voters on the previous Register were protected.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) suggested that the clause should be allowed to pass, and that the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) or the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan) should raise their objection to it, if they had any to raise, on the Report stage.

MR. CALLAN said, he did not raise any objection whatever to the clause. As a matter of fact, he had always objected to the supplementary list. He objected to the supplementary list in his own county; he objected to the name of anyone who was unfavourable to him, and thereby put him on the proof. He regarded it as a most unfair thing; but, at the same time, it was a facility afforded him by the law as it now existed. He wanted to do away with that; and he remarked that however objectionable it might be when it was a question of 200 or 300 names, it would be far more so when there were 2,000 or 3,000 to deal with. There were two official lists published, and he wanted to call the attention of the Solicitor General for Ireland to this fact. One was the official list of the voters of the previous year. For instance, if an election took place this year there would be the official list published of persons on the Register for 1885; that was sent to the Clerks of the Unions in the month of July, and that person put objections against the names of persons on various grounds. Then there was what was called the supplementary list, which contained the names of persons entitled since the previous year to be on the Register; that was dealt with by the Clerk of the Union in the same manner as the ordinary list. In the case of objection being raised to anyone on that list, he must prove his right to vote; whereas he (Mr. Callan) contended that the *onus* of proof ought to be placed on the objector. He thought that common sense demanded that a change should be made in this matter.

Motion *agreed to.*

Clause read a second time, and *added* to the Bill.

New Clause:—

(Costs to be awarded not to exceed £5. 28 and 29 Vic. c. 36, s. 14. 13 and 14 Vic. c. 69, s. 62.)

"The sum ordered to be paid by way of costs shall not upon any one vote exceed the sum of five pounds, and the sixty-second section of 'The Parliamentary Voters (Ireland) Act, 1850,' shall be read as if the words 'five pounds' had been substituted therein for the words 'twenty shillings,'"—(*Mr. T. A. Dickson,*)

—*brought up,* and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be read a second time."

MR. HEALY suggested that the clause should not be put in this form so far as the present Motion was concerned. It would be better that the clause should be put as far as the words "five pounds" in the second line.

Motion *agreed to.*

Clause read a second time, and *added* to the Bill.

New Clause:—

(Proceedings on objections. 13 and 14 Vic. c. 69, s. 55. 41 and 42 Vic. c. 26, s. 28.)

"Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in 'The Parliamentary Voters (Ireland) Act, 1850,' where any person whose name is on any list of voters for a county, city, town, or borough (not being a list of claimants), is duly objected to by some person other than the clerk of the peace, the clerk of the union, the poor rate collector, or the town clerk, the county court judge, chairman, or revising bar-

rister, whether the person objected to does or does not appear before him, shall, before requiring it to be proved that the person objected to is entitled to have his name inserted in the list of voters for such county, city, town, or borough, or expunging such name, require primâ facie proof to be given to his satisfaction of some ground of objection against such person, and, for the purpose of determining whether such primâ facie proof is satisfactory, shall examine the collectors of poor rates, clerk of the union, or any other person who may be present, touching the truth of the alleged ground of objection, and if such primâ facie proof is not so given to his satisfaction, he shall retain the name of the person objected to in the list of voters,"—(*Mr. T. A. Dickson,*)

—*brought up*, and read the first and second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be added to the Bill."

MR. LEWIS said, that this provision was meant to apply to persons who would now come upon the list for the first time as well as to old voters. It was capable of so much misuse that he proposed to add to the clause an Amendment to the effect that the section should not apply to any objection where the person objected to was on the list of voters in respect of a qualification for which he should not have been registered on the list of voters for the present year. It was necessary that there should be a clear line of demarcation between the old list and the new with regard to the costs of objections. As to the form that had to be handed in by occupiers relating to sub-tenants, he did not believe that one Member of the House out of 50 could of his own motion fill it up properly; anything more technical or misleading to be placed in the hands of persons deficient in ordinary intelligence and experience could not be conceived. It would be in the recollection of the Committee that the question as to what constituted a dwelling-house had been raised in the Courts of Law, and that the decision had ultimately turned on whether the chief occupier or landlord resided on the premises or not. This form then assumed that the person was acquainted with an abstruse point of law, and the result must be that vast numbers of those forms would be filled up ignorantly, and a great number of them improperly. He believed that persons would be put on who might have been in occupation only a week, and many who were not in occupation of a dwelling-house at all. His Amendment was to prevent manipulation, either by ignorance or fraud, by enacting that the stringent provision that the objectors should prove their objection *primâ facie* should not apply the first time a name appeared on the list. He believed that it would be obvious to the Committee that it was desirable that that addition should be made, and he could see no reasonable objection to it, because it was hostile to the interests of no Party. His contention was that the *onus* should not be shifted, and that it was fair that it should remain where it was at present in the case of new voters.

Amendment proposed to the proposed new Clause, at end, add—

"But this section shall not apply to any objection where the person objected to is on the list of voters in respect of a qualification for which he shall not have been registered on the list of voters for the present year."—(*Mr. Lewis.*)

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, the Amendment would nullify what the Committee had already agreed to, and he could not, therefore, agree to it.

Amendment *negatived.*

Clause *added* to the Bill.

New Clause:—

(Power of revising barrister to summon witnesses.)

"A revising barrister may by summons under his hand require any person to attend at the court and give evidence or produce documents for the purpose of the revision, and any person who, after the tender to him of a reasonable amount for his expenses, fails so to attend, or who fails to answer any question put to him by the revising barrister in pursuance of this section, or to produce any document which he is required in pursuance of this section to produce, shall be liable to pay a fine not exceeding *five pounds* and not less than *twenty shillings*. Such fine may be imposed by the revising barrister at his discretion, and may be recovered in the same manner as any other fine imposed by 'The Parliamentary Registration (Ireland) Act, 1850,' is now by law recoverable,"—(*Mr. Healy,*)

—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be read a second time."

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, that the contingency contemplated by the hon. and learned Member was suffi-

ciently provided for by the 56th section of the Act of 1850. He did not think, therefore, that the clause was necessary, and he suggested to the hon. and learned Member that it should not be pressed.

MR. T. A. DICKSON said, as a matter of fact, when a County Court Judge summoned a witness, and he did not attend, no further steps were taken. Dozens of cases of that kind occurred; and the Judge would not compel the witnesses to attend. If notice was issued, he thought that they ought to be compelled to attend.

MR. HEALY pointed out that, as the matter now stood, a witness who happened to be hostile had only to get up when he liked and walk out of Court.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked why, if, as the Solicitor General for Ireland had stated, this was provided for in the Act of 1850, it was necessary to provide for it again in the English Act of 1870?

SIR JOSEPH M'KENNA said, he could see no possible objection to repeating in the Irish Act what was already in the English Act.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, he would not press his objection to the Amendment.

Motion *agreed to.*

Clause read a second time, and *added* to the Bill.

New Clause:—

(Costs of appeal.)

"The costs of an appellant against a decision of a revising barrister may, if the appeal is successful, be ordered by the court hearing the appeal to be paid by the clerk of the peace or town clerk named as respondent in the said appeal, whether he shall or shall not appear before the said court in support of the decision.

"For enabling an appellant to obtain such an order he may, at or before the time of making his declaration of appeal under section fifty-eight of 'The Parliamentary Registration (Ireland) Act, 1850,' require the revising barrister to name the clerk of the peace for the county, or the town clerk for the parliamentary borough or municipal borough, as the case may be, to which the appeal relates, to be respondent in the appeal.

"The revising barrister if so required shall, and in any case may, name such clerk of the peace or town clerk, as the case may be, to be respondent in an appeal, either alone or in addition to any other person referred to in section fifty-nine of 'The Parliamentary Registration (Ireland) Act, 1850.'

"The expenses properly incurred by a clerk of the peace or town clerk as respondent, including any costs which he may be ordered to pay to the appellant in any such appeal, shall be allowed to him as part of the expenses incurred by him in respect of the revision of the list to which the appeal relates. The costs of an appeal against the decision of a revising barrister shall be in the discretion of the court hearing the appeal,"—(*Mr. Healy,*)

—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be read a second time."

Motion *agreed to.*

Clause *added* to the Bill.

New Clause:—

(Rate-books may be amended.)

"The board of guardians of any poor law union may from time to time amend any rate made for such union by virtue of the Acts for the relief of the destitute poor in Ireland, by inserting in the rate-book the name of any person claiming and entitled to have his name therein as owner or occupier, or by inserting therein the name of any person who ought to have been rated, or by striking out the name of any person who ought not to have been rated, or by raising or reducing the sum at which any person has been rated, if it appears to the board that such person has been underrated or over-rated through clerical errors, or by making such other amendments therein as will make such rate conformable to the said Acts; and no such amendment shall be held to avoid the rate: Provided always, That every person aggrieved by any such alteration shall have the same right of appeal therefrom as he would have had if his name had been originally inserted in such rate, and no such alteration had been made; and as respects any such person the rates shall be considered to have been made at the time when he recived notice of such alteration, and every person whose rates are altered shall be entitled to seven days' notice of such alteration before the rate shall be payable by him,"—(*Mr. Healy,*)

—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be read a second time."

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, he did not think this clause was germane to the subject of registration.

MR. HEALY said, he appealed to to the hon. and learned Gentleman to consider this Amendment in a fair spirit. It was not a matter that had anything to do with Party considerations; he might call it an all-round matter. If a wrong existed, as was admitted, now was the time to amend it; and that was what his clause was in-

tended to do. There was no power invested in the Board of Guardians to make the alterations in question, and as he had shown that no Party considerations were involved, he hoped he should receive the support of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) and the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis).

MR. GIBSON said, he was utterly at a loss to know why his name should be dragged into the discussion on every Amendment relating to those matters. It was always the same; whether he spoke, or whether he was silent. It was said he agreed to this, and did not agree to that, even when he had never opened his lips on any matter. However, looking at this question, he was inclined to agree with the Solicitor General for Ireland that the Amendment was not in the slightest degree germane to a Registration Bill. It might be open to examination and discussion if it were brought forward on a Rating Bill; but he was bound to say that his hon. and learned Friend was justified in taking objection to the introduction of the Amendment on such a Bill as the present, and that objection he felt bound to support.

MR. HEALY said, he would not press the Amendment, but would ask why a Rating Bill was not introduced, seeing that it was admitted that his Amendment was germane to a Rating Bill?

Clause, by leave, *withdrawn*.

New Clause:—

(Duties and powers of court of revision.)

"The court shall, with respect to the lists of Parliamentary voters which it is appointed to revise, perform the duties and have the powers following:

"(1.) It shall correct any mistake which is proved to have been made in any list;

"(2.) It may correct any mistake which is proved to have been made in any claim or notice of objection;

"(3.) It shall expunge the name of every person, whether objected to or not, whose qualification as stated in any list is insufficient in law to entitle such person to be included therein;

"(4.) It shall expunge the name of every person who, whether objected to or not, is proved to be dead;

"(5.) It shall expunge the name of every person, whether objected to or not, whose name or place of abode, or the nature of whose qualification, or the name or situation of whose qualifying property if the qualification is in respect of property, or any other particulars respecting whom by law required to be stated in the list, is or are either wholly omitted or in the judgment of the revising barrister insufficiently described for the purpose of being identified, unless the matter or matters so omitted or insufficiently described be supplied to the satisfaction of the court before it shall have completed the revision of the list in which the omission or insufficient description occurs, and in case such matter or matters shall be so supplied the court shall then and there insert the same in such list;

"(6.) It shall expunge the name of every person, whether objected to or not, where it is proved to the revising barrister that such person was, on the twentieth day of July then next preceding, incapacitated by any law or statute from voting;

"(7.) Before expunging from a list the name of any person not objected to, the court shall cause such notice, if any, as shall appear necessary or proper under the circumstances of the proposal to expunge the name to be given to or left at the usual or last known place of abode of such person;

"(8.) Subject as herein and otherwise by law provided, the court shall retain the name of every person not objected to, and also of every person objected to, unless the objector appears by himself or by some person on his behalf in support of his objection;

"(9.) If any objector other than the clerk of the peace, town clerk, or a clerk of union, or collector-general, so appears, the court of revision shall require him to prove that he gave the notice or notices of objection required by law to be given by him, and to give primâ facie proof of the ground of objection, and for that purpose may examine and allow the objector to examine any clerk of union, collector-general, or other collector of rates, or any other person on oath touching the alleged ground of objection, and unless such proof is given to the satisfaction of the court, the court shall, subject as herein and otherwise by law provided, retain the name of the person objected to;

"An objection made under this Act by a clerk of union, collector-general, town clerk, or clerk of the peace, shall be deemed to cast upon the person objected to the burden of proving his right to be on the list;

"The primâ facie proof shall be deemed to be given by the objector if it is shown to the satisfaction of the court by evidence, repute, or otherwise that there is reasonable ground for believing that the objection is well founded, and that by reason of the person objected to not being present for examination, or for some other reason, the objector is prevented from discovering or proving the truth respecting the entry objected to;

"(10.) If such proof is given by the objector as herein prescribed, or if the objection is by a clerk of union, collector-general, town clerk, or clerk of the peace, then unless the person objected to appears by himself or by some person on his behalf, and proves that he was entitled on the twentieth day of July then next preceding to have his name inserted in the list in respect of the qualification described in such list, the court of revision shall expunge the name of the person objected to,"—(*Mr. Healy,*)

—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be read a second time."

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, there was some redundance in the clause, which, however, might be corrected on the Report.

MR. LEWIS said, the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland seemed unable to understand his (Mr. Lewis's) objection. If the hon. and learned Gentleman would turn to Sub-section 9, he would there find that *primâ facie* proof was required. They had passed upon the Motion of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson) that the objector was bound to give some *primâ facie* evidence of the ground of objection, otherwise the objection would not be allowed to be gone into. That was the same subject-matter which was proposed to be dealt with by Sub-section 9. He did not know whether the Government would like to have in the same Act of Parliament two clauses dealing in different language with the same subject-matter.

Motion *agreed to.*

Clause read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be added to the Bill."

MR. LEWIS would like to hear what the Solicitor General for Ireland had to say about Sub-section 9.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, that there was, perhaps, some resemblance in the wording of the two sections; but it occurred to him that that might be cured on Report.

Motion *agreed to.*

Clause *added* to the Bill.

MR. HEALY proposed the following new clause, which was also taken from the English Act:—

(Objections not to lapse by death of objector.)

"Any objection by a qualified objector may after his death be revived by any other person qualified to have made the objection originally by a notice to that effect in writing signed by him and given to the clerk of the peace or town clerk at or before the time of revision of the entry to which the objection relates."

Clause *brought up*, read the first and second time, and *added* to the Bill.

MR. HEALY proposed the following new clause:—

(Dates for lodgers' qualifications.)

"In the construction of the fourth section of 'The Representation of the People (Ireland) Act, 1868,' and the enactments amending or affecting the same, the first day of July shall be substituted for the twentieth day of July."

The hon. and learned Gentleman said, this clause dealt with a very curious matter, which must, of course, have been brought under the notice of the Solicitor General for Ireland. At the present time, lodgers in Ireland were required to declare on the 14th of July that they were in occupation of their lodgings on the 20th of July. Now, that was absurd, and ought to be remedied.

Clause *brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be read a second time."

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) suggested that the Motion should be withdrawn, and that the hon. and learned Gentleman should confer with him with the view of a clause being prepared by Report.

MR. HEALY thought that the 20th of July would be a better day; but the 20th of July would not give sufficient time, in his judgment, for the preparation of the list. He would, however, ask leave to withdraw the clause.

Clause, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. HEALY moved the following new clause:—

(Objections to claim lists.)

"Every registered voter or person whose name appears on the list of voters shall be entitled, without giving any notice of objection, to oppose the claim of every person claiming to be inserted in the list of voters in the same manner, and with the same rights and liabilities, as if such registered voter or person had given due notice of objection. For the purposes of this section no list of voters shall be deemed to include any list of claimants."

The hon. and learned Gentleman said, he certainly moved this clause with a great deal of hesitation, because any Amendment with regard to objections coming from one side of the House appeared rather odd. If the Government liked to accept it, he would be quite prepared to press it.

Clause *brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be read a second time."

MR. LEWIS said, that if the clause were accepted, it would be quite possible for persons to be struck off the list without their knowing anything about it. He certainly thought that a person should receive notice that his name was to be objected to.

MR. HEALY asked leave to withdraw the clause.

Clause, by leave, *withdrawn*.

MR. HEALY proposed the following new clause:—

"For the preparation of the voters lists in the City of Dublin, the Commissioners of the townships of Pembroke and Blackrock shall repay to the treasurer of the Corporation of Dublin the expense of making out the lists for such portion of these townships as are situate within the Parliamentary borough of Dublin."

The hon. and learned Gentleman said, the Government had promised to amend the law in this respect. No one knew this matter better than the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland, because he was counsel for the Corporation when they fought the matter some years ago, and when the Court of Queen's Bench decided that the expenses would have to be borne by the city at large. He (Mr. Healy) presumed that if the Government were not able to accept his clause, they would state what they were prepared to do on Report.

Clause *brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be read a second time."

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) thought there was a good case made out for some alteration of the present system, because Pembroke and Blackrock were distinct townships. The clause, however, did not supply the means of working out what the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Healy) desired. If the hon. and learned Gentleman would withdraw the clause, by Report a clause might be framed which would effect the object in view.

Clause, by leave, *withdrawn*.

MR. HEALY proposed the following new clause:—

(Students in rooms not to be registered as lodgers.)

"No student occupying rooms in any college for collegiate purposes shall be entitled to be registered to vote as a lodger."

The hon. and learned Gentleman said, he was induced by the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke), who, he regretted, was now absent, to put this Amendment on the Paper. The other night, when he moved an Amendment upon the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill, the right hon. Gentleman promised him to look into the anomalous condition of things in Dublin, whereby young gentlemen, to the number of some hundreds, who had no interest whatever in the City of Dublin, and whose board and lodging as well as their education was paid for by their parents, were entitled to be placed on the list of lodgers and to vote in the election of Members for the City of Dublin. He had inquired whether anything of the kind existed at Oxford or Cambridge, and he had been told that no person in either of those Universities could vote as lodgers for the towns in which the Universities were situated. He need scarcely point out to the Committee how absurd it was that a number of young gentlemen who came up from the Provinces to Dublin University, occupying rooms there for purposes connected with their degrees, should plump themselves down to the number of 200 upon the voters' list of the city in which they paid no rent, rates, or taxes. That state of things did not exist in England or Scotland, and it had only existed in Ireland within the last few years owing to a decision sanctioning it given in the Dublin Registration Court. He was sure the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) would agree with him that those young gentlemen were already sufficiently represented in the House of Commons. The right hon. and learned Gentleman could not reasonably say that the students of Trinity College did not now possess a sufficient voice in the affairs of Parliament. He might be told that those gentlemen did not vote in the University. But they would soon get on the University Roll, and have the pleasure of recording their votes for the two right hon. and learned Gentlemen who now represented that constituency. The

few hundred persons in the University were already accorded two very admirable Representatives; and, therefore, he now proposed that those students should not be allowed to vote in the City of Dublin—in other words, that the honest burgesses of Dublin, the people who paid rent, rates, and taxes in the city, should be allowed to have some little voice in the management of their own affairs.

Clause *brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be read a second time."

MR. GIBSON said, that the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Healy) had moved the Amendment with such good humour, accompanied by kindly references to himself (Mr. Gibson) and his right hon. and learned Colleague (Mr. Plunket), that he felt a certain amount of difficulty in replying. But as the clause had been moved, he must encounter it by fair and legitimate argument. This was not a Disfranchisement Bill, and the whole Reform scheme of the Prime Minister and of the Government was an enfranchising and not a disfranchising scheme. This was not a Reform Bill, but a Registration Bill, and the particular section under discussion was such that if it found a place at all in any Bill it should be in a distinct Franchise Bill. The proposal of the hon. and learned Member was entirely opposed to the Reform Bill submitted to the House by the Government, and, therefore, was quite out of place. He might, however, say that it must not be taken that students were raw boys fresh from the country; they must be 21 years of age, and they must be in possession of rooms as lodgers for a year. Trinity College paid very large rates, and there was no reason whatever why those young gentlemen—he did not know the exact number of them, but he supposed there were less than 200—[MR. HEALY: Above 200.]—should be refused the right of contributing, not a very large share, to the voting power of the City of Dublin. It had been stated incidentally that none of the students of other Universities were registered as lodgers. That was not so. [MR. HEALY: I said Oxford or Cambridge.] Hon. Members sometimes failed to remember all that they said. As a matter of fact, the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) mentioned the Scotch Universities. He (Mr. Gibson) had ascertained how Scotland stood in this matter—indeed, only the other night the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. T. Russell) pointed out that the very same provision or arrangement prevailed in the Scotch Universities; that those who resided within the walls of the Glasgow University were registered to a much larger extent as voters for the City of Glasgow than the students in Trinity College, Dublin, were registered as voters for the City of Dublin. He (Mr. Gibson) did not know that that was so until it was stated. ["It is not so."] He did not know what the fact was, but what he had said was stated in the House the other night by the hon. Member for Glasgow without question or contradiction. He (Mr. Gibson) was not aware how affairs were managed at Oxford and Cambridge. He was not aware that the matter had ever been brought before the Revising Barrister for the City of Oxford or for the town of Cambridge; but it certainly was one to be decided according to the ordinary Registration Law of the country. He met this clause by saying it was a distinct disfranchisement clause, out of place in this Bill or in any Bill, out of keeping with all the statements of the Prime Minister, and that, therefore, he imagined there would be no hesitation on the part of the Committee—if, indeed, the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) meant to press it—in rejecting it.

MR. R. BIDDULPH MARTIN said, that when he was at Oxford some of the undergraduates endeavoured to get upon the Register, but without success. Of course, he was speaking of many years ago; but as far he remembered they were met by the objection that they had no possible right to be registered. He did not profess to have any knowledge of the state of affairs in the University of Dublin; but as Oxford and Cambridge had been mentioned he desired to state his experience.

MR. WILLIAMSON said, that as far as he understood no students resided within the University buildings in Scotland. If it be the case that no student in the Universities of Oxford or Cambridge was entitled to the franchise outside the University, he did not see why

the students of Trinity College, Dublin, should be allowed to vote.

MR. HEALY said, the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) had said he (Mr. Healy) mentioned Scotland that night. He mentioned it three or four nights ago, and he was met by the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. T. Russell), who, of course, was a new Member of the House, and who did not know exactly what they were driving at, with the assertion that the Scotch Universities had votes. The hon. Gentleman seemed to think they were objecting to students who lived in the town having votes. The hon. Member for St. Andrews (Mr. Williamson) now stated that the Scotch students were not residential. The hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. T. Russell) would see the mistaken view he had taken in this matter. The right hon. and learned Gentlemen (Mr. Gibson) very deftly seized upon the mistake of the hon. Member for Glasgow. It was not desired to deprive men lodging in towns from voting; but it was desired to deprive undergraduates from voting in respect of lodgings which they held as school boys and no more.

MR. GIBSON protested against the method of carrying on Public Business. He had stated a series of propositions founded upon the statements of the Prime Minister; and he protested against the Government not rising to express their views upon this important subject.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, he did not know what the case exactly was at Oxford and Cambridge. As to the Scotch Universities, he never heard of residential students having votes. There might be students who lived in the Professors' houses, and who might be registered as lodgers. He could not say exactly how the matter stood; but there were no residential students in Scotland in the sense in which there were in Dublin and in Oxford and Cambridge. Treating the case as it stood, he was disposed to reply that he was very much averse to disfranchising anybody. He thought that the more people admitted to the franchise the better, providing they were justly entitled to it. If a student in Dublin, over 21 years of age, capable of exercising the franchise, was in such a position as in any other place would give him the franchise, why on earth should he not have it? If a student held his rooms or tenement in the same way and under such circumstances as would elsewhere give him the franchise, why should he not have it? The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) had said these persons were school boys sent up by their parents. Well, if they were, they were school boys of 21 years of age. He (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) confessed he did not like the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member, and he was disposed to vote against it. This was not a question of politics, and the number of persons affected by the Amendment was small. [MR. HEALY: 200.] Even if there be 200, he maintained that if they were qualified as lodgers, or in any other way, and that their qualification would be good in Cork, or Limerick, or Belfast, it ought to be good in Dublin. If their qualification was not good they would not be put on the Register. Do not let them be disqualified because they happened to be students.

MR. PARNELL said, he was very much surprised to hear the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) take the line he had done under what might justly be called the intimidation of the Front Opposition Bench. A distinct pledge was given upon this matter to his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) by the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) when the Irish Members felt it their duty to insist upon an assimilation of the English and Irish Registration Laws. They had gone no further. They had asked the Government and the Committee to agree to such Amendments of theirs as would assimilate the Registration Law of Ireland to that of England and Scotland. He (Mr. Parnell) put down some new clauses; but he felt that, having the principle of assimilation in view, they came in competition with those of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson), and therefore he said nothing about them, but allowed them to go by default. His clauses were of a more perfect character, and of a very much more advantageous character, than those of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. T. A. Dickson); but as he and his hon. Friends

had repeatedly announced that they only desired to bring the Registration Law of Ireland up to that of England, he considered he would not be entitled to persevere with them, for they would have opened up a wider and more extended field of improvement in the system of registration. But now they were met by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, under the circumstances to which he (Mr. Parnell) had just alluded, with a distinct refusal to carry out in the Dublin University the system which prevailed to his knowledge in both Oxford and Cambridge, and which prevailed, according to the testimony of the hon. Gentleman the Member for St. Andrews (Mr. Williamson), in the Scotch Universities. This was not an Amendment for disfranchising men who lived in lodgings outside the University; but it was an Amendment which declared that an undergraduate in the Dublin University, possessing peculiar advantages as a result of exceptional endowments, possessing peculiar advantages with regard to his rooms within the College, holding his rooms at a much less cost than he could obtain apartments elsewhere, should be treated in the same way as students were treated under similar circumstances in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge and of Scotland. This was the first time in the consideration of this Bill that the claim of the Irish Members for assimilation had been refused. Now, there were circumstances connected with this matter which rendered the facts of the case still more aggravated. It so happened that Trinity College had been placed in the jerrymandered division of the City of Dublin, so that those 200 voters might make the difference of a seat to one Party or the other. If the Government refused to give the Irish Party fair play in respect to the boundaries of the different divisions, he and his hon. Friends were entitled to call upon the Government to give them, at least, fair play in this matter by making the law in Ireland similar to the law in England. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) had said that this was a matter properly appertaining to the Representation of the People Act which had been passed, rather than for a Registration Bill. But whenever they raised a question like this on the Representation of the People Bill, they were told by the right hon. and learned Gentleman that it was a question to bring up on a Registration Bill; so that whether they hit high or hit low there was no pleasing the right hon. and learned Gentleman. Of course, that was what they expected from the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin; but they did expect that the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant would Act consistently in this matter, and maintain the tenour of the Bill so far as it had gone, a tenour which the Irish Members had not endeavoured to limit.

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, he was not prepared to say whether there was any provision in any English Franchise or Registration Bill disqualifying students in Oxford or Cambridge because they were students. Students were either qualified, or they were not. If they were qualified, it was proposed that because they were students they should be disqualified. To that he objected. He had no predilection in favour of the students of Trinity College; but he did maintain that if a student living in a College had the ordinary qualification he should have the vote just as anyone else should.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, that whether there was or was not any provision in any English Act which would disqualify students of Universities because they were students, it was very probable that a large number of persons residing in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge would come in under the new service franchise. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had spoken about the division of the City of Dublin. He (Mr. Arnold) supported the hon. Gentleman against the Government when that question was formally raised in Committee on the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill; but he could not support an Amendment which proposed to disfranchise a certain number of persons. From his point of view, the more men they could get on the Register the better. If men were admitted to the Register of voters he welcomed them there, and he could not see why inquiries should be made as to what order of men or what quality of men they were, or what position in life they occupied.

MR. H. G. ALLEN said, that as the Committee did not seem to be aware of the English law on this subject, it was perhaps as well that he should direct their attention to the Reform Act, 2 & 3 *Will.* IV. c. 45, s. 78, which provided that—

"Nothing in this Act shall entitle any person to vote in the election of Members to serve in Parliament for the city of Oxford or town of Cambridge in respect of the occupation of any chambers or premises in any of the Colleges or Halls of these Universities."

This disqualification was recognized and continued by the Parliamentary and Municipal Registration Act, 1878, 41 & 42 *Vict.* c. 26, s. 43.

MR. GIBSON said, he was not inclined in the slightest degree to argue the case of Oxford and Cambridge. He was arguing a much narrower point. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Tewkesbury (Mr. R. Biddulph Martin) had recounted his own experiences at Oxford. He (Mr. Gibson) assumed that those experiences were prior to 1877-8. Had any effort been made in Oxford or Cambridge since Martin's Act was passed, and since a great many interpretations of the lodger franchise had been given, to test whether any person resident in those Universities could get on the Register for the borough? He was not aware that there had. Oxford and Cambridge seemed to have stood still in the matter for a good many years. But that was not his point. His point was that there were—taking the figures of the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) as correct—200 persons actually on the Register and entitled to vote for the City of Dublin; and that this was an Amendment, not to enlarge the franchise, but to remove the voters in question from the Register and to disqualify them. He maintained that this was a monstrous proposition in face of all the statements that had been made to the House by the Prime Minister and by the Government, and of all the arguments which had been addressed to the House even by those who were in favour of the present proposition. There was nothing whatever under the existing law, as openly administered in the Irish Registration Courts, to prevent these young men being upon the Register. They occupied separate premises, for which they paid separate rent. Only that night the Committee had accepted an Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) himself, declaring that it was not necessary that separate premises should be separately rated. [MR. HEALY: It is in the English law.] Be it so; they had accepted that provision. Now, this was not a Reform Bill, but a Registration Bill; and under cover of the Bill it was sought to remove from the Register men who, under the existing law, had a right to exercise the franchise. He appealed to the sense of fair play in the Committee—was it reasonable, was it just, was it fair that those 200 men should be struck off the Register because, as the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had declared, they would vote in the one portion of the city where the hon. Member considered the chances of his Party were in jeopardy, owing to the equality in the strength of Parties? Was it fair or reasonable, when that was the avowed object of the Amendment, that those 200 men should be deprived of the franchise which, under the existing law, they were entitled to exercise?

MR. HEALY said, the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), referring in stentorian tones to the good service which the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Pembroke (Mr. H. G. Allen) had done in reading to the Committee the clause in the English Act bearing on this question, said he did not take his stand upon the case of Oxford and Cambridge. Yes; but the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant did. The right hon. Gentleman appealed to them to show him that English students were disqualified, and then he said he would be able to deal with them. From the right hon. Gentleman's own side—from the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Pembroke—came the statement that the students of Oxford and Cambridge were disqualified. He (Mr. Healy) called upon the Chief Secretary to make good his words; he pinned the right hon. Gentleman to his own words. The other night the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) said that this was a matter which did not arise upon the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill; but if it were postponed he would give it his best con-

sideration. Were they to be dodged like a shuttlecock from one Bill to another? At one time it was not a matter for the Representation of the People Bill, at another it was not a matter for the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill, and at another it was a disfranchising clause. He (Mr. Healy) and his hon. Friends took their stand upon the declaration of Ministers. They were within the recollection of the Committee. The words of the Chief Secretary still echoed in the Chamber; the right hon. Gentleman said—"Point out to me in any English Act any disqualification similar to that now proposed." Of course, the inference was that if such a disqualification could be shown he was quite prepared to assimilate the Irish to the English law. All the Irish Members wanted was assimilation. They had been fighting for the English law, and they appealed to the right hon. Gentleman to stand by his own words, and give them in Ireland the benefit of the same law which was dealt out in Oxford and Cambridge.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said he could not recall exactly the words he used; but he remembered that he began by saying he was against the disfranchisement of anybody. Then he asked hon. Members whether they could prove that what was alleged with regard to Oxford and Cambridge was really the fact. He asserted his own ignorance on the subject. He now found that the students in the Colleges of Oxford and Cambridge were disqualified by a special clause of an Act of Parliament—there was no doubt now upon the matter. He was sorry they were disqualified, because, as far as he could form an opinion, they ought not to be. If the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Healy) said that he (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) went so far as to say he did not wish any different treatment of the students of Dublin University to that of the students of Oxford and Cambridge, he was afraid that precluded him from voting to extend a privilege to the students of the Dublin University which was denied to those of Oxford and Cambridge. He was sorry that by a hasty expression he had precluded himself from the possibility of voting upon this subject. Under the circumstances, it would perhaps be better that he should refrain from voting; but he thought his opinion on the subject would be gathered from what he had said. He did not think anyone ought to be prevented from voting because he happened to be a student. He regretted to find that the students of Oxford and Cambridge were excluded from the franchise, though they might possess the necessary qualification.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that he had understood that no one who had a vote was to be disfranchised. Long before this small question about University students was raised, the Prime Minister told the House, and no Member of the Government could possibly depart from the assertion, that no one was to be disfranchised by this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman had said so over and over again. And now, when they came to this particular point, it so happened that something had been found out which was different from what was expected—that was to say, the Irish Members who wished the same law as prevailed in England to prevail in Ireland—he wished they held that opinion in other matters—had found out that the English students had not the right to vote, whereas the Irish students had. That was no reason why the Irish students should be disqualified. It might be a good reason why the English students should be enfranchised; and if such a proposition were made he should certainly be inclined to support it. When he was at the University he felt his disfranchisement very much. He could never understand why he should not have a vote, occupying chambers in Cambridge as he did. He certainly could not agree to the disfranchisement of the students in Dublin because the students of Oxford and Cambridge were disqualified from voting. He took his stand upon the declaration of the Prime Minister that no one was to be disfranchised by this Bill. Of course, it was quite plain that this disfranchisement could not be made upon a mere Registration Bill, though he should oppose the proposal just as strongly if it were made upon a Franchise Bill. The question of the franchise was settled; and now they were dealing with the registration of those persons who were, by the Representation of the People Act, to have the right to vote. Nothing had been taken away from the Irish students by the Representation of the People Act. It was now a pure

question of registration, and not of who were entitled to vote and who were not. He certainly should most strongly support the view which had been expressed by his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), and impress upon the Government the necessity of adhering strictly to the last statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It was only a personal statement.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, there could be no personality in the case of a Government. The Prime Minister spoke for the Government, and his view was that no person should be disfranchised. He (Sir R. Assheton Cross) called upon every hon. Gentleman now sitting upon the Treasury Bench to carry out the view of the Prime Minister by going into the Lobby against the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy).

MR. O'SHEA said, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) was quite mistaken. The Prime Minister never said that no one was to be disfranchised by this Bill.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: Yes; over and over again.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE, in reply to the right hon. Gentleman (Sir R. Assheton Cross), admitted, on the part of the Government, that the Prime Minister said more than once that the group of Bills now before the House—the Franchise Bill and the Registration Bills—were in no sense to be disfranchising Bills. Under those circumstances, the Government were precluded from voting with the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), whatever view they might have of the merits of the case. If he (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) understood rightly there were many students in Trinity College, Dublin, who were now on the Register; and if the Committee were to accept the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman those students would be disfranchised. The Committee would, therefore, be infringing the rule which the Prime Minister and the Government had laid down for themselves in this matter. He (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) would not express any opinion on the merits of the case. The time had passed for considering whether those students should have votes or not. That question ought to have been decided on the Representation of the People Bill of last year. This was a mere Registration Bill, and upon it the Government felt themselves precluded from making any change which would result in disfranchisement.

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN said, that great weight had been attached to the statement of the Prime Minister that this was not to be a disfranchising Act, and that no class of persons would be disfranchised under it. This was a very curious case, which he believed did not come within the purview of the Prime Minister when he was making that assertion. It seemed to him to have been forgotten that the Prime Minister proclaimed another principle, and it was this—that under this Act the people of the Three Kingdoms should enjoy equal rights and privileges. He (Mr. Sullivan) maintained that that was as much a principle of the Prime Minister's speech and speeches with reference to this matter as the version which had been so frequently quoted. The right hon. Gentleman declared over and over again that there should be equalization of registration; but simply because this handful of young men happened to be Tory, and hailed from the centre or headquarters of Toryism in Ireland, the words of the Prime Minister as to disfranchisement were clung to with great affection by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen who sat above the Gangway on the Opposition side of the House. The Prime Minister committed himself, unmistakably, to the principle that there was to be from first to last in this matter equality of treatment between the people of the three countries; and it was only because the Tory Party found they had an advantage in this particular matter that they fastened on to the words of the Prime Minister, which he (Mr. Sullivan) was sure were never meant to cover a case such as that under consideration.

MR. R. BIDDULPH MARTIN said, it seemed of importance that they should assimilate the laws which prevailed on this subject in the different parts of the United Kingdom. He thought it really would be in conformity with the wishes of the Committee that this Amendment should be passed, and that then the question of qualification or enfranchisement of University students in the three

countries should be made the subject of a separate Bill. Though it was perfectly true that the Prime Minister said this was not a disfranchising Bill, the opportunity might be taken of adjusting this anomalous state of things. He hoped the Committee would take this opportunity of assimilating the law between the two countries, even at the risk, he must admit, of doing some injustice in this particular case.

MR. SMALL said, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) had said it was not possible for him to support this Amendment, because it would have a disfranchising effect. But the Representation of the People Act of the Government was in some respects a disfranchising measure. ["Oh, oh!"] Yes; all joint occupiers of houses valued, say, at £10, were disfranchised by the Act passed last autumn. It seemed to him very extraordinary that right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench, who swallowed the Representation of the People Act, containing as it did several disfranchising clauses, should raise objection to some 200 young gentlemen being disqualified to vote in a constituency in which they had no title whatever to exercise the franchise.

MR. HEALY said, he had been greatly edified by the attitude of the Treasury Bench in this matter. He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke), who, the other night, distinctly promised to give the subject his best consideration. The right hon. Gentleman was brought into the House; but when he found what was going on, he, in the immortal words of Mr. Disraeli, "scuttled away." Then the Chief Secretary (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) came to the fore. The right hon. Gentleman was very bold in the early portion of the night. He wanted the law of Ireland to be assimilated to that of England. "Show me," said the right hon. Gentleman, "anything in an English Act which disqualifies the students of Oxford and Cambridge, and then I will deal with the students of Trinity College, Dublin." And then, when the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Pembroke (Mr. H. G. Allen) produced the clause from the Reform Act which distinctly disqualified the students of Oxford and Cambridge from voting in the city or town, as the case might be, the right hon. Gentleman said—"I spoke hastily." The right hon. Gentleman had two voices—one voice was that of the Irish Secretary, and the other voice was that of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling Burghs. The right hon. Gentleman now attempted to disassociate himself from his official position in the hope of defeating the Amendment. The inference to be drawn from the right hon. Gentleman's words was that if it was proved to be that English students were disqualified, he would assent to the disqualification of Irish students. When it was proved to him that English students were disqualified he said—"I only spoke for myself." What Minister ever took up such a position? Was it to be tolerated that in one breath the right hon. Gentleman should speak as the Irish Secretary, and in another breath as Mr. Campbell-Bannerman? The right hon. Gentleman, as Irish Secretary, opposed the Amendment on the ground that the provision involved was not contained in any English Act. It was proved to him that he was mistaken; but, nevertheless, he still opposed the Amendment, but not as the Irish Secretary, but in his personal capacity. And yet Irish Members were asked, upon matters relating to Ireland, to have full confidence in the Government. The President of the Local Government Board was called in by a messenger despatched by his Colleagues; but finding that the waters were troublous he made off. The Chief Secretary for Ireland, as such, repelled the Amendment; but in his individual capacity said—"I will not be able to vote against the Amendment, but I will not vote for it." Such was the conduct of the Government in which they were asked to have confidence. Then the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) came forward, and said—"Oh, but the Prime Minister has said this is not a disfranchising Bill." The Prime Minister said that in reference to a particular Bill. Let the dead bury its dead. What the right hon. Gentleman said last July under totally different circumstances did not apply now.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he did not refer to anything the Prime Minister said on the Representation of the People Bill, but to a declaration the right hon.

Gentleman made on the group of Registration Bills.

MR. HEALY said, that, as far as his recollection served him, the Prime Minister made no such declaration with regard to any group of Bills. In the famous phrase of the Home Secretary (Sir William Harcourt), on the 17th of March, "Where are the traces?" Produce the Prime Minister's words upon which this Amendment was opposed. The Government could not deny that he was led the other night to withdraw an Amendment bearing upon the subject by the promise of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) to look into the matter. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) could not deny that to-night he asked them to show him what was provided by the English Act, and then he would know whether he ought to assimilate the laws of the two countries.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No; I did not say that.

MR. HEALY remarked, that it was only a few minutes ago that the right hon. Gentleman said he did not recollect what he did say. He (Mr. Healy) appealed to English Members who had been witnesses of these proceedings whether there had been a creditable exhibition on the part of Her Majesty's Government? He appealed to English Gentlemen to refrain from supporting the Government on this occasion. He thought that when pledges were given by the Government the House ought to be in a position to rely upon them. The other night they were led astray by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Glasgow (Mr. Thomas Russell). It turned out that there were no residential students in the Glasgow University; that, in fact, the only places where there were residential students were Oxford and Cambridge, and that those students were distinctly disqualified. They were told by the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold) that he wished to get everybody on the Register they possibly could, so he (Mr. Healy) wished that everyone possessing proper qualifications should be put upon the Register; but the students in Trinity College did not, in his opinion, possess the necessary qualifications, and, therefore, they ought to be struck off. Such were the arguments with which he and his hon. Friends were met; and he confidently appealed to the honour of English Gentlemen to say whether the words of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary were not words which led the Committee to believe that if these students of Oxford and Cambridge were disqualified he would be prepared to refuse to admit to the franchise in Dublin City people who did not pay any rent, rates, or taxes?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN objected to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) attributing to him the assertion that he was prepared to assimilate the laws of the two countries in that respect. At the outset he said he was in favour of disfranchising no one; he said he did not know how the facts stood with regard to Oxford and Cambridge; and he asked hon. Members on the other side of the House whether they could produce any evidence that the students of Oxford and Cambridge were disqualified from voting. Then he went on to say that it was his opinion—and such was still his opinion—that if a student had such a qualification that, under any other circumstances, he would obtain a vote, he should not be disqualified because he was a student. What had happened since he made his speech? All that had happened was this—that the discovery had been made that there was a special clause in an Act of Parliament which excluded the students living in any of the Colleges of Oxford and Cambridge from voting. He said again he was very sorry for it, and he should be very glad to see that law repealed. Now, what were they to do with reference to the clause proposed by the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Healy)? He thought the Government would be altogether wrong, and that the Committee would be altogether wrong, if it proceeded to disfranchise those who already possessed the franchise in Dublin, because it so happened that what appeared to him to be an injustice was done in Oxford and Cambridge. He was in the recollection of the Committee that what he had now said was the gist of what he stated originally. He was puzzled to discover any particular inconsistency in anything he had laid before the Committee.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR said, a great deal had been said that night about the disfranchisement of men. He had as much regard for the natural rights of men as the right hon. Gentlemen who occupied the Front Government and Opposition Benches; but he held that the students of Trinity College, contemplated by this Amendment, were not men in the proper sense of the term, but were mere birds of passage. Speaking as a citizen who often had to come into contact with those gentlemen, he objected to have his citizen rights overborne by the votes of mere birds of passage. What other functions did those gentlemen perform? Did they serve upon juries? No. Did they join the Army? Perhaps they would in a while; but they were exempt from doing so now. Did they fulfil any conditions of citizenship? No, they were merely there as a floating balance of power to overbear the votes and the voices of such citizens as paid rates. Those men came and went, and left no traces behind them, except the expression of their peculiar opinions. For those reasons he supported the proposal of his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Healy), and he appealed to the Government to assimilate the law of the two countries in this respect, as they had endeavoured to do in others.

MR. THOMAS RUSSELL was sorry if anything he said the other night led the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) to understand that there were any residential students in the Scotch Universities. He (Mr. Thomas Russell) was perfectly aware that in Scotland no students were resident within the University; but he had yet to learn that residence within College walls was to make a difference between a student living there and a student living in a street close by. If a student fulfilled the law so as to qualify as a lodger, he did not see why he should be debarred from the privilege of the franchise, and it was not so in Scotland. Every student who fulfilled the lodger qualification had a vote.

MR. HEALY: Scotch students do not live in the College.

MR. THOMAS RUSSELL said, that that was so; but he could not conceive that residence within the College made any difference in the matter. He should like to point out to the hon. Gentleman who last addressed the Committee (Mr. J. O'Connor) that students were not mere birds of passage, but fulfilled all the duties of citizenship just as much as other classes of lodgers—they paid rents, and taxes were included in their rents. Other lodgers did not serve upon juries, and he did not see why a student, possessed of all the necessary qualifications to entitle him to the lodger franchise, should be treated differently to the bank clerk or the mechanic who might be a lodger. He might also point out to the Committee that at present Ireland and Scotland were in the same position as regarded students. He was very sorry indeed to hear that the students in Oxford and Cambridge had not the same privilege, and he thought it extremely desirable that they should have the same privilege conferred upon them. It was perfectly evident to everybody that a student of 21 years of age, with a considerable amount of knowledge, was as well qualified to exercise the franchise as any other lodger. Seeing that Ireland and Scotland were in this matter upon an equal footing, he thought it would be better that the law of England should be assimilated to the law in those countries.

MR. MACARTNEY pointed out that the students in the Temple had votes for the City of London. They always had had votes, and they were not debarred from voting because they happened to reside within an establishment in which law was taught.

MR. SEXTON said, it was as well, before they went to a division, that the claim put forward on behalf of those young men should be thoroughly understood. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) wished the Committee to maintain an exclusive privilege on behalf of this body of young men, which was denied to young men in a similar condition in Great Britain. There was no similar case in Scotland, because in Scotland no residential students existed. What was the difference between a student who lived in his University, and a bank clerk, for instance, who occupied apartments in the city? The bank clerk, who was a man earning his own living, had, generally speaking, to pay heavily for his apartments; whereas the student was in a state of pupilage, and occupied his rooms at

a particularly low rent, owing to public generosity—["No!"] Did the hon. Gentleman who interrupted him mean to say that a student in Trinity College paid as much for his rooms as a young man lodging in the City of Dublin paid? It was well known that Trinity College was richly endowed from the lands that some time ago were taken from the people; it was well known that the possession by Trinity College of those lands, and the rents they yielded, enabled the Governing Body of Trinity College to give rooms to young men and the students of the College at rates which were only a fraction of those paid by the gentlemen who lodged outside. That was the difference between the student in Trinity College and the bank clerk lodging in the city. That was a fundamental difference; and the claim which was now made on behalf of those students was a claim to maintain and continue an exclusive privilege, which was not only unjust to those on whose behalf it was made, but offensive to the general body of the community outside. The Committee had been told that the Government scheme of Reform was not intended to have any disfranchising effect. But there were disfranchising clauses in the Representation of the People Act, and he was surprised to hear the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) endeavour to represent this scheme of Reform to be entirely free from any disfranchising element. He (Mr. Sexton) was completely at a loss to understand what the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) wished the Committee to understand with regard to his position in the House and in the Government, and with regard to the meaning to be attached to the declarations he made in debate. They saw the right hon. Gentleman a couple of days ago, when he yielded to the solemn voice of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), left in the lurch. After he had made declarations at the Table as positive as that he had made to-night, they saw him, when the common sense of the Committee went unanimously against him, abdicating his position and abandoning his responsibility; they saw him, as the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) had said, "scuttle out of the House." If the right hon. Gentleman did not intend to take up a misleading position, perhaps he would inform the Committee what his position really was. The right hon. Gentleman, only a few minutes ago, challenged hon. Members to show him any clause disqualifying students in England. When, after a lapse of time, the clause in the English Act was produced, the right hon. Gentleman coolly said—"Oh, I made no promise to assimilate the law of the two countries." What was the meaning of the challenge the right hon. Gentleman threw out?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I did not challenge anybody. I merely asked for the production of the clause.

MR. SEXTON said, that that was only another instance of the unfair treatment to which Irish Members were subjected. Really, the strong Caledonian common sense of the right hon. Gentleman had developed, since he became Chief Secretary, into strong Hibernian ingenuity. The inference to be drawn from the right hon. Gentleman's words were that, in his opinion, there was no clause in an Act of Parliament disqualifying the students of Oxford and Cambridge; when, however, an hon. and learned Gentleman behind him (Mr. H. G. Allen) produced the clause the right hon. Gentleman executed a manœuvre worthy of Jim Crow. If the disqualifying clause could not have been produced, the right hon. Gentleman would have pleaded and relied upon the absence of such a clause as a reason for opposing the present Amendment. The clause was produced, and from that moment its significance ceased. The right hon. Gentleman then became, not the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, but the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling Burghs. At the moment the right hon. Gentleman retained the salary of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, but threw off the responsibility of Office. Hitherto they had been accustomed in the House of Commons to understand that even though the Government might break promises which related to any date, to any month, or any year, they would at least have the good faith to keep a promise which related only to the present. They had been accustomed to understand that Ministers in charge of a Bill were to be relied upon to carry out the natural indication flowing from their

language. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) had, however, introduced the House to a new condition of ethics; and if he proceeded much longer in the manner in which he proceeded the other night, when, after having pledged himself to a certain course on a Bill, he failed to carry out his compact, and he shamed his own compeers by leaving the House—if he again repeated such conduct it would be well he should have two flags, and hoist one or the other according as he spoke in his official or in his personal capacity.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN) said, the argument would disqualify not only students, but Masters of Arts, Professors, and so forth.

MR. SEXTON: No; students only.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN) said, the argument was that students occupied rooms at a cheaper rate than outsiders; and of course that argument applied equally to Masters of Arts and other members of the Universities.

MR. SEXTON: The argument applied to those in a state of pupilage.

MR. HEALY: Their masters might lock them up on the polling day.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN) said, he thought a great deal of unnecessary heat had been imported into that discussion. No one could suppose for a moment that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant had desired to mislead the Committee in anything that he had said. His right hon. Friend had fallen into the mistake which he had admitted—namely, of saying that not only graduates, but undergraduates in Oxford and Cambridge, were entitled to vote for the borough. This was not a disfranchising Bill, and he (Mr. Osborne Morgan) would therefore suggest that this Amendment should not be pressed, but that some opportunity should be taken hereafter of correcting what hon. Members admitted to be an injustice, and which arose from the peculiar position of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge at the time the Statute was passed—namely, that the Colleges had been formerly extra-parochial, and not liable to pay rates. That was the reason the clause had been passed; but that condition of things had long ceased to exist. He would suggest that the present Amendment should be either withdrawn or negatived, and that some future opportunity should be taken of removing the injustice done to members of Oxford and Cambridge Universities, and of putting graduates at least who were disqualified in a position to vote.

MR. PARNELL said, he rose for the purpose of asking the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant for some information as to the course which he intended personally to adopt. He wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he intended to vote for the original proposal or the Amendment of his (Mr. Parnell's) hon. and learned Friend the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), or whether he intended to take the third course of walking out of the House when the Question was put; because the right hon. Gentleman had on three several and distinct occasions that evening announced to the Committee that he was going to adopt each one of those courses. It was obvious that he could not adopt three courses; and he (Mr. Parnell) should be glad to know, for his own information, if ther ight hon. Gentleman had fixed upon the course he intended to adopt? As to the statement of the right hon. and learned Gentleman who had just spoken (Mr. Osborne Morgan), he (Mr. Parnell) thought he would probably find that the opportunity which had been referred to would be presented to the Conservative Party a little sooner than the right hon. and learned Gentleman or his Government would like on the Registration Bill. When that opportunity came he did not see how the Government could possibly refuse to adopt an Amendment enfranchising the students of Oxford and Cambridge in the face of the attitude they had adopted in regard to the students of Trinity College.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, the hon. Member who had just spoken had appealed to him to know what course he proposed to follow, and he (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) thought he had explained that already. He had endeavoured to do so several times. He had addressed the Committee on this small point repeatedly, and had given a good many reasons against the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy). On the first occasion he had, amongst other reasons,

stated that he had not been aware of the facts of the cases of Oxford and Cambridge, and he had asked hon. Gentlemen who had spoken about it if they could produce evidence of the facts they alleged. That was the whole sum—front, beginning, and end—of his offence. On that occasion he (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) had said that he did not know what the state of things at Oxford and Cambridge was, and should be glad to know it. Now, however, they knew that the students at Oxford and Cambridge did not vote for the city and borough. But he had then stated—and he would refrain from stating again—a good many other considerations, every one of which led him to reject the proposal of the hon. and learned Member.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said, the state of the law was anomalous between the different parts of the United Kingdom. In Scotland and Ireland it seemed that these undergraduates were qualified to vote at borough elections.

MR. HEALY: Not in Scotland—not residential students. They do not exist.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said, that, at any rate, the undergraduate in Dublin came under the conditions of the law as to the lodger franchise. With every disposition to go as far as possible with the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), he was afraid the hon. and learned Member really had not, and could not make out, a case for the refusal of the franchise to undergraduates as lodgers. The case was that there was an apparent injustice to the undergraduates in the Colleges of Oxford and Cambridge; but it seemed to him that really in no Registration Bill, neither English nor Irish, were they called upon to deal with the question of this franchise. He would go further, and say that he thought that what hon. Gentlemen opposite were entitled to attack in every possible way was the representation of the University itself. It was that that was the main grievance. Upon that point he (Mr. Illingworth) had already voted with the Irish Members, and upon that point he should be glad to go with them again. But surely there could not be a case established—surely Parliament could not take cognizance as to what particular buildings persons might live in, or whether the rent of those buildings was higher or lower according to the peculiar circumstances of the case. If the students complied with the ordinary conditions of the law, no Revising Barrister should go beyond the ordinary inquiry, and distinguish, as hon. Gentlemen opposite had distinguished, between different classes. He could only hope that hon. Gentlemen would go a step further, and would not draw a distinction between the position of these electors and those who might be bank clerks, or who might hold other positions. He did not hold that these students were birds of passage any more than were other classes of young men who were entitled to the franchise. [MR. HEALY: They are not producers.] He (Mr. Illingworth) really thought that hon. Members opposite were arguing a case on which justice did not stand on their side.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he wished to say a word as to how this matter stood, so far as the English Universities were concerned. The graduates and undergraduates did not vote under the old system previous to 1832. It was thought that, under the first Reform Act, students might be qualified to vote for the city of Oxford and borough of Cambridge. It was thought right, in the Reform Act, to insert a special clause, stating that nothing in the measure should enable the students of Oxford and Cambridge to vote for the city of Oxford or the town of Cambridge. They never had done so before, and all the Act of 1832 did was to say that they should not be allowed by that Act to vote for the city or the borough; but, so far as other Universities of England were concerned, there was nothing to prevent students of the University of Durham, or the Victoria University of Manchester, from voting just like ordinary persons. The clause that was passed in 1832 did not seem to have been passed in the case of Dublin; and when they came to the English Bill, and the question again arose as to allowing students at Oxford and Cambridge to vote for the city and borough respectively, he should be ready to support a proposal to extend the privilege to them.

MR. COMMINS was of opinion that the two main points involved in this question had been, to a large extent, evaded. The first was—was the law in

Ireland to be assimilated to that in England as to the position of students who were *in statu pupillari*, and were not *sui juris?* With regard to Durham, there were no resident students there, and there were no residential students in the Victoria University of Manchester, to which the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had referred. Nor were there any either in the London University or the Royal University of Ireland. The only students who were in a similar position to those at Oxford and Cambridge were the students of the University of Dublin residing within the walls of Trinity College.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: The students of Durham are in the same position.

MR. COMMINS said, he was not aware that there were any residential students in Durham. If there were any, they were so few that they were not worth taking any note of. He should like to know how many dozen students of the University of Durham were resident within the walls of that University, or ever were at one time? He did not believe that one dozen were ever residential within the walls at one period. The question was—were they to assimilate the law of Ireland to that of England in this matter? The policy of doing that had been sufficiently pointed out in the Committee. There was a higher question than that which hon. Members had been discussing, and that was—was it advisable that students who, as he had said, were not *sui juris*, and were subject to academical discipline, should have the apple of discord, in the form of political partizanship, thrown amongst them? Was it wise that those students should have their thoughts diverted from those legitimate objects which had taken them to the Universities—was it advisable that they should be thrown into the confusion and turmoil of election contests, which meant the destruction of all University discipline? It was evidently the opinion of the Government in 1832 that that state of things was not advisable, and they had introduced a clause into the Reform Act, stating that the students of Oxford and Cambridge should not enjoy the franchise for the city and town. The provision did not apply to Masters of Arts, or to anyone but students, and for the exclusion of those there were ample grounds. He thought that, instead of taking away the disability in the case of the English students, it should be allowed to remain to protect them against political turmoil, and to secure for them the serene air of the Universities, and that the students of Trinity College, Dublin, should be placed in the same position.

MR. MARUM said, he just wished to say one word before the Committee divided. He was a Member of the London University, and, as such, he wished to remind the Committee that the Reform Act of 1832 had deliberately made this exception. The reasons for the adoption of this provision 50 years ago were sound, and he did not see why the same reasons should not obtain at the present day. He did not know that they were any better reformers than their ancestors.

MR. TOMLINSON deprecated the adoption of this proposal as an Amendment to a Bill with which it really had no concern. Reasons had been given for the Amendment inconsistent with each other. The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had based his support of this proposal on the ground that the students were birds of passage; but students were none the less birds of passage if they happened to live outside instead of inside the walls of the University. The students of the Scotch Universities or of the University of London were quite as much birds of passage as those who lived within the walls of the University of Dublin. Then the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had based his support of the proposal upon an entirely different ground. He maintained that students who lived in Universities were in a less independent position than those who occupied lodgings. But students who lived outside the walls of the Universities were partakers of the benefits of belonging to the Universities just as much as those who lived within the walls of a College. There was in the University of Oxford at the present time a system by which certain students did not belong to any College. They were members of the University, and subject to a special Governing Body. Those gentlemen were, apparently, not excluded from voting; and he maintained that this exceptional exclusion of those who had rooms in the Colleges should be brought to an end. It was said that those students

were not *sui juris;* but that applied to those who lived outside the walls as well as to those who lived within. The whole thing was anomalous, and could not be consistently supported. The proposal was, moreover, as he had observed, outside this Bill, which was to amend the law for the registration of voters in Ireland, and had nothing to do with disfranchisement. If hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway desired to bring forward a proposal for disfranchisement of this kind, they should have done so on the Representation of the People Bill. They had told the Committee that that Bill was to a large extent a disfranchising measure, though there was some exaggeration in the manner in which they alluded to it; but if they had a clause to move on this subject they should have brought it in as an Amendment to that Bill. The Amendment at this moment should be rejected by the Committee.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 34; Noes 127: Majority 93.—(Div. List, No. 147.)

MR. SEXTON said, he now begged to move the first of the three clauses standing on the Paper in his name, entitled "Service by post of form of requisition." The clause was an attempt to deal with a very pressing matter. It said—

"No clerk of union, or other official to whom the form of requisition for names of inhabitant occupiers is to be returned when filled up, shall be entitled to refuse to receive such form, or omit to proceed upon the information it contains, because it has been returned through the post without prepayment of postage, but shall receive such form, and act in regard to it in every respect, as if the postage had been prepaid, and, in case of failure so to do, every such clerk or other official shall be liable in respect of each such form refused or not proceeded upon to a penalty of not less than forty shillings."

The Act gave no instructions as to whether the form sent out by the Guardians bearing the name of the inhabitant occupier should be prepaid or not, and the fact was that a number of forms had been returned with no stamp upon them, and the Guardians had been charged by the Post Office 1*d.* for each. There was this pressing difficulty to face—that many of the Boards of Guardians in Ireland might for political reasons refuse to act upon the Returns which came to them without the postage having been prepaid. In the North Dublin Union he had been informed that a large number of the forms had been returned unstamped. The clerk had asked whether he was to receive the returned forms and pay the postage, or whether he was to refuse them, and the Chairman had said that it would be hard to deprive those people of the franchise because they had not prepaid the postage on the forms which they had sent in. He (Mr. Sexton) had seen one of the forms sent out by the North Dublin Union, and he had noticed on the back of it the letters O.H.M.S., which everybody understood to mean "On Her Majesty's Service." When those letters appeared on a document the general impression was that it could go through the post free of charge. In the North Dublin Union, Mr. M'Neil, a Tory Guardian, had moved that the Returns which were sent back unstamped should be refused. That motion was not carried; but had it been made in the South Dublin Union instead of the North, no doubt it would have been adopted, and that would have had the effect of excluding those persons from the Register. He (Mr. Sexton) did not care very much how the matter was settled. If it were agreed that the Post Office should carry the letters post free, it would suit his purpose very well; or if, on the other hand, it was decided to instruct the Guardians to receive the notices, whether stamped or not, he should be satisfied. The amount would not be very great, supposing nobody paid the postage. About 700,000 notices would be sent out, being the number which would come upon the Electoral Roll under the Representation of the People Act, and, supposing that none of them paid the postage, the whole sum would only amount to about £1,000. No doubt, after those matters had been discussed and noticed in the papers, a great many people would take the precaution to pay the postage, but some might not do so, and it would be unfortunate if by a misapprehension a great many people should be deprived of the vote. He would press his Amendment very strongly, and he hoped the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland would be able to assure him either that the Post Office would deliver the notices without charge, or that the Guardians

would be instructed to receive them and act upon them whether they were stamped or not.

New Clause :—

(Service by post of form of requisition.)

"No clerk of union, or other official to whom the form of requisition for names of inhabitant occupiers is to be returned when filled up, shall be entitled to refuse to receive such form, or omit to proceed upon the information it contains, because it has been returned through the post without prepayment of postage, but shall receive such form, and act in regard to it in every respect, as if the postage had been prepaid, and, in case of failure so to do, every such clerk or other official shall be liable in respect of each such form refused or not proceeded upon to a penalty of not less than forty shillings,"—(*Mr. Sexton,*)

—*brought up,* and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be read a second time."

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. WALKER) said, the question as to whether those notices should be carried without being stamped was one entirely for the Postmaster General. He did not think there would be any difficulty in the matter, at any rate not so much as was anticipated. He thought it would be well to leave it to the common sense of the Clerks of the Unions, and that it was not necessary to legislate in the matter.

MR. LEAMY asked whether the Local Government Board would have any objection to send instructions to the Clerks of the Unions to receive those forms unstamped?

MR. HEALY said, he hoped the Postmaster General would take a liberal view of this matter, and that in view of the fact that thousands of new voters would come on the Register, many of whom would not know that it was necessary that the notice should be returned with the postage prepaid, he would not enforce the halfpenny stamp.

MR. SEXTON said, the Solicitor General for Ireland had not touched the case at all. What had happened at Dublin would happen again in these cases. The clerk would refuse to receive the notices. There was a great possibility of fraud and collusion under the existing arrangement. The majority on the Boards of Guardians were Tories; and if the Tory landlords occupied themselves with politics, and objected to the popular candidate, all that was necessary was that the landlords should send back the paper unstamped, and the Tory Clerk of the Union or other official should decline to receive it. He contended that they should not be placed within the possibility of a large number of people being disfranchised for the want of a halfpenny stamp. He felt sure that the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General would not, for the sake of the small sum of money involved, refuse to instruct his subordinates in Ireland that, whenever these Returns came into their hands, the fact of their not being stamped should not be allowed to interfere with their delivery; he would not refuse to guarantee that the papers should get into the hands of the persons to whom they were addressed whether they were stamped or not. The whole matter was a very small one, and one that, in his opinion, ought to be decided without hesitation.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, it was a question of exemption, and he would consider it before the Report.

MR. SEXTON said, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman and the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland would be able to devise a practical settlement of the matter. He would ask leave to withdraw his Amendment in that expectation.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said, before the Amendment was withdrawn he wished to express a hope that there would be no miscarriage of justice over a technical matter of this kind; but while it would be a very serious thing that the object of the Bill should be nullified by the want of these stamps, he trusted, on the other hand, that care would be taken that no harm was done to the Inland Revenue.

Clause, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. SEXTON said, he believed that no one would contest his contention that any Clerk of the Union or other official charged with any duty under the Representation of the People Act, 1884, who refused to carry out that duty, and thereby endangered the vote of any person, should be dismissed from his office. The clerk or official who delayed or killed time in connection with his duties came within the scope of that contention, and he thought it was necessary clearly to indicate at the earliest pos-

sible moment that no insubordination, delay, or action likely to prejudice the rights of voters, should be tolerated by that House; and, for that reason, he asked the Committee to say that if any official sinned against the Act in question he would not be allowed to retain his position. With that object in view he would move the Amendment in his name.

New Clause:—

(Duties of clerks of unions under "The Representation of the People Act, 1884.")

"Any clerk of union, or other official charged with any duty by 'The Representation of the People Act, 1884,' who, after having been called upon to perform such duty, shall refuse or delay to enter upon and proceed with such performance, shall be liable to dismissal without notice,"—(*Mr. Sexton,*)

—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be read a second time."

MR. GIBSON said, this was an important clause. He did not at all object to a clerk who, by delay or neglect, caused grave obstruction in a matter of this kind being punished for it. That was entirely right; but it would seem a matter to be dealt with by the official heads of the Department. He did not know whether the Government felt that this clause, as drafted, was necessary to strengthen their hands; whether, in its present form, it was calculated to do so in the most efficient way. He desired to elicit from the Government how far they considered a clause of the kind necessary, and how far they were satisfied with the clause as proposed?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, he did not think it necessary to introduce into the Bill a clause of this kind, because such a breach of duty would be considered a matter justifying dismissal. He considered that to adopt a new clause under the circumstances would be to go beyond the necessities of the case.

MR. SEXTON said, the point was that every hour was of importance in this matter of the voting of the people. They knew that evil-doing on the part of a Clerk of the Union or official could only be discovered months afterwards. This clause was not intended to meet the case of default; it was only intended to meet the case of refusal or delay in proceeding. It was a matter for ascertainment by the Local Government Board. If it were reported to the Local Government Board that any clerk or official had refused to proceed, they could then send down and investigate the matter. But that should be done without notice, for obvious reasons. He thought it necessary to deal with a dereliction of duty by a penalty; and, in this case, thousands of people might be disfranchised unless the officials were told that the iniquity in question would entail loss of office.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, he had already pointed out that in the case of misconduct no notice was necessary.

MR. HEALY said, that, last year, they had made out a list of over 100 cases where an official had acted falsely and fraudulently; but what satisfaction did they get by leaving the matter to be dealt with by the Local Government Board? Why, the fact that officials were accused by hon. Members on those Benches was in itself sufficient to cause right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench to screen them. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland was President of the Irish Local Government Board, and how did he treat complaints made to him? His one idea was not to please the people, to give them satisfaction, or to do anything agreeable to them. He would screen the officials, and the one question he would ask himself would be—"How can I thwart the Parnellites?" His own belief was that when the Clerks of Unions and officials in Ireland grossly misconducted themselve, the right hon. Gentleman and the Irish Government would quite as grossly maintain them in their offices.

MR. SEXTON said, unless the Government promised to take the matter into consideration and ceased to put them off with answers of the kind they had just received, he thought they would be compelled to occupy considerably more time in discussing the question. He understood the Solicitor General for Ireland to say that the course that would be pursued was that which he (Mr. Sexton) wished to have declared in the Bill. Both the learned Gentlemen who had spoken on the Amendment admitted that if an official did what was described in the clause—that was to say, refused to

perform his duty, or delayed to enter upon its performance—he was liable to dismissal. What then was the cause of the abhorrence on the part of the Government to have that declared; what harm could there be in saying that under the circumstances the individual would be dismissed? There was one other course open to the Government. If they had this insuperable objection to the clause, would they accept a compromise—that was to say, if under the circumstances, as was admitted, an official was liable to dismissal, would the President of the Irish Local Government Board undertake that the Board would immediately issue to the Clerks of Unions a Circular intimating to them upon the authority of the Board that refusal or delaying to perform the duties cast upon them by the Act would entail their dismissal?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Yes, Sir. I do not accept the way in which the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) has put this question, or his description of the action of the officials of the Local Government Board. I can assure him, however, that we have every desire to see justice done in this matter; but I am not aware that any instance has been pointed out to me, or my hon. and learned Friend near me, of unfairness in these matters. The Local Government Board have undertaken to issue instructions, but we could not accept the clause in its present form. If it will meet the views of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) I will agree to a clause running in this way—

"Any clerk of union, or other official . . . who, after having been called upon to perform such duty, shall wilfully refuse or delay, and so on."

MR. SEXTON: I accept that.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I think there would be no objection to that.

Clause read a second time.

Question, "That the word 'wilfully' be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to,* and *added* to the Bill.

New Clause:—

(Devolution of title.)

"For the purposes of this Act the production of letters of administration by any claimant in order to establish any devolution of title to or rom any qualification shall not be deemed necessary, and the pendency of proceedings under or the non-compliance with any of the provisions of the third section of 'The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881,' shall not be deemed to invalidate a claim to any qualification,"—(*Mr. Marum,*)

—*brought up,* and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be now read a second time."

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, he did not think it would be advisable to accept the clause.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said, he must confess that the difficulty which the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Kilkenny (Mr. Marum) aimed at by the clause was one very certain to arise.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, this was not so much a question of difficulty as a matter of actual fact. At the last revision in the Queen's County, a considerable number of men were disfranchised because they had not taken out letters of administration. He knew of cases where men had died leaving several sons, but only one son had remained in occupation of the farm for perhaps 12 or 15 years, this arrangement being completely satisfactory to all the parties. According to ordinary presumption, the man who had been in occupation, and had paid rates, was entitled to vote. But that was not enough for the gentleman who presided at the Registration Court, and he disallowed vote after vote, on the ground that though the men had been in exclusive occupation for a very great number of years, they had not qualified themselves legally by taking out letters of administration. *Primâ facie* claims to be registered did not avail the men at all. He (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) saw his constituents, one after another, disfranchised on no better ground than that he had stated. This means of disfranchisement had been adopted in the past, and he had no doubt it would be adopted in the future unless steps were taken to avoid it.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN asked if the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) could give the Committee an estimate of the disfranchisements under such circumstances?

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that he saw five men disfranchised in a quarter of an hour.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir FARRER HERSCHELL) said, he did not think that such disfranchisement as the hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. O'Connor) referred to would be possible, when regard was had to the provisions of this Bill. There was a clause providing that actual occupation should give the vote, and if evidence were given of actual occupation, one could hardly understand the vote being disallowed. As to the latter part of the clause of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Marum), it would not in his (the Solicitor General's) opinion have any effect at all. The words were—

"Or the non-compliance with any of the provisions of the third section of 'The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881,' shall not be deemed to invalidate a claim to any qualification."

He did not quite understand what was meant by non-compliance with any of the provisions of the 3rd section of the Land Act, because that section provided that a man had to bequeath to one person only. If a man bequeathed to more than one person, he (the Solicitor General) did not understand what was to follow. If the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Marum) was agreeable, they would confer together to see whether the difficulty suggested could be properly met. Whatever evil there was, he (the Solicitor General) did not think it would be remedied by this clause. He thought that, as a matter of fact, the clause would be a mere nullity.

MR. MARUM said, he would point out that it was possible that there might be pendency of proceedings within the 12 months to determine who was the tenant of premises. It was to prevent the pendency of proceedings invalidating a claim to a qualification, that he proposed this clause. He knew many persons who did not like to sub-divide a holding. They agreed amongst themselves, and then came the difficulty who was the tenant? When they came before the Revising Barrister, that gentleman invariably asked, first of all, who the occupier was.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, that if the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Marum) would confer with the Law Officers, they would be very happy to do what they could to meet his views. If, after a conference, the hon. and learned Gentleman preferred his own words, he could move to re-introduce his clause on the Report.

MR. MARUM said, he would very gladly avail himself of the suggestion of the hon. and learned Gentleman.

Motion and Clause, by leave, *withdrawn.*

SCHEDULE.

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN proposed an Amendment, in page 4, line 1, before "Schedule," to insert "Second."

Question, "That that word be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN proposed an Amendment, in Schedule 2, page 4, lines 9 and 10, after "2," to leave out "and the Schedules," and insert "except sub-sections one and two of section two."

Question, "That the words 'and the Schedules' stand part of the Schedule," put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That the words 'except sub-sections one and two of section two' be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN proposed an Amendment, in Second Schedule, page 4, leave out from beginning of line 27 to end of Schedule, and insert—

"The forms and directions applicable to cases where new polling districts have been constituted, contained in the First Schedule to this Act, shall be substituted for the corresponding forms and directions contained in the Schedule to 'The Polling Districts (Ireland) Act, 1873.'"

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Schedule."

MR. HEALY said, he would ask the Government whether they were willing to agree to the holding of night Sessions in places like Kingstown, especially now that the Franchise Act had made a great change in the general character and the number of persons who would come up to prove their claims?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, he would consider the subject and determine upon it by Report.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That the words proposed be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN moved the insertion of a new Schedule.

New Schedule (Containing the Forms necessary to carry out the Act in counties and Boroughs separately, and in Counties and Boroughs conjunctively,) —(*Mr. Campbell-Bannerman,*)

—*brought up,* and read the first and second time.

Question proposed, "That the Schedule be added to the Bill."

PART III.—FORMS APPLICABLE TO BOTH COUNTIES AND BOROUGHS.

FORM No. 31.

CLAIM OF LODGER.

MR. HEALY, in moving, as an Amendment, to leave out Column 4, "Amount of Rent paid," said, the term in question was a very confusing term, because the lodgings were to be of the value of £10 unfurnished. The people who got the forms would be puzzled to know whether the phrase to which he referred meant with or without furniture. He and his hon. Friends were puzzled to know how to fill up the form, and that fact was sufficient to show that many other people would experience the same difficulty. He would, therefore, propose that the column be struck out.

Amendment proposed, in Part 3, Form No. 31, to leave out Column 4, "Amount of Rent paid."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That the Column proposed to be left out stand part of the Form."

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, he could not agree now to the striking out of the column. Perhaps the hon. and learned Gentleman would reserve the point until Report.

MR. GIBSON said, he had no bigotry about this Form at all. The lodger franchise had been retained, in addition to all the other franchises now created. There must be some column in the Form, the filling up of which would enable anybody to ascertain the value of the lodgings in respect of which a man claimed to be registered. If this column were struck out, how was a person to find out that the figure of £10 was reached? There certainly should be something to indicate the value of the lodgings.

MR. HEALY thought that instead of a column, "Amount of Rent paid," it would be better to have one, "Are your rooms above the value of" so much? The present column was mere surplusage, because no man would fill up the Form, unless he considered the value of his rooms was over £10. The point was this—that in the City of Dublin people were in the habit of taking rooms and furnishing them themselves. There were also, as a matter of course, furnished lodgings, and therefore a distinction ought to be made between furnished and unfurnished rooms, and this column did not make any distinction between them. Perhaps the difficulty would be met if the word "furnished" were put in.

MR. MACARTNEY said, he would point out that there was one column, "Description of Rooms occupied, and whether furnished or not."

MR. HEALY said, he would agree to the postponement of the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

On the Motion of Mr. FINDLATER (for Mr. T. A. DICKSON), the following Amendment made:—At end insert the following Schedule:—

(Schedule B.)

NOTICE of OBJECTION to be given to PARTIES objected to by any PERSON other than the CLERK of the PEACE or CLERK of the UNION, or POOR RATE COLLECTOR.

Polling district of

To Mr. , of

Take notice that I object to your name [*in the notice to the tenant, instead of the words "your name," insert the name of the person objected to*] being retained on the list for this polling district of voters for the county of [*or* borough of], and I ground my objection on the column of the register headed—

"Christian name and surname of each person on the register;"

Or on the column headed—

"Place of abode;"

Or on the column headed—

"Nature of qualification;"

Or on the column headed—

"Amount of qualification or rating;"

Or on the column headed—

"Townland or other denomination, street, lane, or other like place in this polling district, &c."

Dated this day of one thousand eight hundred and

Signed *A.B.*, of [*place of abode*], being now registered [*or*] on the register of voters or list of voters [*as the case may be*] for the county of [*or* borough of].

Bill *reported*, as amended; to be considered upon *Monday* next, and to be *printed*. [Bill 150.]

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

(*The Lord Advocate, Mr Solicitor General for Scotland.*)

[BILL 132.] COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Short title); and Clause 2 (Definition), severally *agreed* to.

Clause 3 (Power of Her Majesty in Council to prescribe forms).

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON, in moving, as an Amendment, in page 1, line 12, to leave out "including," and insert "excluding," said, he proposed the Amendment for the purpose of keeping in the hands of hon. Members the alteration of an Act of Parliament which was very important to Scotland. The clause proposed to enable the form of the Valuation Roll to be altered by an Order of the Queen in Council, instead of its being brought to the House of Commons and altered after consultation with the Scotch Members. It was quite possible that English and Irish Members did not know that the Valuation Roll was the most important document the Scotch people had. It was formed 32 years ago as the basis of all rating in Scotland, and it had been of the greatest value since. In Scotland they could not get on without it; and the English and Irish people would be very well satisfied if they adopted the same system. But that, however, was another matter. The Order of the Queen in Council was a very high sounding term; but, in point of fact, it really amounted to the Lord Advocate and his clerks. This was purely a Scotch business; and he would show the way in which this very Bill had been brought before the House, as an instance of how easily alterations might be made without any consultation with the Members from Scotland. This Bill was printed and delivered to hon. Members between 8 and 9 o'clock last Wednesday, and at 1 o'clock on the same day it was read a second time. He believed that not more than one or two Members from Scotland then knew that the Bill was in existence. He asked several Scotch Members, and only one of them told him that he had noticed that the Bill had been delivered that morning. He believed that the rapidity with which the Bill was read a second time was unprecedented in the annals of Parliament. There was no record of a Bill being read a second time the day it was delivered to Members. He mentioned that as an instance of how easily the Valuation Roll might be altered without the Scotch Representatives knowing anything about it. The alteration that was proposed in this case was the adoption for the counties of a form of roll now used in boroughs. He would deal with that more in detail when they reached the Schedules. The county Members in the counties in Scotland had no organization by which they could bring to the notice of the Lord Advocate either their objections to the proposed change, or their wishes with regard to it. In that respect they were in a very different position to the burghs of Scotland, which had what was called the Convention of Burghs — an organization for the purpose of looking after the interests of the burghs—having its head-quarters and offices in Edinburgh, and for its President very often the Lord Provost of that city. They had, therefore, means of access to the Lord Advocate and other officials in Edinburgh for the furthering of their wishes. He did not say that the interests of the burghs and counties were antagonistic; but his point was that they were not identical. Their wants were very different, and what was suitable for one might not be suitable for the other. It would be very easy for the officials of the Government to make changes which might have a political bias, and which might affect the voting of either burghs or counties in a very important manner, and, therefore, he thought hon. Members of that House ought to retain what they had had for 30 years—namely, the privilege of altering the law. He, therefore, proposed just merely to strike out of Clauses 3 to 4 so much as enabled them to alter the Valuation Roll of counties without coming to that House. He hoped hon. Members would see that it was proposed purely to keep in their hands that power which they had now, and not for any purpose of obstruction or hostility to the measure of the Lord Advocate. He begged to move the Amendment of which he had given Notice.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 12, to leave out the word "including" for the purpose of inserting the word "excluding,"—(*Sir Alexander Gordon,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the word 'including' stand part of the Clause."

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, that the hon. and gallant Gentleman, as he understood him, both from his Amendment on the Paper and from his speech, did not object to the Queen in Council being vested with the power of prescribing forms for the execution of this Act generally, but merely objected to that power being extended to the Valuation Roll. [Sir ALEXANDER GORDON: Yes; that is so.] In that case, he could assure the Committee that the only object with which this provision had been introduced was for the sake of convenience. They had now had a good many years experience of the Valuation Roll. It had been very frequently altered by Act of Parliament; and he believed that the counties had by no means adhered to the particular form which had been prescribed from time to time, so that there were in the various counties considerable variations. His hon. and gallant Friend had spoken of the want of facility for communication. He could assure the hon. Member that the reason why the Bill was somewhat late in being introduced was because they had been in communication with the assessors of the leading counties with the view of ascertaining what was the prevalent opinion as to the most convenient form and method of accomplishing the object they had in view—namely, simplicity and clearness in this Roll. It was found, from time to time, that some of the entries were needless, and that others required to be introduced. Instead of making it essential to come back to Parliament for authority to get this done, they had thought it would be convenient to propose a simpler method of making such alteration as might be thought necessary from time to time. He conceived that that would be in accordance with the prevalent opinion; but he need scarcely say that if there was an idea on the part of Scotch Members that this should be made the subject of legislation, he would have no objection. A mere alteration of the form or the style was hardly worth—he was going to say occupying the time of the House, but he would not say that. He regarded the Valuation Roll as important; but it was not quite the charter of their liberties, as the hon. and gallant Member would seem to imply. He should like to know what the prevalent opinion on the subject was?

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON said, the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate had spoken of the Valuation Roll having been altered several times. The right hon. and learned Gentleman, he thought, would find himself mistaken with regard to that. It had only been altered once.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): No; several times.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON said, he had here two Acts of Parliament—namely, the Act of 1854, and the subsequent Act of the 24 & 25 *Vict.*

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, the Valuation Roll was altered with regard to burghs by the Burghs Reform Act, and in regard to counties by the County Voters Act of 1861.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON said, that was what he was speaking of. The Act of 1861, no doubt, had altered it. It had made it optional for the period to be one or five years, as the Commissioners of Supply thought proper. It was for the purpose of assimilating the Roll; but there was no object to be gained by assimilating the Roll of the counties and the burghs. The two were wholly different, and nothing would be gained by having the two forms amalgamated. Therefore, he hoped his Amendment would be acceded to.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL said, that he had understood the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate to invite an expression of opinion as to the propriety of the proposals in the Bill. Well, he (Sir Herbert Maxwell) hardly concurred in the proposals in the Bill. He thought it would be distinctly to the advantage of those who had to deal with the working of the Act in the counties and burghs that there should be a certain elasticity given which could not be obtained by the complicated machinery of an Act of Parliament. It might seem a trivial point, and a somewhat unimportant point, which had been raised by his hon. and gallant Friend

(Sir Alexander Gordon); but he could assure the Committee that there was a great deal of expense, unavoidable expense, involved in this question. It was the practice in the counties to adopt a most cumbersome and expensive form of printing the register of voters. He held in his hand a sheet of the register of voters for his own county, and he thought hon. Members, if they would look at it, would agree that it was a most inconvenient form. In his own constituency there were not more than 1,700 voters, and, absurd as it might seem, the register of these voters—the papers on which these 1,700 names were printed—weighed no less than 1½ lbs.; and he left it to the Committee to consider what would be the weight of records containing the names of, perhaps, 25,000 or 30,000 voters. He thought the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate deserved the thanks of the Committee for having referred this matter to the Privy Council; for, no doubt, the recommendations would reach that Body more perfectly and more readily than they would in the form of an Act of Parliament brought before this House.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment *negatived.*

On the Motion of The LORD ADVOCATE, the following Amendments made:—In page 1, line 24, after "1861," insert "and section sixteen of 'The Representation of the People (Scotland) Act;'" and in line 27, leave out "section four of the said Act," and insert "the last-mentioned section."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 4 (Assessor may call for a list of inhabitant occupiers).

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, the first Amendment on the Paper in his name was as follows:—In page 2, line 4, after "every," insert "occupier or others." He did not, however propose to move it. He desired to accomplish the same thing by a slightly different method—namely, by moving to insert, in page 2, line 5, after the words "in respect of," the words "the occupation of." It had been pointed out that the clause, as it stood, did not define with sufficient clearness what the rating was to be. In Scotland, differing from the usual English practice, there was a rating both on the proprietor and the tenant, and under the clause, as it stood, there would be laid on the proprietor, however large his property, an obligation to send in a Return specifying all the names of the servants that even the tenants had on his property; and if the Committee accepted the proposal, he would have to specify also the time at which the servants entered his service. It would not be reasonable to ask that of the proprietor if he was not in the occupancy, because he might not have the means of knowing the facts; and accordingly the words he (the Lord Advocate) proposed to insert would make the clause run—"Every person rated, or liable to be rated, in respect of the occupation of lands." If he were the proprietor in occupation, then he would have to make the Return, and if he were the tenant in occupation he would have to do it. It was only the occupier who knew the service men on his property.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 5, after the words "in respect of," insert "occupation of."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

On the Motion of The LORD ADVOCATE, the following Amendments made:—In page 2, line 6, after "dwelling-house," insert "or on some agent of such person concerned in the management of such lands and heritages;" line 7, leave out "himself," and insert "such person;" line 9, after "dwelling-house," insert "and the month and year in which they began to occupy such dwelling-house;" line 10, leave out "he," and insert "any such person or agent;" and in line 12, leave out from "conviction," to end of Clause, and insert—

"To the same penalty as is enacted in similar cases by section seven of the Act passed in the Session of the seventeenth and eighteenth years of the reign of Her present Majesty, chapter ninety-one."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 5 (Special provision as to voters in 1885), *agreed to.*

Clause 6 (Dwelling-house to be entered in valuation roll).

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 21, to leave out "separately."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'separately' stand part of the Clause."

MR. A. R. D. ELLIOT said, he wished to know the meaning of the Amendment.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, it had been suggested that the use of the word "separately" was a direction which led the assessors, or some of them, in making up the lists, practically to make double entries. They might feel it their duty to enter a name a second time in connection with the houses of servants. A criticism had been made upon that by those familiar with the working of the matter.

MR. A. R. D. ELLIOT said, he thought it desirable that the different houses attached to a farm should be entered separately.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, there was such a specification as would show that there was a different place inhabited by a different person. He had thought it safer to have the word "separately" in. They had been told that it would lead to double entry, and without it the section would be quite sufficient in itself.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON thought that each individual house should have a separate number on the Roll. Every house which carried a vote with it should have a separate number on the Roll.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, it should be individualized, whether it was numbered or not.

MR. R. P. BRUCE said, he thought the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate should consider the matter before Report. Take the case of a large farm; it might have four or five houses on it, the inhabitants of which would possess votes. There would be a list of four or five names in another column of the Roll, and nothing in the Roll to show where the houses were, or by whom they were occupied. That point he thought worthy of consideration. Should not the word "cottage," or whatever it might be, be put against each name?

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON: I hope the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate will consider that matter.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): I will undertake to do so.

MR. ORR-EWING thought each house should be clearly specified.

MR. BUCHANAN asked whether there would be a separate entry?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B BALFOUR) said, that specifying a dwelling-house meant entering that dwelling-house individually. There might be a farmhouse, then so many cottages, and so on.

Question put, and *negatived*; word *left out* accordingly.

Clause, as amended, *agreed to*.

Clause 7 (Register in divided parishes); Clause 8 (Register in parliamentary burghs merged in counties); Clause 9 (Advertisement of new polling places in counties, 16 & 17 Vict. c. 28); and Clause 10 (Registration where counties are divided), severally *agreed to*.

Clause 11 (Assessor not to be collector of poor rates or factor).

MR. WILLIAMSON said, he did not know what the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate expected to gain by the clause. No doubt it was a desirable thing that the assessor of a burgh—it might be a small one—should not be allowed to be a factor or land agent within that small burgh; but there was no reason why he should be prevented from engaging as factor or land agent in farm operations in a district 10 or 12 miles away. He was sure the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate did not wish to prevent that, although that was the result of his clause. He (Mr. Williamson) proposed to remedy it in either one or two ways—either to insert, after the word "assessor," in line 11, the words "in the county or division of the county"—that was to say, to exclude the operation of the clause from an outside district. If that were not acceptable, he would suggest, as an alternative proposal, to put at the end of the clause the words "in the county district or burgh in which he may be assessor." He would move the first of the two alternative Amendments, but would leave the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate to make his choice between the two.

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 11, after the word "assessor," insert "in the county or division of the county."—(*Mr. Williamson.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. DALRYMPLE said, he agreed with the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Williamson). He quite understood the reason of this clause. It might be advantageous to have the restriction in some cases; but there were instances in which burgh solicitors were to a very small extent land factors, and these gentlemen it would be unnecessary to exclude from the office of accessor. He believed the language of the clause was unnecessarily wide, and was of opinion that the case the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate had in view, and which the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had also borne in mind, would be met by making the provision apply to counties only. He thought that burgh factors should be excluded from the clause. They were in no sense factors in the sense in which he understood those referred to in the Bill to be.

DR. CAMERON said, he hoped that the second alternative proposed by the hon. Gentleman the Member for St. Andrews (Mr. Williamson) would be accepted. To include small burghs in the operation of this Bill would be to put a stop to some flagrant cases of pluralism which existed in small burghs, and there could be no particular hardship in the proposal. He quite agreed that there was no reason why an assessor in a burgh or county should be prevented from doing what he liked in any district beyond his official jurisdiction; but that brought in the second alternative. But if this was to be inserted in the clause, and he thought it was desirable that it should, he protested against burghs being taken out.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL could not understand the object of the provision in the Bill which they were discussing. If gentlemen acting as factors in many districts were excluded by their office from acting as assessors, they would lose the services of those who were really the most capable men in the county for discharging the duties of assessors. Of course, in large towns there was plenty of choice; but he would ask the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate to remember that in sparsely populated districts and rural places the most capable business men, and the best men, were selected as factors and land agents, and that these would be the best qualified for discharging the duties of assessors. He must protest against the idea, which seemed to be accepted in some quarters, that because a man was employed in a certain capacity to act between a landlord and tenant, he utterly and entirely lost the capacity for acting impartially in any public office. He entirely protested against any such idea as that, and trusted the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate would, if he did not abandon this Amendment, at all events show some better reason why the Committee should support it than it bore on the face of it.

GENERAL ALEXANDER said, he supported the view of the hon. Baronet (Sir Herbert Maxwell). He had an Amendment on the Paper to leave out all the words after the word "rates" to the end of the clause. He failed to understand why burgh assessors should be placed in a better position than county assessors, as his hon. Friend the Member for Wigtonshire had just stated. Some of the factors who acted as county assessors were the very best men in the county. He had in view the cases of several assessors in several towns who had been acting as factors for various properties for 25 years past. He had never heard any complaint against these gentlemen; and he thought that to prevent a choice being made from amongst the factors and land agents was to deprive the public of the services of a very valuable class of men. The result of the exclusion proposed would be that they would be apt to get an inferior class of men, because the superior class would have to chose between giving up their factorships or relinquishing the assessorships. He thought in the case of men who had acted for 25 years without a whisper of complaint against them, it was a hard thing to put before them the alternative of giving up either their factorships or their assessorships. He had not heard a single argument in favour of the plan the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate proposed; and he should like to hear from the right hon. and learned Gentleman what he had to say in favour of depriving this worthy class of men of their assessorships or their factorships, as the case might be?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, he thought he could explain in a few words the reason why this clause was introduced. It had been

introduced in consequence of representations received from a variety of quarters to the effect that the combination of the offices of assessors and factors had resulted in a good deal of complaint. Pluralism was objected to as being disadvantageous in the holder of a public office, but it was not merely to prevent that that the clause had been introduced. Legislation had no concern with that by itself, unless it was shown that there was some possible conflict between the discharge of a public duty and a private one. What were the duties of an assessor and his powers? An assessor had to go about and collect all kinds of information regarding hereditable property. He had to go about the lands in his district, whether county or burgh. He asked all kinds of questions, and made all kinds of notes, and entered what he thought the value on the Valuation Roll, and he very often had a considerable amount of judgment to bring to bear. Take, for instance, the case of houses in the town or in the county which were not let, but in the occupancy of the owner. The assessor had to form an opinion as to what value he would put upon them. On the other hand, observe what an assessor's duties as factor were. One of his duties as factor was, of course, to manage in the interest of his employer, and to avoid any taxation that could be avoided. He should be very sorry to make any charge against the factors; but it was quite plain that they might be tempted to take a more favourable—that is, for the purposes of taxation, a lower—view of the valuation of property they managed than they would if the same property were managed by someone else. Accordingly, it was thought there was a possibility of a conflict of public and private duty to which no one should be subjected. Certainly there were parts of the country in which the feeling existed—whether rightly or wrongly—that it was unfortunate that there should be persons in such a position. He put it as a matter of general principle which he thought the Committee would accept. If what he had said were true of the country, he should imagine it was even more true of the towns. It had been represented to the Government that there were in towns gentlemen holding the office of house factors and also of assessors, and it had been pointed out that it was unfair they should have the power of valuing houses they managed and the houses they did not manage. The same considerations, therefore, came into play in towns as in counties. Assessors who acted as house factors would get to know the affairs of their neighbours, and it might be of their rivals in trade. They might obtain particulars with regard to other houses that it was not desirable they should acquire. In short, this was not a position in which a man should be placed. Such was the ground on which this provision with regard to factors had been introduced. He might point out that no objection had been made to the collectors of poor rates being disqualified from acting as assessors. The reason of their disqualification was obvious. Poor rate collectors also had certain duties to perform with respect to the preparation of the Register. But it appeared to him that the case against factors acting as assessors was even stronger than that against poor rate collectors. He should, however, be quite prepared, if the Committee thought fit, to accept the second Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for St. Andrews Burghs (Mr. Williamson), because the possible conflict of duty would not arise except where the management was in the same area as that in which the second set of duties were to be performed. If his hon. Friend (Mr. Williamson) would for the words "for a county or division of a county" substitute the words "in the county or burgh," he (the Lord Advocate) would be prepared to accept the Amendment. But he was not disposed, for the reasons he had given, to drop the provision, unless there was a feeling in the Committee that it was not a right provision.

MR. ORR-EWING said, he was very sorry the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate had thought it necessary to introduce this clause, because he (Mr. Orr-Ewing) thought that the clause was quite unnecessary. They had not been told the sources from which the Government had obtained the information upon which this clause was defended. It was a great pity that owing to secret communications, a clause should be inserted in an Act of Paliament which really endeavoured to cast a reflection upon a most respectable class of men. This clause would be

found to be all the more unnecessary when it was borne in mind how the assessors were appointed. The Government assessors valued each district of Scotland, and the counties almost invariably appointed them their assessors —indeed, he was not aware of any county with which he was acquainted that did not accept the valuation of the county assessors. It must be a very small county that acted differently. It would save the counties a great deal of expense, and a clashing of valuation between the Government and county assessors, if the Government valuation were to be adopted. It would be much better for the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate to withdraw this clause altogether. If the right hon. and learned Gentleman would only give the matter a little thought, and throw aside the anonymous correspondence he had received, he must see the force of the arguments addressed to him.

MR. WILLIAMSON asked leave to withdraw his Amendment, seeing that the Lord Advocate was prepared to accept the alternative proposal.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 12, after "be," insert "a sheriff clerk or clerk of supply."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. R. P. BRUCE said, he wished to point out that if these men were prevented from engaging in the work, it might be found necessary to employ men of an inferior class.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, he would remind the Committee that sheriffs' officers had other public duties to perform.

MR. DALRYMPLE asked what sort of persons it was contemplated to employ in future as assessors? In many districts there was only a limited number of persons who could possibly be so employed; and if by this Bill they were to exclude such persons, who would have to be appointed in future? No one could make a living by being assessor only; and if an assessor was not to have any other means of obtaining a living, he (Mr. Dalrymple) failed to see who they could appoint to the office.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) thought a very convenient method would be to appoint the Government assessor. He believed that the Government assessor was employed in all the counties of Scotland except six.

Question put, and *agreed to;* words *inserted* accordingly.

DR. CAMERON proposed, in page 3, line 12, after "poor," to insert "or other public." It appeared to him that the same argument applied in the case of the one officer as in the case of the other.

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 12, after "poor," to insert "or other public."—(*Dr. Cameron.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, he doubted whether it was wise to use such very general words. He did not exactly know what they covered. He thought the Committee ought to know whether any particular office was pointed at, and whether it was expected there would be any conflict of duty.

DR. CAMERON: The municipal and police rates, for instance.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, he did not know that the mere collecting of money raised a conflict, and he put it to his hon. Friend whether the words adopted did not cover every office that was necessary.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

GENERAL ALEXANDER said, he was not satisfied with the explanations given by the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate, and as he believed, with his hon. Friend the Member for Dumbartonshire (Mr. Orr-Ewing), that the proposal of the right hon. and learned Gentleman cast a slur on a deserving body of men, he begged to move the Amendment which stood in his name.

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 13, to leave out all after "rates" to end of Clause.—(*General Alexander.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, he did not propose to repeat what he had already said on this matter; but he must point out that what was proposed did not cast a slur upon anybody—he should be very sorry if it

did. Parliament had repeatedly declared by Acts that particular offices should not be held together. That did not cast a slur upon anybody; it merely affirmed that in the estimation of Parliament it would be better that certain offices should not be held jointly. The object was to prevent any possible conflict of duties.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL said, that an undoubted slur was cast upon the factors. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had said he had received anonymous communications.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): I did not say anonymous.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL said, that so far as the Committee were concerned the communications were anonymous. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had received communications, he declined to say from whom; but he invited the Committee to be influenced by communications of this nature. He (Sir Herbert Maxwell) would be very surprised if the Committee of the House of Commons consented to pay any attention whatsoever to the communications in question. Why, they all knew that nobody could fill any public office in any rural town or large town without making enemies. It was very possible that an enemy of one of the factors had written to the right hon. and learned Gentleman; but the right hon. and learned Gentleman was not to suppose that the Committee would on any trivial grounds consent that a class of men should be discredited in the manner proposed. The right hon. and learned Gentleman spoke as if to be tempted was tantamount to being tempted. He spoke of the motives which would actuate these gentlemen, and he mentioned certain forms of temptation to which they would be exposed by the fact of holding a number of offices. Of course, men were exposed to temptation; but it was not the business of the House of Commons to build a hedge round every subject of Her Majesty so that they should not be tempted. The gentlemen in question could resist temptation, and therefore he cordially supported the Amendment of his hon. and gallant Friend (General Alexander).

MR. ORR-EWING said, there were only six counties in Scotland which did not adopt the Government assessor. He would put it to the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate whether it would not be better to introduce a clause compelling these six counties to adopt the Government valuator as the county valuator? If that were done, the difficulty which the right hon. and learned Gentleman and his Friends foresaw, of having factors and Poor Law Inspectors acting as assessors, would be prevented. If this suggestion did not meet with approval, he hoped the Committee would reject the clause altogether.

DR. CAMERON hoped the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate would adhere to this part of his proposal. He did not see that any slur was cast upon any section of the community by what was proposed. There was a strong temptation to employ as factor a man who had power of fixing the assessment of properties. The liberal reforms which had taken place would work a very material change, especially in the Highland counties; and from the knowledge he (Dr. Cameron) possessed of the classes who were to be enfranchised, he could say that they would not regard with anything like confidence or satisfaction the holding of the office of assessor by the factors. Officials of this sort should be above suspicion; and when they were legislating on this subject, it was well that a change should be made if good reason were shown for making it. The hon. Baronet (Sir Herbert Maxwell) had spoken of anonymous communications. The right hon. and learned Lord Advocate did not mention anonymous communications, but spoke of having received communications from various quarters of the country. He (Dr. Cameron) had also received many communications on this subject.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he hoped the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate would accept the request of the hon. Member for Dumbartonshire (Mr. Orr-Ewing). That hon. Gentleman had proposed a compromise which would be acceptable to all Parties. He (Mr. A. J. Balfour) agreed with the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate, that there was some advantage in having officials who were above suspicion; but he also agreed with his hon. Friend, that there was no more deserving class in all Scotland, a class more capable of doing their business than the factors. If it was true that this clause

was likely to be interpreted as a slur on that deserving class, could not that be avoided without injury to the Public Service? Would it not be well for the right hon. and learned Gentleman to engage, between this and Report, to make it obligatory on all counties in Scotland to engage the Government assessors?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. A. BALFOUR) said, he thought it was possible it might be regarded as an interference with local self-government if the Government were to say—"We appoint certain gentlemen as assessors, and you must appoint them as your assessors." Besides, the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Orr-Ewing) did not cover the case of burghs, and he (the Lord Advocate) was not sure whether that was not a more important case than the other.

MR. ORR-EWING suggested that it should be arranged to include the burghs in the provision.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, that the only counties in which this was in question at all were the Highland counties, and it was just in those counties where there would be difficulty in finding any efficient official other than the Government official. He was certainly of opinion that it would be well if some compulsion were put on the counties in this matter.

GENERAL ALEXANDER said, he would ask leave to withdraw the Amendment in order that a division might be taken upon the Question, "That the clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) moved an Amendment, in page 3, line 13, after "factor," to insert "for heritable property."

Question, "That those words be there inserted" put, and *agreed to.*

MR. WILLIAMSON said, he would propose the Amendment accepted by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate—namely, at the end of line 13, to add "in the county or burgh for which he may be assessor."

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 13, at end, to insert "in the county or burgh for which he may be assessor."

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. BUCHANAN asked whether it would not be necessary to insert the words "Parliamentary burgh?"

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, he did not know whether that would be necessary; but he would consider the matter on Report, and also whether they should not insert the words "county or division of county."

Question put, and *agreed to;* words *inserted* accordingly.

DR. CAMERON proposed to insert, in line 13, at end—

"And every person who is the partner of a person so employed shall, for the purpose of this section, be deemed himself to be so employed."

His object in proposing this Amendment was to prevent an evasion of the meaning of the clause.

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 13, at the end of the Clause, to insert the words "and every person who is the partner of a person so employed shall, for the purpose of this section, be deemed himself to be so employed."—(*Dr. Cameron.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, the qualification was an individual qualification, and he did not think there was any fear of a clause being evaded in the way contemplated by the hon. Gentleman. If the clause were allowed to stand as at present, there would be no possibility of harm arising.

MR. DICK-PEDDIE said, he considered the Amendment was necessary, and therefore trusted the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate would see his way to accept it.

DR. CAMERON said, the clause might be necessary or not; but his belief was that if the clause was necessary, to make it effective they must put in words such as he proposed. Therefore, as the right hon. and learned Gentleman would not accept the Amendment, he should divide the Committee.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 31; Noes 76: Majority 45.—(Div. List, No. 148.)

Motion made, and Question put, "That Clause 11, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 80; Noes 27 : Majority 53.—(Div. List, No. 149.)

Clause 12 (Separate valuation of water, gas, and other companies to be made in police burghs having population over 5,000).

On the Motion of The LORD ADVOCATE, the following Amendments made:—In page 3, line 14, after "twenty-three," insert "twenty-five and twenty-seven;" and in line 19, leave out from "Act" to end of Clause.

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR), in moving the insertion of a new clause, after Clause 12, providing for the printing of the Valuation Rolls, giving the Commissioners of Supply of any county, or the magistrates of any burgh, duly assembled for such purpose, the power to enter into contracts for such printing, and declaring the expense of such printing to be part of the expense of making up the Roll, and to be assessed for and levied accordingly, explained that under the Lands Valuation (Scotland) Act of 1867 the power was given to the Commissioners of Supply to contract for the printing of the Roll only for one year at a time, and it was thought that it would be much cheaper to give the power to contract for a period not exceeding 10 years. The new clause, therefore, proposed that they should have power to make such contracts for 10 years.

New Clause:—

(Printing of Valuation Roll. 30 and 31 Vic. c. 80.)

"It shall be lawful for the Commissioners of Supply of any county, or the magistrates of any burgh, to resolve at any meeting of their number, ordinary or special, duly called, and by a majority of those attending and voting, that the Valuation Roll of such county or burgh shall be printed for any period of years not exceeding ten, and it shall be lawful for such Commissioners or magistrates to enter into contracts for printing the same, and the expenses of such printing shall be deemed to be part of the expenses of making up such Roll, and shall be assessed for and valued accordingly: Provided always, That notice of the intention to move such resolution shall be inserted in the notice calling the meeting at which it is to be moved.

"And section ten of 'The Valuation of Lands (Scotland) Amendment Act, 1867,' is hereby repealed,"—(*The Lord Advocate,*)

brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

MR. A. R. D. ELLIOT said, he would move that Progress should now be reported. Many hon. Members had not been able as yet to look very carefully at these Amendments, some of which had been put upon the Paper for the first time that night. Another reason for postponement was that he and several other Scotch Members had sent off the Bill and the Amendments to their friends in Scotland for their consideration, and before going into the new clauses, which occupied a couple of pages of the Paper, he would like to know what his friends in Scotland thought of them. The only result of persevering with the Bill now would be that discussion would be raised upon it on the Report stage.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman be directed to report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. A. R. D. Elliot.*)

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, there was another reason for reporting Progress. The Prime Minister had announced at Question time that evening that he should have a statement to make next week with regard to the course he proposed to take in the English Bill in reference to the question of paying for the expenses of registration. It would be observed that these new clauses dealt with the question of the cost of registration. Perhaps the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate would tell the Committee what course the Government would take on this question in the present Bill?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, that was a matter for the judgment of the House. But if the Bill passed through Committee that night, it would be reprinted before the Report, and it would be more convenient to discuss the matter then. He did not propose to go into the general question now; but whatever might be decided in regard to it in connection with the English measure, the same principle would, of course, apply to the Bill for Scotland.

MR. A. R. D. ELLIOT said, he would, in that case, withdraw his Motion for reporting Progress. His only object was to prevent the Committee from going on in the dark.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Then, we understand that, whatever arrangement is come to in the English Bill on this point, a similar arrangement will be made for Scotland?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): Yes.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause read a second time, and *added* to the Bill.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR), in moving the insertion of a new clause providing for the registration of lodgers in the case of the joint occupation of lodgings where the interest of each lodger, not more than two in number, amounted to an annual sum of not less than £10, explained that the object of the clause was to give the same privilege to lodgers in Scotland as was enjoyed by lodgers in England under the Registration Act of 1878.

New Clause:—

(Joint occupation of lodgings.)

"Where lodgings are jointly occupied by more than one lodger, and the clear yearly value of the lodgings if let unfurnished is of an amount which when divided by the number of the lodgers gives a sum of not less than ten pounds for each lodger, then each lodger, if otherwise qualified, and subject to the conditions of 'The Representation of the People (Scotland) Act, 1868,' shall be entitled to be registered, and when registered to vote as a lodger, provided that not more than two persons, being such joint lodgers, shall be entitled to be registered in respect of such lodgings,"—(*The Lord Advocate,*)

—*brought up,* and read a first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

MR. HENDERSON said, he wished to know whether, in any case where there were more than two lodgers in joint occupation of the premises, the Revising Barrister would be permitted to make a selection among them?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR), in reply, said, that could not be done under the English law, and it would not be possible under the present Bill.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause read a second time, and *added* to the Bill.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) moved the insertion of a new clause, providing that the declaration of a lodger annexed to his notice of claim should be *primâ facie* evidence of his qualification.

New Clause:—

(Declaration of lodger to be primâ facie evidence.)

"In the case of a person claiming to vote as a lodger, the declaration annexed to his notice of claim shall for the purposes of revision be primâ facie evidence of his qualification,"—(*The Lord Advocate,*)

—*brought up,* and read a first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

MR. ORR-EWING said, he wished to know what would be the effect of the clause?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, that here again the analogy of the English Act was followed. It had been said that a man ought not to be obliged to go and prove affirmatively that he was a lodger, and the object of the clause was simply to provide that the onus of objecting to him should be thrown upon the person who objected.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause read a second time, and *added* to the Bill.

On the Motion of THE LORD ADVOCATE, the following new Clauses were read a first and second time, and *added* to the Bill:—

(Remuneration of collectors of poor rates.)

"For the duties imposed upon them by sections eighteen and nineteen of 'The Representation of the People (Scotland) Act, 1868,' collectors of poor rates shall be entitled to remuneration at the rate of six shillings for every thousand names, and such remuneration shall be paid as part of the expenses of registration in counties and burghs respectively."

(Additional officers for registration in 1885.)

"During the year one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five—

"(1.) It shall be lawful for the assessors, with the consent of the Commissioners of Supply and of the Town Council, in counties and burghs respectively, to employ such assistants as may be necessary in order to complete the registration of voters at every stage at the proper date;

"(2.) It shall be lawful for the sheriff to appoint such number of substitutes as he thinks necessary to assist in the revision

of the list of voters, such substitutes shall have the qualifications required by law for a salaried sheriff-substitute, and shall be paid at the rate of seven guineas per day;

"All expenses under this section shall be paid as part of the expenses of registration in counties and burghs respectively."

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) moved the insertion of a new clause dealing with the cases of the double entry of voters upon the lists.

New Clause:—

(Double entries of Voters.)

"(1.) When the name of a person appears to be entered more than once as a voter on the lists of voters for the same county or burgh, the sheriff, when revising the lists, shall inquire whether such entries relate to the same person, and, on proof that such entries relate to the same person, shall retain one entry and strike out the others.

"(2.) The said person may select the entry to be retained by notice in writing delivered or sent by post to the sheriff clerk at or before the opening of the first court at which the sheriff revises any of the lists in which any such entries appear, or by application made by such person or on his behalf at the first sitting of the court for the revision of such lists.

"(3.) If no selection is so made the entry to be retained shall be determined as follows:—

"(a.) In counties:—

"(i.) If one of the entries is an entry on the list of voters as proprietor, and unobjected to, that entry shall be retained; and

"(ii.) If none of the entries is on the list of voters as proprietor, and one of the entries is the place of residence of the voter, and unobjected to, the entry in respect of the place of residence shall be retained; and

"(iii.) In any other case the entry which is first reached by the sheriff in revising the lists shall be retained:

"(b.) In burghs:—

"(i.) If one of the entries is the place of residence of the voter, the entry in respect of the place of residence shall be retained; and

"(ii.) In any other case the entry which is first reached by the sheriff in revising the lists shall be retained:

"And, if any such entry to be retained is objected to the sheriff shall not finally strike out any other entry until the objection to the entry to be retained has been determined by him in favour of the voter:

"(4.) When a Parliamentary burgh is divided into divisions, and the name of a person is entered in the register of Parliamentary voters in more than one division, and one of these entries is his place of residence, he shall be entitled to vote only in that division in which he is registered as a voter in respect of his place of residence, and shall not vote in respect of any other entry."—(*The Lord Advocate,*)

—*brought up*, and read a first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

MR. DALRYMPLE said, he was glad the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate proposed to reprint the Bill, because this clause was of a somewhat startling character in its arrangement and method. It not only contained four sub-sections, but one of these sub-sections was sub-divided into two; and of those two secondary sub-sections, one was again sub-divided into three parts, and the other into two. Altogether the clause was of a most complicated character, and it might surely be made more intelligible. He would like to know what was meant by the word "entries," because it was difficult to ascertain whether they were men or things. In line 3 of the clause they were clearly things; but in line 17 as clearly they were persons. He hoped this sort of criticism would not be considered hypercritical—it was very important that they should be clear in the wording of the Bill. He would also like to see the words "unobjected to" omitted. Clearly they were not English, and he did not know that they were Scotch. They formed an unfortunate expression for an Act of Parliament. As the Bill was to be reprinted, he hoped that attention would be given to these points.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, he did not know whether the words "unobjected to" were Scotch; but he had no doubt whatever that they were English, because they were taken from the English Bill.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause verbally amended, as amended *agreed to,* and *added* to the Bill.

Schedule.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON moved, as an Amendment, the substitution of a Schedule in a different form from that contained in the Bill. Under the Act of 1854, two separate forms of Roll were established, one for counties, and the other for burghs. The one for counties had a column like the one he now proposed for the description of sub-

ject; but the one for burghs was subdivided, and had a small space for streets. In counties the houses were not numbered, and therefore the place for numbers was of no use. For some reason unexplained, the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate now proposed to introduce one form both for counties and burghs. In 1861, under the County Voters Act for Scotland, the two original forms were reduced to one form, and the double columns for towns were discontinued, and one simple form was introduced for both counties and burghs. That had been in use ever since 1861, and he was not aware that any inconvenience had arisen from it. But the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate now proposed to reverse the arrangement—to have one form for counties and burghs; but to make the counties adopt the burgh form, by which there would be a complicated column with three divisions introducing a number. There ought to be a separate roll for counties, with one plain column, in which to place the entries. He had in his hand some of the forms, and there would be no difficulty in filling them up with one column. He did not attach much importance to the point; but, as it would simplify the procedure, he would move to leave out the words "and situation."

Amendment proposed, in column 2, to leave out the words "and situation."—(*Sir Alexander Gordon.*)

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, he must point out that it was most essential to have a clear specification. He apprehended that the Committee would think that the column, as it stood, was a proper column.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON said, he had an Amendment to propose in order to carry out the 5th section of the Act of 1868, which was to the effect that any person holding property of the value of £5, after deducting feu duty, should be entitled to vote. That section, not having been repealed, it was important to have the feu duty placed on the Valuation Roll, in order that it might be deducted from the total value, and that it might be seen at once whether the person was entitled to vote. If that was not done, there would be a great inducement to assessors making up the Roll to take the value of property as it stood, without deducting the feu duty. It was also very important that there should be a public record of all feuars. Feuars were liable to assessment in cases where tenants were not so liable; therefore it was most desirable to have on the Valuation Roll a statement of those who were feuars, and those who were tenants. That was the custom with regard to the last Valuation Roll, and it had been found to be very useful. He therefore proposed that the right hon. Gentleman should agree to take out the first money column of the Government Schedule, because that column was of no value whatever. His proposal was that they should have the net result put in the column of the yearly rent or value.

Amendment proposed, in column 7, to leave out the words "yearly rent or value," in order to insert the words "feu duty and ground annual,"—(*Sir Alexander Gordon,*)—instead thereof.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS: What is the meaning of "ground annual?"

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON: Ground rent.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, the Schedule had been prepared after very careful consideration with assessors in the leading counties of Scotland. There seemed to have been something like a consensus that it was not necessary to insert the feu duty; but he found that there had since been a good deal of representation in another sense. He was therefore willing to accept the Amendment of his hon. and gallant Friend.

Amendment *agreed to;* words *substituted* accordingly.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the column headed "Observations."—(*Sir Alexander Gordon.*)

Amendment *agreed to;* column left out accordingly.

Schedule, as amended, *agreed to.*

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered upon *Monday* next, and to be *printed.* [Bill 151.]

WAYS AND MEANS.—REPORT.

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL.

WAYS AND MEANS — Resolutions [April 30] *reported.*

Resolution 1 (Income Tax) read a first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Resolution be read a second time."

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, this Resolution is an integral part of the Budget of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which is one of the most important that any of us can remember, both as to the amount of expenditure and the amount of deficit, and as to the steps proposed to be taken for meeting the deficit of the year. The first step, of voting the Resolutions in Supply, has been taken without any substantial discussion, only certain observations of a conversational character having passed; and we know that when we are asked to take the Report stage at this hour of the morning (1.45) there can be no real discussion of principle. I do not object to the Report being taken now; but I think it ought to be clearly understood that we shall have an opportunity of discussing all the proposals of the Budget on the second reading of the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill. For that purpose I think it ought to be made the first Order on the day on which it is brought forward, and I say we ought to have also a fair opportunity of discussing that which lies at the root of the finance of the year —namely, the Vote of Credit for £11,000,000, which has not been discussed, but which has been allowed to pass the Committee stage. It stands for Report, I believe, on Monday next. Now, what we desire is that we should have a proper opportunity of discussing that Report. I believe that the Government desire to put down the English Registration Bill as the first Order, and that they have also some proposal to make in order to meet the demands put forward in respect of questions relating to registration. That we understand will be a statement made by the Prime Minister, or by someone else on his behalf, at the commencement of Business on Monday; and if that is satisfactory we understand that the Report of the Vote of Credit will be taken, but if not, that the Registration Bill will stand over until Tuesday, and Supply taken on Monday. Sir, I do not think that would be a satisfactory arrangement. Considering the magnitude of the Vote, and its relation to the finance of the year, considering also the close bearing of the Vote on the policy of the Government in Egypt and elsewhere, it is only reasonable, I think, that we should have a full opportunity for discussion on that subject. Anyone of experience, who knows what it is to have Supply suspended at a late hour, to admit of another question of importance being taken, must be aware that, under such an arrangement, we cannot have the same satisfactory discussion as when the question is taken at an early part of the evening. I suggest, therefore, that the Government should make the arrangement for Monday such that we may have the greater part of the evening for the discussion on the Vote of Credit.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Sir, I think the right hon. Baronet has fairly stated the case. The Prime Minister not being present, it would be out of place for us to make any alterations in the arrangement with regard to the Business of the House; and, therefore, I can only say that it is the desire of the Government to place as much time as possible at the disposal of the House for the discussion on the Vote of Credit. I will undertake to communicate the statement of the right hon. Baronet to the Prime Minister.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolution *agreed to.*

Resolution 2 (Stamp Duties on Account of Property).

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he wished to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer a question with regard to the course he intended to take in the matter of Probate and Succession Duty. He had understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that it was his intention to place all the points affecting this matter in a separate Bill, and not include them in the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would follow that course, because it would be inconvenient to deal with a permanent change of law in the same measure with the alterations in the Income Tax and other similar duties. The Probate and Succession Duty was a subject of great importance, and as such required and deserved considerable discussion. He believed the right hon.

Gentleman would admit that, and also that it would not be easy to insure that discussion on the second reading, or even on the Committee stage of the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill. That being so, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would take care to keep this matter apart from all other questions.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I must remind the right hon. Baronet that this question was formerly settled after great controversy, which ended in the rule that all Budget proposals relating to Customs and Inland Revenue arrangements should be embraced in one Bill. I need not go back to the controversy that ended in that settlement; but it has been adhered to; and whenever great changes have been made since — and very great changes have been made since 1861 in matters connected with the Stamp Duties, which are, at first sight, distinct from Custom and Excise Duties—the rule has been maintained. The whole of the Customs and Inland Revenue changes have been embraced in one Bill, and I cannot consent to depart from that rule. I said last night that the alteration in the Income Tax must take effect from this morning; but that the alterations embodied in the Stamp Resolutions would not take effect until after the Bill had passed through Parliament. That is a distinction made in previous years; it is a proper Constitutional distinction, and we are prepared to maintain it; but to deal with the financial proposals of the Government in two Bills would be absolutely impossible.

Resolution *agreed to.*

Remaining Resolutions *agreed to.*

Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Sir ARTHUR OTWAY, Mr. CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER, and Mr. HIBBERT.

METROPOLITAN STREETS ACT (1867) EXTENSION BILL.—[BILL 137.]

(*Mr. H. H. Fowler, Secretary Sir William Harcourt.*)

COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Extension of limits of Act under 30 & 31 Vict. c. 134. s. 4.).

MR. FIRTH asked, why "six miles" was substituted for "four miles." There was no six miles area for any purposes; but the four miles area did exist for cab and other purposes.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, the Act which this Bill proposed to amend had three limits. There was the Metropolitan limit, the general limit of the Act, and the special limit of the Act. All that this Bill proposed to deal with was the general limit of the Act, by extending the radius from four miles to six.

MR. FIRTH asked what was the reason of the change?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: Because we think it most desirable in the public interest.

Clause *agreed to.*

Preamble *agreed to.*

Bill *reported*, without Amendment; to be read the third time on *Monday* next.

WATERWORKS CLAUSES ACT (1847) AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 7.]

(*Mr. Daniel Grant, Mr. Torrens, Mr. Sclater-Booth, Mr. Arthur Cohen, Mr. Ritchie, Mr. William Lawrence, Baron Henry De Worms.*)

COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Explanation of s. 68 of Act 10 & 11 Vict. c. 17).

MR. W. M. TORRENS said, that, in fulfilment of the pledge he gave to the House some time ago, he would propose, as an Amendment, in page 1, line 15, after "shall," to insert—

"Within the Metropolitan area as defined by the Act of the eighteenth and nineteenth of Victoria, chapter one hundred and twenty, section two hundred and fifty."

The object of the Amendment was to limit the operation of the Act to that district which came under the control of the Valuation Act of 1869. That Act constituted a standard of value, and means of ascertaining value, which did not exist in other parts of the Kingdom.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 15, after "shall," insert "within the Metropolitan area as defined by the Act of the eighteenth and nineteenth of Victoria, chapter one hundred and twenty, section two hundred and fifty."—(*Mr. W. M. Torrens.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

SIR SYDNEY WATERLOW said, that as the Committee had agreed that this should be a Bill confined to the Metropolis, the Amendment which stood in his name was merely consequential. The scope of the Bill was to assess the water rate upon the value determined by the Local Authority from time to time. The Local Authority, acting through the Assessment Committee, had no power whatever to assess the net annual value; in fact, "net annual value" could not be found in the Act of Parliament. Under the Act the Local Authorities were called upon to fix two values, the gross value and the rateable value, and to insert in the valuation list, as set out in the Schedule, the value under the two heads. Water rate should be paid on the same basis as local taxation; and that basis should be fixed by an independent authority—namely, the Assessment Committee, acting under the Valuation Authority. He fancied that was the intention of the Committee, and that that was the wish of the ratepayers of the Metropolis. If they retained the words "net annual value," they would have a phrase which could not be defined even by the Water Companies themselves. With those words it was possible to have litigation upon every assessment; whereas if they adopted the words "rateable value," they would have an amount which could not be challenged except through the Assessment Committee, and through the Court of Queen's Bench. If the words "net annual value" remained, the Bill would be inoperative, because the Local Authority would have no power; they had no power to settle the "net annual value," but only the rateable value. A paper had been circulated this morning—it bore the endorsement of the most eminent legal firms in the Metropolis, acting for the Water Companies—and in that Circular it was stated that net annual value and rateable value meant the same. If that was so, let the Committee adopt "rateable value," because that was a term generally understood.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 15, to leave out "net annual," and insert "rateable."—(*Sir Sydney Waterlow.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'net annual' stand part of the Clause."

MR. W. M. TORRENS said, the reason why he could not agree with his hon. Friend (Sir Sydney Waterlow) on this change was simply this. Everyone knew that this controversy had arisen through the decision of the House of Lords sitting as a Court of Appeal, which decision was to the effect that Parliament, in 1847, could have meant nothing else than to establish the test of net annual value. He (Mr. Torrens) took that as the basis of this Bill; and with the assistance of the hon. and learned Member for Southwark (Mr. Arthur Cohen), and many other Gentlemen of great experience, he had, he hoped, obtained the consent of the House to turn into legislation that which was successful litigation. In other words, he believed that net annual value would be found to be identical with rateable value; but if the House of Commons should determine to substitute the phrase "rateable value," which did not occur in the decision of the House of Lords, for "net annual value," which did occur in that decision, he thought they all knew there were influences in the Upper House which were very likely to fasten upon that as an objection, and say that was not what the House of Lords decided in the case of Dobbs. His hon. Friend (Sir Sydney Waterlow) had vast experience in London rating, and he must know what the thing would come to. If it was inevitable that "net annual value" and "rateable value" were the same thing, why quarrel about the phrase? Why give a handle to those who were opposed to this legislation if there was no essential difference in the two terms? Either the two would come to the same thing in the end, or they would not. The Amendment of the hon. Gentleman would certainly give rise to an objection which it was well known there were people out of the House quite ready to take. If the Committee thought fit to substitute his hon. Friend's phrase for his (Mr. Torrens's), he, of course, would submit without a murmur; but he warned the Committee that they would run a great risk if they changed the phraseology.

COLONEL MAKINS said, he agreed with the hon. Gentleman in charge of

the Bill (Mr. W. M. Torrens) in objecting to the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Gravesend (Sir Sydney Waterlow). But he could not agree with the hon. Gentleman in saying that "net annual value" and "rateable value" were the same thing. He would not, at that late hour (2.45), go into very many figures; but he felt bound to occupy the Committee for a short time, more especially because the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) was good enough last night to refer to the hon. Member for Middlesex (Mr. Coope) and himself (Colonel Makins) in not very complimentary terms. He wished to assure the right hon. Baronet that he and his hon. Friend were not anxious to oppose themselves to the wishes either of the right hon. Baronet, or of the Metropolitan Members generally. They were there simply in the discharge of what they believed to be their duty, and in the support of what they believed to be a real and vital principle—namely, the maintenance of Parliamentary faith. With regard to the question of the difference between "rateable value" and "net annual value," there was a test which he thought must convince everybody. The object of the Bill, as he understood the hon. Member for Finsbury, was to bring the law into conformity with the judgment on the subject of the highest Court in the land. Now, the House of Lords, in Dobbs's case, fixed the "net annual value" as the basis upon which the water charges were to be made. Hitherto, under the language of the Act itself, it was "annual value" only. The judgment of the House of Lords had made it "net annual value;" therefore, if the Bill simply carried out that judgment, it would stop at "net annual value." But then the Bill went on to provide "as settled from time to time by the Local Authority." That was exactly what the hon. Member for Gravesend proposed.

SIR SYDNEY WATERLOW: I object to that, because the Local Authority cannot do it.

COLONEL MAKINS said, the Local Authority fixed what was the rateable value, and the Local Authority was the assessment authority. Since the Dobbs judgment was given, the Water Companies had tried, as far as he knew—he had no official connection with any Company—to bring themselves in conformity with the law; and they had, in several cases in which there had been a dispute between them and the consumers, applied to the magistrates with regard to the rates. He had a Return of 17 cases in one Company which had been before the magistrates; and the result of those 17 cases was that the parish assessment was at least 13 per cent lower than the assessment fixed by the magistrates. He could give the figures if the Committee desired it; but he thought hon. Members might take his word for it. He, therefore, maintained that if it was the desire of his hon. Friend the Member for Finsbury to bring legislation in accord with the judgment of the House of Lords, he ought to stop at the words "net annual value," and not bring in the Assessment Committee. In various parts of the Metropolis the action of the Assessment Committees was very different. A Paper had been circulated to-day—he had received a copy, and he supposed every hon. Member had received one—showing the difference between the real sum—that was, the actual value of the premises—and the rate in the assessment list. There were a large number of cases given in the Paper, and the differences varied from 50 to 100 per cent. Now, if they fixed the "rateable value" or "net annual value" as fixed by the Assessment Committee, they *pro tanto* reduced the basis on which the water charges were made to that extent, and they took from the Water Companies something Parliament had endowed them with. It might be desirable, in the interest of the consumers, to pass a measure like this; but it was not justice to the Companies, and it would be a precedent fraught with the most evil consequences with regard to all future enterprizes based upon Acts of Parliament. He was sure the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) would give him credit for not desiring to do anything but to uphold the principle which governed all commercial matters. He hoped that when the Amendment he had upon the Paper was formally before the Committee he might be permitted to argue upon it. It was practically a negative to the Amendment now before them, and he desired to move it because it would settle all doubts. It would bring the actual law into conformity with the

latest and highest judgment on the subject—namely, the judgment in the Dobbs case. If this clause passed as it now stood, it would inflict great injustice on the Companies; it would reduce the basis on which they were entitled by law to make their charges, and it would be a distinct breach of public faith. Of course, he knew that, in a case like this, he must be in a great minority; but, nevertheless, he felt it his duty to make this protest, in order that it might not be said when the question was argued, as it was sure to be, in "another place" —["Hear, hear!"]—he supposed that cheer meant that they had to look elsewhere for justice than from the present occupants of the Treasury Bench—he could not put any other construction upon it. However, he would not now detain the Committee longer. He should vote against the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Gravesend (Sir Sydney Waterlow); and if that was not carried he should propose the Amendment which stood in his own name.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir FARRER HERSCHELL) said, he should like to say a word or two in this matter, because he was probably as familiar, or even more familiar, with the Dobbs case than any other Member of the House. He did not think there was any substantial difference between the words as they existed in the Bill and the words proposed by the hon. Member behind him (Sir Sydney Waterlow), as he believed the two expressions "net annual" and "rateable" would be held to mean the same thing. But the speech that his hon. and gallant Friend opposite (Colonel Makins) had just delivered seemed exactly to point to the desirability of shaping the Amendment, and putting beyond question what the meaning was. The hon. Gentleman behind him (Mr. W. M. Torrens), whose measure this was, had, he thought, somewhat depreciated its value when he said that its object was merely to carry into effect a decision of the House of Lords. No Bill would be necessary for that purpose.

SIR SYDNEY WATERLOW said, the object was to remove a doubt with regard to the decision of the House of Lords.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir FARRER HERSCHELL) said, the Bill proposed to do something beyond that. He believed that what it proposed to do was quite right; but there was no use in shutting their eyes to the fact that it would go somewhat beyond the decision of the House of Lords. That decision said that the net annual value they were to arrive at was the net annual value after making certain deductions, there being a sum required for the purposes of rating to cover estimated rental above rateable value. It was left open for cases to be tested as to what was the net annual value—that was to say, what were the annual deductions for purposes of rating to be made from a given sum. The measure proposed that within the Metropolitan area all this litigation should be got rid of—inasmuch as they had an independent authority, under statutory regulations, working out this very problem, and arriving at the net annual value. After making these deductions, it should be taken, within the Metropolitan area, as a satisfactory solution of the question of what the net annual value was. That was the purpose of the Bill. Inasmuch as the Local Authority, from time to time duly constituted, when they arrived at that, by Act of Parliament called it "annual value"—which they were bound to do, as they intended to include all the rateable value—it was much better to say so, because in the Statute that regulated these rates they found the words "net annual value." Though it did not make a change in the substance, it made a very distinct declaration, and avoided the possibility of controversy as to what the meaning was, and he did not think his hon. Friend behind him would find it make any substantial difference in "another place." What they were doing was to make the decision of the Assessment Committee conclusive, instead of leaving it open to litigation in each case.

MR. HARDY said, he took a very different view of the justice of this Bill, and he agreed that if they were going to make the net annual value the rateable value they had better call it so.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS said, he was obliged to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for his statement on this question. He (Mr. Rogers) had always thought that the decision the House of Lords arrived at in a perfectly well-known case was that

the annual value should be taken, which they explained to mean the net annual value; but he could not help thinking that the House of Lords would be very glad if the House of Commons were to decide for them that it should be the rateable value. Net annual value was not a phrase known to the existing system, and they would stop an infinite amount of litigation which was not only open to them in consequence of such an expression as this being used, but which had been imminent in many cases ever since Clarke's case. They constantly saw in the Police Courts attempts made on the part of the Water Companies to indirectly evade the consequences of the proceedings in Dobbs's case. That was very well known to most hon. Members in the House; it certainly was well known to him, having, as he had, been connected with local government for a long period, and having once taken upon himself the function for three years of working out the local assessment of the town in which he lived. He was bound to say that the proposal of the Government was intelligible and satisfactory, and one with which every person interested would agree.

COLONEL MAKINS said, that, so far as he could judge, the Companies had loyally accepted the judgment in Dobbs's case, and had invariably endeavoured to carry it out. He believed that in almost every case which had come before the magistrates the contentions of the Companies had been upheld. In not 5 per cent of the cases which had been adjudicated on by the magistrates had the Companies been proved to be wrong.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS asked whether the hon. and gallant Member had said that the amount charged was 13 per cent above the rateable value?

COLONEL MAKINS: No; what I said was that the decision of the magistrates gave 13 per cent above the assessment value.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That the word 'rateable' be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

MR. W. M. TORRENS was proceeding to move an Amendment, when——

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE rose to Order; the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth) had an Amendment down which came to the same point as that of the hon. Member for Finsbury (Mr. W. M. Torrens), and stood first upon the Paper. The reason why he rose to Order was, because his hon. and learned Friend's words were so drawn that those of the hon. Member for Finsbury would properly follow them; if they were to put the words in the opposite order they would have to be altered.

THE CHAIRMAN: I understood that the hon. Member for Finsbury intended to propose another Amendment altogether.

MR. W. M. TORRENS: No; that is not the case.

MR. FIRTH said, he should be willing to give way if the hon. Member (Mr. W. M. Torrens) desired it; but, if not, he would proceed to explain his own Amendment, which was, at the end of the clause, to add—

"So, nevertheless, that where on any re-assessment of the Metropolis under the provisions of 'The Metropolitan Valuation Act, 1869,' the assessed net annual value of any tenement is increased by the assessing authority, no Water Company shall be entitled to charge any higher or further rate in respect of such increase, except where such increase is in respect of structural or other alteration of the premises, or in respect of other matters than unearned increment of value."

This Amendment followed upon a Question or two he had put in the House in regard to what had been suggested by the hon. Member for Middlesex (Mr. Coope), who was not now in his place, which was based upon a misapprehension. Under the Act of 1869 there had been a quinquennial valuation, the tendency of which had been in the Metropolis to increase the value of a house by what was supposed to be absolutely increased value, but which was unearned increment; and the Water Companies were entitled, as they knew, to charge upon that annual amount, and would in future be entitled to charge upon the annual rateable value. He (Mr. Firth) had stated in an interrogatory form that the increased rateable value between the quinquennial valuations upon which the Companies could levy their rates amounted to £2,000,000, representing an increased income of £100,000, which, of course, increased the vested interests of the Companies to an enormous extent. The figures he had used in this way—The Metropolitan Board of Works' Report had given the valuation of the

Metropolis for the present year. The increase during the past 12 months had been £496,000. In 1869 the valuation was £16,287,000; but in 1870 it had increased by £2,462,000. In 1876 the increase for 1875 was £2,225,000. As between 1880 and 1881 the increase was £2,904,000, since which period the average increase had been between £400,000 and £500,000, This year, if this Bill did not pass, there would again be an enormous increase in the value of the property of the Water Companies. So much with regard to finance and figures. The Water Companies did not supply any more water in respect of that increase. The supply to accommodate the necessities of life ought to be paid for according to the amount consumed. A Return had been supplied which showed that between 1872 and 1883 the number of houses or other buildings supplied with water by the Companies rose from 497,736 to 659,249, an increase of 32·4 per cent; while the water rentals in respect of such houses and buildings rose from £948,277 to £1,505,057, or 58·7 per cent. The average rental had thus increased from £1 18*s.* 1*d.* per house in 1872 to £2 5*s.* 8*d.* in 1883, or 19·9 per cent. It had been suggested in regard to the Return to which he was alluding, and from which he was quoting, that the houses newly erected were, for the most part, of a superior class—that those rebuilt were generally much larger than those which they replaced. But, as a matter of fact, the houses were much smaller, for the reason that there had been an enormous development in every part of suburban London, an enormous increase in the number of working men's houses. Then, as to the amount of water supplied, according to the Table contained in the Return he had alluded to, the average amount of water supplied daily to each house for domestic purposes by six out of the eight Companies was less in 1883 than it was in 1872. Thus, as they advanced, the dividends of the Water Companies had enormously increased. Loan and share capital had enormously increased, and yet there had been a disadvantage to the public in the increased amount they had to pay. The increase per cent in the amount of share capital between 1872 and 1883 had been 30 per cent; but the increase per cent on the estimated value of share capital between 1871 and 1883 had been 101·1. Owing to the working of the Act of 1869, Water Companies had enormously increased their vested interests, which was certainly not in the contemplation of the House when the Act was passed. The Act had had an effect on the Water Companies which was not at the time contemplated; and he very much regretted that they had not had in the Metropolis any properly qualified authority to sufficiently protect the interests of the ratepayers, and to prevent this sort of thing going on. The Amendment he was moving he brought forward in the interests of all persons, simply to remedy an oversight of the kind he referred to in the Act of 1869.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, at end of Clause, add, "so, nevertheless, that where on any re-assessment of the Metropolis under the provisions of 'The Metropolis Valuation Act, 1869,' the assessed net annual value of any tenement is increased by the assessing authority, no Water Company shall be entitled to charge any higher or further rate in respect of such increase, except where such increase is in respect of structural or other alteration of the premises, or in respect of other matters than unearned increment of value."—(*Mr. Firth.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. HARDY said, he could hardly believe that the Government proposed to accept such an Amendment as this for several reasons. It was not a fact, as the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Firth) had said, that the Metropolis Valuation Act, 1869, had given the Companies power to raise their charges every time there was an assessment made. They were told that the advantage of the present Bill was that there would be a fixed value upon which the Companies would have to charge their rate; but that would not alter the present condition of things in the least, as there was already a fixed value. If the Amendment were adopted, however, that would no longer be the case. He looked upon the measure as an unjust one in every respect, although, personally, he should be prepared to accept it, because he quite saw the advantages which would accrue both to the public and the Water Companies of having a basis of charge fixed by a *quasi*-independent authority. A Paper had been handed round to hon. Members showing

the discrepancies which existed between the rateable and the gross annual value of houses in the Metropolis. There were nearly 100 cases given in this Paper; but he was prepared to say that, in all probability, for every one case here set down it would be quite easy to find a thousand; therefore, the document really represented a large number of cases. If this Amendment were carried, these houses, a large number of which were probably paying on the net annual value—because Companies were aware of these facts and had made their charges upon the net annual value—would have to pay on the rateable value. By the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Chelsea they would have to be kept at that rateable value, which was admittedly less than half what they ought in many cases to be paying—which was less than half that which in many instances their neighbours on each side of them were paying. Was that a state of things which should exist? The real injustice of this arose from the fact that the Government had supported this Bill, allowing it to come forward as a public measure, and not requiring it to be sent like other private Bills to a Select Committee, where it would have been thoroughly inquired into and sifted by counsel on the one side and the other. He would undertake to say that there had never before been a case in which interests involving millions of money, and being dependent on Parliamentary sanction, had been attacked in Parliament without any sort of inquiry being instituted. It was impossible to know what the effect of this clause would be. He himself had been connected with the New River Company for something like 20 years, and he knew the circumstances of that undertaking very well; but he could not possibly tell the House, by reading these clauses, what the extent of their effect upon that Company was likely to be. He could not say whether they would be likely to effect it to the extent of £10,000 a-year or £100,000 a-year before the matter had been inquired into by competent authorities and the provisions had been viewed in all their bearings. Surely it was not possible for the Government to accept a clause so unfair as this, which virtually said to the Water Companies—"Heads I win, tails you lose—your rates are never to rise; but under certain eventualities they may go down." The House had before it a statement to the effect that in the 100 cases submitted the rateable value was not within 100 per cent of what it ought to be; and yet it was proposed to stereotype the injustice not only against the Water Companies, but against the very neighbours on each side of a ratepayer who might be called upon to pay a higher rate.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he did not in this matter speak on behalf of the Government so much as he spoke as a Metropolitan Member, and as one interested in the subject. He did not think that in a Bill of this kind, introduced by a private Member, it was necessary for the Government, as a Government, to take a very distinct position; but he certainly thought it right to express an opinion upon the subject as a Member of the House, and one whose constituents were interested in the question. The hon. Member who had just addressed the Committee (Mr. Hardy) declared that the Companies hitherto had acted in the way of making a valuation for themselves. It must be remembered that in the Metropolis there was no control——

MR. HARDY desired to explain. He had been speaking solely against the Amendment, and not against the Bill. Without this Amendment, personally, he should be prepared to support the measure.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the hon. Member submitted that an enormous discrepancy between the real value of premises and the amount at which they were rated had been shown. He (Sir Charles W. Dilke) was bound to say that a great deal of care had been exercised in the Metropolis which was not exercised elsewhere in the preparation of the assessments. Though there was power to appeal to the surveyor against the decision of the Assessment Committees in cases where it was believed that over-charges had been made, it was remarkable, as evidencing the accuracy of the valuations, that over a valuation of such an enormous number of millions alterations to the extent only of a few thousands had been made in the decisions of the Assessment Committees. That was a fact, and he had the figures before him at the present moment, and could submit them to the

Committee if necessary. The surveyor of taxes had the power of appealing against the valuation; but he found the figures so correct that in hardly any cases was he obliged to alter them. In the Metropolis the property was assessed for the purpose of House Tax and Income Tax. He agreed with what had fallen from his hon. and learned Colleague (Mr. Firth), as to the enormous unearned increment in the water rentals within the last few years. The hon. and learned Member had mentioned some facts on that branch of the subject which he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) could supplement. The average supply of water to the houses of the Metropolis had diminished. The Companies said that the houses had increased in size; but, even if that were so, the average supply, house by house, had greatly diminished, and a smaller amount of water was now supplied than was supplied in 1883. The aggregate capital of the Companies had enormously risen. In 1872 the amount of share capital was just under £8,000,000; but in 1883 it amount to £10,333,000. In the same period £8,500,000 had been paid in dividends, and the amount of share and loan capital taken up by the shareholders at par had been nearly £3,000,000, which was estimated as equivalent to a bonus of £1,500,000 more, so that the dividends really amounted to more than the whole share capital of the Companies. In face of that fact he did not think it could be wisely contended that the Amendment of his hon. and learned Friend would amount to confiscation.

Mr. EDWARD CLARKE said, he was sorry to hear the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) declare it was his intention to support the Amendment. He (Mr. Edward Clarke) was anxious that the Bill should pass; but he considered it extremely dangerous that this Amendment should be inserted in it. It was, he thought, essential to mention the intention of the Bill as it was first proposed. The measure had the intention of providing a definite method of valuing a house upon which the rate was to be levied; but if the Amendment were accepted and added to the Bill, it would set up at once the very difficulty and uncertainty which it was the object of the measure to remove. Let the Committee remember what the words of the Amendment were—

> "No Water Company shall be entitled to charge any higher or further rate in respect of such increase, except where such increase is in respect of structural or other alterations of the premises, or in respect of other matters than unearned increment of value."

Suppose a house was rated at £200 a-year, and, in a year or two, its rating was increased to £230, a controversy would take place as to whether the increase had been caused by "structural alterations" or "other alterations" which was a very large expression indeed, and one which might mean decorative alterations or "other than unearned increment of value." What "structural" or other alterations would mean in an Act of Parliament he could not pretend to say; but he was sure the adoption of this Amendment would be fatal to the hope of getting the Bill on the Statute Book, because if they were to add it to the Statute Book with this phrase in it he believed that the litigation which would result from the attempt to interpret that section would diminish, if not altogether destroy, the value of the measure. If the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth) desired that the Bill should pass, and that the ratepayers of the Metropolis should be relieved of their doubt and uncertainty as to their position in regard to what they were to be charged for water, he would withdraw this Amendment.

Sir SYDNEY WATERLOW said, he hoped the Committee would not agree to the Amendment, as it seemed to him that it would be creating a mischief which, when the Committee had agreed to the words "rateable value," they had been endeavouring to get rid of. The Amendment would have the effect really of establishing two rateable values. He agreed that it seemed very hard that ratepayers should be called upon to pay a larger sum every year, notwithstanding that they might not use a larger amount of water; but the question would then arise whether the people should not be asked only to pay for the amount of water they really used—that a sum should be fixed for a certain quantity, that the consumption should be ascertained by meter, and that if the rate charged was not sufficient to recoup the Water Companies, Parlia-

ment should be called upon to adjust the amount. That, however, important as it was, was a question that did not come under this Bill. Under the measure, they were endeavouring to get an uniform rate notwithstanding that under it, if the value went up, so would the charge for water. Supposing that from accident or want of information—some inadvertence on the part of the Assessment Committee—premises had been assessed too low, then the Assessment Committee would have power to make the necessary alteration, surely the Water Companies would be entitled to charge upon the additional valuation. He hoped the Amendment would not be assented to.

MR. RITCHIE said, he was a strong supporter of the Bill, and considered that the Water Companies were alone to blame for the necessity of any legislation on this matter at all. The Companies had been very severe in their exactions; they had pushed their claims to an intolerable extent; and, therefore, he willingly joined in bringing in this Bill, the object of which was to fix some definite and distinct basis on which the charges were to be made in future. Such being the scope of the Bill, he was unable to support the Amendment which had been moved by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth). He would suggest that if there was any desire to have legislation such as the hon. and learned Member proposed, it would be very much better to introduce it in a separate form in a separate Bill. They would run a very great risk of losing the benefit of the Bill altogether if such an Amendment as this were tacked on to the Bill. There was another reason why he could not support the present proposition; and it was that if the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member were accepted, he did not see how the Committee could, with any justice, refuse the Amendment to that Amendment which stood in the name of the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for South Essex (Colonel Makins). It would be a very unjust thing to say that the Water Companies were to derive no benefit whatever from any rise which might take place in the assessment, and yet be bound to accept any reduction made in the assessment. Under all the circumstances, his hon. Friend in charge of the Bill (Mr. W. M. Torrens) would do wisely not to accept the Amendment proposed by the hon. and learned Member for Chelsea, but to allow the Bill to remain substantially in the form in which it was brought in by himself and those associated with him in the Bill.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said, he hoped his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Firth) would not withdraw the Amendment. It was better that the Bill should be lost than that the Amendment should be withdrawn, and for this reason—that the state of things which now existed would not exist much longer, and the matter could be settled much more easily as a whole, than in the piecemeal fashion suggested. What hon. Members on the Opposition Benches had been discussing were difficulties of method. The hon. and learned Member for Plymouth (Mr. Edward Clarke), and hon. Gentlemen near him, seemed to demand that the Water Companies should, in addition to having a fair price paid for the water they supplied, be also made into the rating authority—that they should be able to rate the community of London for things they did not supply. In other words, hon. Gentlemen desired that the Water Companies should not only receive money for the water they supplied, but that they should have an increased income every five years, resulting not from any increased value of the article they supplied, or from any increased quantity supplied, but simply by the method of rating adopted. This was a question whether a private Company should, for its own profit, put a tax on a community for which it rendered nothing in return. That was the principle on which this question would have to be settled. He did not think that the House of Commons would sanction the injustice of the people, not only of London, but of all large towns, being required to pay exorbitantly for so common a necessary of life as water; to pay, not on account of the increased quantity or quality of the water supplied, but simply because the Company had power which should not belong to any private Company—that of taxing the people for five years.

COLONEL MAKINS said, he had on the Paper an Amendment to this Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth); but he hoped it would not be necessary to move it,

because the evident sense of the Committee was that the Amendment now under consideration should be withdrawn. The right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Charles W. Dilke) and his hon. and learned Colleague (Mr. Firth) had dealt only with private supply. They had said that houses only received the same amount of water as formerly. They had lost sight altogether of the fact that in London the private consumption of water was not paid for by meter, as was the case in Manchester and Liverpool. In addition to the payment by meter for the water consumed, each house in Manchester and Liverpool was rated for the public supply. In London the whole service, whether public or private, was included in the rate which the consumer paid; therefore, when the rateable value went up, it meant that the rates were increased, that the quantity of water used for the extinguishing of fires and for other public purposes was increased, though the actual amount per head of the population might not have been increased. He should be perfectly prepared to consider a measure, if it were brought in by the Government, providing that water used for domestic purposes should be paid for by meter. Of course, to that would have to be added such a rate for water for public purposes which would make the remuneration of the Companies that which Parliament intended it should be. The Amendment now before the Committee was one-sided. They all desired the same thing, though they might not view the matter from the same point of view.

Mr. HARDY said, the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for South Essex (Colonel Makins) was mistaken when he supposed that all public supplies were gratuitous. It was only the water supplied for fires that was supplied without payment.

Mr. LYULPH STANLEY said, that some hon. Members of the House would be very glad to see the Bill passed; while others simply wished to make it an engine for future agitation. He wished to see the Bill passed; and, therefore, he should vote against the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth).

Mr. FIRTH said, that all he had to say was that they would have to buy out the Water Companies sooner or later, and that if this Amendment were not passed they would this year be found to have increased their vested interest by £2,500,000. He would not, under any possible circumstances, be a party to so wicked an injustice as that; and, therefore, he intended to carry his Amendment to a division.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 21; Noes 34: Majority 13.—(Div. List, No. 150.)

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, to add at end of the Clause—"Provided, That where the water rate is chargeable on the annual value of a part only of any hereditament entered in the valuation list, such annual value shall be a fairly apportioned part of the rateable value of the whole tenement, ascertained as aforesaid, the apportionment in case of dispute to be determined in manner provided by the said section."—(*Mr. W. M. Torrens.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Sir SYDNEY WATERLOW said, he would point out that the words "annual value" could not be found in the Metropolis Valuation Act, 1869.

Mr. EDWARD CLARKE thought it was quite right in this instance to say "annual value."

Question put, and *agreed to;* words *added.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Short title) *agreed to.*

On the Motion of Mr. W. M. Torrens, the following Clause *agreed to,* and *added* to the Bill:—

(Construction of Act.)

"'The Waterworks Clauses Act, 1847,' and this Act shall be construed together as one Act, and the provisions of this Act shall be held to repeal and supersede such of the provisions of that Act as are inconsistent with this Act."

The CHAIRMAN said, that the new clause ("Supply of Water by Meter") standing in the name of the hon. Member for Marylebone (Mr. Daniel Grant) appeared to him to be beyond the scope of the Bill, and, therefore, could not be put. The same observation applied to a new clause standing in the name of the hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce).

Preamble.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 7, after the word "not," to insert "in the Metropolis."—(*Mr. W. M. Torrens.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, there was a little ambiguity with respect to the Metropolis. He did not oppose the Amendment; but he might find it necessary to ask the hon. Gentleman to move another Amendment on Report. There were two purposes for which the Metropolis was not the same. Under the Metropolis Management Act, that which was called the Metropolis was not the same as the Metropolis to which the Valuation of Property Act applied. The area would have been better defined as unions and parishes to which the Valuation Act applied, and he would suggest that his hon. Friend (Mr. W. M. Torrens) should move an Amendment in that form on Report. The difference was that Penge was included in the Metropolis Management Act, but was not in the Valuation Act; and the hamlet of Mottingham was included in the latter, but not in the former Act.

MR. W. M. TORRENS said, he would bring up an Amendment on Report, as suggested by the right hon. Baronet.

Question put, and *agreed to*; words *inserted* accordingly.

Amendment proposed to further amend the Preamble, by omitting the words "net annual" in line 7, and inserting the word "rateable."—(*Mr. W. M. Torrens.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

Preamble, as amended, *agreed to.*

Bill *reported*; as amended, to be considered upon *Friday* next, and to be *printed.* [Bill 152.]

EAST INDIA UNCLAIMED STOCKS [EXPENSES].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of the Revenues of India, of any costs and expenses which may be incurred by the Secretary of State in Council of India, arising out of the transfer of Unclaimed Stocks, and the payment of dividends thereon, under the provisions of any Act of the present Session relating to the transfer of Unclaimed India Stock.

Resolution to be reported upon *Monday* next.

MOTION.

GAS AND WATER PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. HOLMS, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade, under "The Gas and Water Works Facilities Act 1870," relating to Chelmsford Gas, Great Grimsby Gas, Clacton-on-Sea Gas and Water, and Cwm Avon Gas and Water, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. HOLMS and Mr. CHAMBERLAIN.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 149.]

House adjourned at half after Three o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 4th May, 1885.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEE—*Fourth Report*—Office of the Clerk of the Parliaments and Office of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod. [No. 97.]

PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Highways * (98).

Report — Water Companies (Regulation of Powers) * (87).

Third Reading—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Public Health Act) (No. 1) * (63), and *passed.*

CENTRAL ASIA — RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN — THE RUSSO-AFGHAN FRONTIER—THE NEGOTIATIONS.

FRANCE AND EGYPT—SEIZURE OF THE "BOSPHORE EGYPTIEN"—THE NEGOTIATIONS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Seeing the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs early in his place, I wish to ask him whether he is able to give any information to the House on two important matters which occupy public attention — namely, the negotiations with respect to the Afghan Frontier, and those with reference to the suppression of *The Bosphore Egyptien?*

EARL GRANVILLE: In answer to the noble Marquess I shall give all the

information in our power as to the two questions to which he refers. It is as follows:—*The Bosphore Egyptien* was suppressed by a lawful decree of the Egyptian Government, and the British Government gave its sanction to the act. The French Government, while wholly refraining from questioning the suppression of the newspaper (1) declared the seizure of the paper and closing of the printing office, in which other business was carried on, to be illegal; and (2) complained of the forcible removal of the French Consul, who had attended personally to protest against the closure of the office. The French Government demanded—(1) the re-opening of the office; and (2) the punishment of the persons concerned in the act. In the meanwhile, Her Majesty's Government had obtained full Reports from Sir Evelyn Baring as to all the circumstances, and had taken advice as to the legal bearings of the case. The conclusion to which Her Majesty's Government came was, that the closure of the office was not warranted by law, and that the technical force used against the French Consular authorities was, therefore, not justifiable. We, therefore, took note of the declaration of the French Government, that there was no desire to shield *The Bosphore Egyptien;* that they wholly refrained from raising any question as to the suppression of the newspaper; and, further, that they expressed their readiness to withdraw their demand for the punishment of those who acted under the orders of the Egyptian Government. Accordingly we stated that Her Majesty's Government, who do not disclaim responsibility for the decision to suppress the newspaper, were ready to associate themselves with the regret which they have advised the Government of the Khedive to express as to the incidents which have attended the suppression. Her Majesty's Government advised Nubar Pasha to re-open the office, and that his Excellency should visit the French acting Agent and Consul General to convey the expression of his regrets for errors committed in the execution of the lawful decree of the Egyptian Government. With regard to the second Question asked by the noble Marquess, I have to state that Her Majesty's Government, agreeing with the Government of Russia, that they desire to provide means for any settlement which may be needful, of differences between them arising out of the engagement at Ak Tepe, concur with them that they do not desire to see gallant officers on either side put upon their trial. For this purpose they are ready to refer to the judgment of the Sovereign of a friendly State any difference which may be found to exist in regard to the interpretation of the agreement between the two Cabinets of the 16th of March, with a view to the settlement of the matter in a manner consistent with the honour of both States. The two Governments trust that no difficulty will occur as to the details of the reference, and are prepared, under these circumstances, to resume at once in London the negotiations on the main points of the line, for the delimitation of the Frontier, the details of which only would be examined and traced on the spot under the conditions agreed on in the Commission. This negotiation, of which it is not possible at present to anticipate the result, will be much facilitated, as regards Her Majesty's Government, by the knowledge they now possess of the views of the Ameer and the full topographical information which has reached the India Office. It is further agreed that the district of Penjdeh shall be neutralized during the negotiations, and the Russian Government have intimated their willingness to consider the question of the Russian outposts being removed on the arrival of the Commissions.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I should like to ask the noble Earl a Question or two with regard to the statement he has made. First, when he states that the seizure of the offices of *The Bosphore* was illegal, does he mean illegal under any International instrument which would give the French Government a right, as against the Egyptian Government, to interfere—that is to say, under what are called the Capitulations; or, does he mean merely illegal under the existing decrees and laws of the Egyptian Government? And, secondly, I wish to know, whether the action of the Egyptian Government in closing *The Bosphore* was due to the initiative and suggestion of the Representative of Her Majesty's Government, or whether it was taken spontaneously? With respect to the announcement which the noble Earl has made as to the Afghan negotiations, I would ask him what is

the meaning of the words "Provide means for any settlement which may be needful of the differences?" What is to be referred, and what will the result of the reference be—will it be the punishment of those who have misconducted themselves, or will it be simply an apology from one Government to another?

EARL GRANVILLE: I made the statement with regard to *The Bosphore* as full as I could in order to give the general information to your Lordships' House. At the same time, I do not wish to go into very great detail on either of the points in question, inasmuch as the Papers which will soon be produced will give your Lordships a much fuller knowledge of the circumstances than I could in a statement in answer to Questions. With regard to one of the Questions of the noble Marquess, however, I have no difficulty in giving an answer. The illegality of the seizure of *The Bosphore* arose out of the rights of the French Government under the Capitulations with regard to the Press. As to the Afghan Question, we have agreed to refer to the judgment of a friendly Power the mode of arriving at a settlement closing the incident, and which shall be honourable to both Parties. I think the noble Marquess will and must see that it is impossible for me in this place to anticipate what the result of that judgment will be.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Then it is a general reference without any special indication of the limits within which the jurisdiction is to be exercised, and a general reference of all matters of difference that have arisen with regard to this Penjdeh incident? I would ask another Question, which arises out of the noble Earl's statement — and which I may observe is merely put for the purpose of elucidation. He stated that the Government would be much guided by their knowledge of the wishes of the Ameer with respect to his own Frontier. Were the Government entirely ignorant of the Ameer's wishes on this point before they began these negotiations—that is to say, until quite recently?

EARL GRANVILLE: It must be perfectly obvious to the noble Marquess that when there has been an interview of several days between the Viceroy of India and the Ameer we have not only more information, but information on which we can better rely, than that which we previously possessed. With regard to the reference to the judgment of a Sovereign of a friendly State, the text of that reference has not yet been absolutely decided upon; and I think it is quite clear that I had better adhere to the words I have already used, and not go further into details.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Are the Capitulations to which the noble Earl has referred to be printed along with the Papers?

EARL GRANVILLE: The Papers to be presented are under consideration, and I shall do my best to lay all information before the House.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH: The noble Earl stated that Russia had evacuated, or would consider the evacuation of, Penjdeh when the labours of the Commission commenced. What does he mean? Does he——

EARL GRANVILLE: No; the noble Lord has quite misapprehended what I said. I said they had agreed to consider it. I really think that I cannot go further than the statement I have made.

EGYPT (AFFAIRS OF THE SOUDAN)—THE EGYPTIAN FRONTIER.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, How soon Her Majesty's Government expect to be able to explain what was the limit to the south in Egypt on the Nile which they have pledged themselves to continue to defend, and from what place on the Nile southwards they hold themselves to have perfect freedom in regard to future action; also, whether Dongola is considered to be in Egypt or the Soudan? The reason why he put the Question was that he wished to obtain some explanation of the two statements made by the noble Earl in reference to the Frontier of Egypt, on the introduction of the Egyptian Loan Bill on the 21st of April—one, in which he stated that no provision was made in the Vote of Credit for offensive operations with a view to an early advance on Khartoum; and the other, in which he stated that the Government preserved to themselves full liberty of action in the matter, seeing that they had not at that

moment absolutely made up their minds. On the 19th of February, the Government announced a definite policy to the effect that it was their intention to go to Khartoum. The statement made by the noble Earl on the 21st of April was a completely new departure. Their policy at a previous period was defined as one of "rescue and retire." It now appeared to him (the Earl of Galloway) that it might be more aptly described by the two words "bombast and bolt." He did not wish to go into these matters in detail, but simply to remind the House of some of the facts; and he put the Question for the purpose of protesting against any desertion of any of Her Majesty's faithful allies, such as the Mudir of Dongola and some Native tribes. He also wished to know what was meant by the Frontier of Egypt, and what was the limit on the Nile up to which Her Majesty's Government were still ready to announce that they would hold the country? He would ask whether Dongola was within the Frontier; whether that meant Old Dongola or New Dongola, because there was a considerable distance between them? He hoped the noble Earl would be ready to give a plain and civil answer to a plain and civil Question.

EARL GRANVILLE: The noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Galloway) has asked for a plain and civil answer. I can only say that we shall try to make the matter plain, and I hope to give him a civil answer. Your Lordships will remember that at the last Sitting of the House a Question very much of the same class as this Question was put to me by the noble Viscount opposite (Viscount Bury), who is not now present; and one of the answers which I gave was that at a previous Sitting of the House the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury), speaking with all the authority that belongs to him, had put a somewhat similar Question to me, which I was obliged to meet with a negative. As I have stated, the noble Viscount is not now here, and I should not only be doing something uncivil to the noble Marquess, but also to the noble Viscount, if I gave the noble Earl a different answer to-night. But be that as it may, I must say that with regard to myself it would not be consistent to do so, reserving the hope that I may be able to make a full statement to the House when the Government are prepared to do so.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK said, that while the noble Earl refused to give any answer to the Question of the noble Earl (the Earl of Galloway), he (Viscount Cranbrook) thought the House ought to know whether any guarantee would be given to the friendly tribes of Arabs who had assisted the British troops. The Government had been represented in the Soudan by a most distinguished General, to whom they had given the powers almost of a Plenipotentiary, and he had perpetually held out hopes to the tribes that the English people would never forsake them. So late as the 12th of February last, Lord Wolseley had given it out most distinctly that the English would march to Khartoum and capture it, and that those who had put their trust in the English might be certain they would not be deserted. That was not the first time that he had used language in regard to the protection of the Native tribes. There was some danger that what had happened in the Soudan would happen in North Africa. When they read in the papers that morning that the 1,500 Coolies, for instance, who were taken away from the railway between Suakin and Berber had been returned to that country, it naturally aroused a new interest as to whether that railway was going on, or whether, in consequence of what had happened with respect to Russia, new conditions had been brought into consideration with respect to the Soudan, and the Government were reverting to their former policy. This was a question which deeply interested the English people, because it was one which touched their honour and credit; and it was not to be wondered at that they pressed earnestly for an answer to the Question, whether or no the pledges of Lord Wolseley were to be maintained?

EARL GRANVILLE said, he thought the noble Viscount opposite (Viscount Cranbrook) would see that the Government having come to the conclusion that they ought not at this moment to go into the question of their general policy in Egypt, it was impossible that he (Earl Granville) should be seduced by Questions such as that of the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Galloway) entirely to depart from their resolution; and, therefore, he thought that, while ad-

hering to a decision which might be right or might be wrong, he should not be led into partial accounts of particular points connected with Egypt and the Soudan.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I do not know whether I have judged correctly, or whether the noble Earl can answer me as to a question of fact with regard to the Suakin-Berber Railway; but I should like to ask him if he can tell me whether that railway has been stopped or not?

[No reply.]

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN: Can the noble Earl the Secretary of State for India say whether the railway is going on or not?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: If the noble Marquess will give Notice of the Question I will endeavour to answer it; but the question of the Suakin-Berber Railway is not in my Department.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Are not the Coolies in the noble Earl's Department? If not, what has become of them?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: They have passed from my control now.

THE NEW PUBLIC OFFICES — THE WAR OFFICE AND ADMIRALTY—THE STONE FOR BUILDING.

QUESTION.

LORD LAMINGTON asked, Whether Her Majesty's Government intend to make further inquiries with the view of finding a durable stone to build with before commencing with the new public buildings? He believed there was a sandstone which was to be found in the neighbourhood of the Metropolis which was most durable and well fitted for the purpose.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY, in reply, said, he could assure the noble Lord that every attention would be paid to the point to which he had directed attention. He was in communication with the architects at that moment on the subject. Of course, the noble Lord was aware that the main difficulty was that of discovering a stone that would resist the effects of the London atmosphere. The last stone that was used in the erection of public buildings was the Portland stone, and he did not know if it was possible to find a stone that would resist the London atmosphere better than the Portland stone.

In reply to the EARL of WEMYSS,

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY said, he understood that a model of the buildings was being made, and that the particular plan to which the noble Earl had directed his attention, and in relation to which the model was made, was now in Westminster Hall, as no adequate accommodation could be found for it in any other part of the building. He was not quite sure whether it was completed; but he had given orders for its being pressed forward. As to the general question of the plans, the first Vote for the purpose had passed the House of Commons, and therefore might be considered to pledge the House of Commons in some degree to the plan; but, of course, it was open to the other House to raise the question again.

RAILWAYS—LEVEL CROSSINGS.

QUESTION.

LORD BRAYE asked, Whether the railway companies in the United Kingdom are under any obligation to Parliament to abolish their level crossings; and, if so, during what period of time; and, if this is not the case, whether the Government intend to take any steps towards prohibiting the construction of level crossings for the future, or to compel the railway companies to gradually reduce the number of such crossings with a view to their total abolition; and, if so, during what period of time this gradual reduction is to extend?

LORD SUDELEY, in reply, said: All level crossings of public roads are specifically authorized by the special Act which sanctions the construction of the railway. Railway Companies are under no obligation to abolish such level crossings unless the special Act contains a provision to that effect. The Railway Clauses Act, 1863, which applies to all railways authorized since that date, empowers the Board of Trade to require a Company to carry any turnpike or public carriage road over or under the railway by means of an arch or bridge, instead of crossing the same on the level, if it appears to them necessary for the public safety. In addition to this, the Board of Trade have since the year 1859, and in compliance with the Standing Orders, reported to Parliament on all level crossings of public roads proposed in the various Railway Bills. There is,

however, no compulsion upon Select Committees to adopt these Reports, and the recommendations of the officers of the Board of Trade are occasionally disregarded, and level crossings which they have objected to are sometimes sanctioned.

TURKEY—THE BOSPHORUS AND DARDANELLES—CONVENTION OF PARIS, 1856, AND TREATY OF BERLIN, 1878.—OBSERVATIONS.

LORD STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL, who had a Notice to move an humble Address to the Crown for the Protocols or Treaties by which the authority of the Sublime Porte to admit foreign ships of war into the Dardanelles was regulated, said, that in consequence of the statement of the noble Earl (Earl Granville) he would not proceed that evening with the Motion, which was suggested by the prospects of a war with Russia.

House adjourned at Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 4th May, 1885.

MINUTES.]—SUPPLY—*considered in Committee —Postponed Resolution* [April 27] *further considered* and *agreed to.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*Resolution in Committee*—Registration of Voters (Ireland) [Remuneration of Officers].

First Reading—Customs and Inland Revenue * [154]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 2) * [155]; Solicitors (Ireland) * [156]; Infants * [157].

Second Reading—Trustees Relief * [83].

Committee — Metropolis Management Acts Amendment * [138]—R.P.

Committee — Report — Submarine Telegraph Cables * [136].

Considered as amended—Third Reading—Barristers Admission (Ireland) * [144], and *passed.*

Third Reading—Metropolitan Streets Act (1867) Extension * [137], and *passed.*

QUESTIONS.

WAYS AND MEANS — INLAND REVENUE—THE STAMP DUTIES—PATENT MEDICINES.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he is aware that the provisions of the 44 *Geo.* III. c. 98, requiring (under a penalty of £10) that packets or bottles of drugs, &c. offered for sale at less than one shilling should be sold with a three-halfpenny stamp affixed to them are daily infringed but rarely enforced; with whom rests the power of deciding in what cases the penalty is to be enforced; whether the Government have any intention of remedying, by legislation or otherwise, the evils arising from the uncertainty of practice prevailing with regard to the enforcement of these penalties; and, what amount was realized to the Exchequer in the last financial year or in 1883-4 from the three-halfpenny duty imposed by the above enactment?

MR. HIBBERT: The Inland Revenue Board is well aware that the Act referred to is very frequently evaded, as is shown by the numerous penalties which it is found necessary to inflict from time to time. The management of the affairs relating to this and other stamp duties is in the hands of that Board, who have discretion to decide in each case whether the full penalty should be exacted or otherwise. The receipts from the three-halfpenny duty amounted in 1883-4 to £93,500.

VACCINATION—HOSPITAL ATTENDANTS—SHEFFIELD HOSPITAL.

MR. HOPWOOD asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whe he has yet received information respecting the contracting of small-pox at the Sheffield Hospital by a medical man and a nurse, and the result of the attack; and, whether one or other had been re-vaccinated previously?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: At the Sheffield Hospital in 1882 the medical officer and a ward servant, who had both been re-vaccinated, had attacks of small-pox so mild that scarcely any rash appeared. The cook, who had not been re-vaccinated, but who had previously had small-pox, had an attack in a modified form. The only severe case in the hospital at the time was that of a patient who had never been vaccinated. This patient died.

MR. HOPWOOD asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he has communicated to the authors of the *Facts Concerning Vaccination,* published with the sanction of the Local

Government Board, his view of the unguarded nature of the statements that no hospital nurse has been attacked with small-pox after re-vaccination?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: We have informed the National Health Society of the reply which I gave to the Question of the hon. and learned Member on the 31st March last.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND) — BEITH SCHOOL ELECTION.

DR. CAMERON asked the Lord Advocate, Whether he has inquired into the truth of the statements made by Mr. J. M'Whirter, of Beith, to the effect that, at the School Board election there on 17th April—

"The several candidates, with two exceptions, had supplied themselves with rooms in the immediate vicinity of the ballot station, in which were stowed an abundant supply of liquors, and all day long their supporters were supplied without stint,"

and that—

"not content with this, several publicans applied for and obtained an extension of the hours of sale in their own premises till two o'clock in the morning, when drink was served to all and sundry; the doors were kept open, and a roaring trade carried on up to the limit of time granted;"

whether it is competent for any extension of hours of sale to be granted other than for a public or special entertainment, not originating directly or indirectly with the licensed person by whom such extension is applied for; whether justices granting such licences are directed to assure themselves that the public or special entertainments, in respect of which such extensions of hours are granted, are of a legitimate and proper character; and, if he would inform the House how many public inns and public houses there are in Beith; how many applied for extension of hours till 2 a.m. on the night of the School Board election; on what grounds they based their applications; how many applications were granted and how many refused; whether the statement as to common sale "to all and sundry" being carried on after 11 o'clock is correct; and under what provision of the Scotch Licensing Acts is such an extension for purposes of common sale provided for?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): I have made inquiry into this case. I am informed that it is the fact that candidates, with one or two exceptions, had committee rooms near to the polling station, and that in these rooms refreshments, consisting of food and drinks, were supplied to persons from a distance. The conditions under which an extension of hours may be granted are contained in Section 6 of the Public-houses Act of 1862, and are shortly, but I think correctly, stated in the Question. I am informed that there are five hotels and nine public-houses in Beith. Application was made on behalf of four hotels for an extension of time for social parties on the occasion of the School Board election. The applications were all granted. The police have no knowledge that liquor was supplied to any persons not being members of the social parties.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND) — NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS— PENSIONS.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the claim of the Irish National School Teachers of the "Old Divisions" of the First and Second Classes to pensions proportionate to their status and class salaries, in accordance with the principle applied to all the other grades of the service, will be conceded in the revision of the pension scheme now in progress?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The pensions scheme is not being revised; but the assets and liabilities of the fund are being valued. If the result of the valuation should be such as to warrant any increased benefit to the contributing teachers, or to any of them, the form which this benefit may most advantageously take will be a matter for careful consideration; and in the meantime no particular expectation can be encouraged.

FISHERY COMMISSIONERS (IRELAND) —CANDIDATES FOR VACANT COMMISSIONERSHIP.

MR. O'SHEA asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, having regard to the important interests confided to the Irish Commissioners of Fisheries, Her Majesty's Government, in the probable case of a vacancy in the Commission, will take into consideration as a factor of efficiency in the candidates for the appoint-

ment, some knowledge of fisheries and of the habits of fish and fishermen?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have no doubt that, in the event of a vacancy, due weight would be given to the qualifications mentioned by the hon. Member.

CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT (IRELAND)—GALWAY CUSTOM HOUSE—AMOUNT PAID FOR OVERWORK, 1884-5.

COLONEL NOLAN asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If he would state the total sums which officers of the Custom House in Galway have received for their own personal benefit from merchants during the last twelve months at the port of Galway; if he would state how much of this was for attending on Bank holidays, and how much for attending after or before official hours; and, if he would give the names of the Custom House officials receiving such sums; if he would give directions that, for the future, ships may discharge non-excisable articles between sunrise and sunset without these private payments to Government officials at least on those days on which the sun does not rise before six; and, if he would make inquiries into the fact of a ship's captain having been summoned immediately after the last Question addressed on this subject for a very trifling breach of regulations; and, if it were found on inquiry that the magistrates stated that there was no smuggling intended, and that they would, if they had the option, dismiss the case, would he remit the penalty?

MR. HIBBERT: The total sum received from the merchants by the Customs officers at Galway on account of overtime during the last 12 months has been £11 7*s.* 2*d.*, of which £5 6*s.* was for attendance on Bank Holidays and Good Friday, and £6 1*s.* 2*d.* for attendance before and after legal hours on ordinary working days. This sum was divided between the superintendent, an examining officer, an outdoor officer, and three boatmen. The rules governing the hours of attendance are the same throughout the Three Kingdoms, and there seems no advantage, but a great deal of difficulty, in altering them. I have seen a report of the case referred to in the last paragraph of the Question; and the circumstances disclosed would certainly not justify any remission of the very light fine imposed by the magistrates.

ARMY (INDIA)—THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER—GRANT OF MEDAL AND BATTA TO OFFICERS AND MEN ENGAGED IN THE ZHOB EXPEDITION.

MR. GUY DAWNAY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, considering the efficient manner in which the Zhob Expedition last autumn was conducted to a successful conclusion, under conditions, which the climate and nature of the country traversed, the arduous character of the work performed, and the hostility of the inhabitants rendered most trying to the troops employed, it is intended to grant the frontier medal, and the usual grant of war batta for three months, to the officers and men of the British and Indian regiments who took part in that expedition.

MR. J. K. CROSS: The Government of India have reported the conclusion of the recent operations in the Zhob Valley, and have conveyed to the Commander-in-Chief their approbation of the manner in which they were conducted. In this opinion the Secretary of State will express his concurrence. The Government of India have not, however, proposed that any further recognition should be made of the services rendered; and the circumstances of the case do not appear to warrant any special distinction such as the grant of a war medal or of a money reward. The hon. Member is mistaken in supposing that the grant of war batta is usual in such cases.

PARLIAMENT—PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—VENTILATION OF THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether during the recess the Chief Inspector of Chemical Works has complied with the request of the Ventilation Committee to ascertain the sources of smell around the House; and, whether he will submit his conclusions in the form of a Report, to be printed with the other Papers about to be presented?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: In consequence of the Report of the Select

Committee, Mr. Fletcher, the Chief Inspector of Alkali Works, was requested by me to make inquiry as to how far chemical, gas, or other works or deposits of ashes and refuse in the neighbourhood of the river might account for the offensive smells which were complained of. A watch has also been kept by the police. Mr. Fletcher made a Report on his inquiry, and I have no objection whatever to that Report being presented to the House when any other Papers on the subject are presented, which will depend on the Office of Works.

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS—THE FIRE BRIGADE COMMITTEE.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, Whether the Committee of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade are unable to make the necessary increase in that body, and in the plant, owing to the want of funds; and, whether this is mainly due to the refusal of the Fire Offices to increase their contribution to the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, and to their opposition to the Bill for the removal of the limitation of the halfpenny rate?

MR. CAUSTON asked, whether the principle of calling upon insurance companies to pay for the protection of those who did not themselves pay for their own protection was not an unsound one; and, whether the burden ought not to be borne equally by the whole of the ratepayers?

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG: In reply to my hon. Friend, I beg to say that the state of the funds now at the disposal of the Metropolitan Board of Works for Fire Brigade purposes has certainly prevented them, on more than one occasion, from entertaining requests made for additional stations; and no doubt if Parliament had passed the Bill which I introduced last year for the increase of the insurance companies' contributions and the removal of the limitation of the rate, the difficulties under which the Board are placed would have also been removed. With regard to the second Question which has been addressed to me, I think the hon. Member had better give Notice of it, because it introduces controversial matter, and I cannot answer it on the spur of the moment.

CIVIL SERVICE (PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATURE)—MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON, INSPECTOR OF IRISH FISHERIES.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, on the 21st ultimo, Mr. William Johnston, one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Fisheries in Ireland, delivered a public speech, in which he denounced what he termed "the errors of the Church of Rome," and incited the Protestant clergy to do the like on the 12th of next July; whether the Government are aware that the 12th of July is an anniversary celebrated by the Orange Society, and that the manner adopted to celebrate this anniversary has frequently led to disorder, riot, and loss of life, through conflicts between people of different creeds; and, whether, having regard to the undertaking exacted, after repeated warnings by the Lord Lieutenant from Mr. Johnston with regard to public speeches, he will be longer retained in the public service?

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the public letter written by Mr. Wm. Johnston, Inspector of Fisheries, to the Orange Grand Master, which appeared in *The Belfast News Letter*,

> "Expressing his readiness, if called upon, to contest one of the divisions of Belfast at the General Election;"

is he aware that this official admits the authorship of the following letter in *The Belfast Evening Telegraph*:—

> "The 12th of July is being prepared for all over Ulster. In view of the approaching General Election it will be of unusual importance. On that occasion I hope to take my place with my Orange brethren. No more loyal addresses will be presented to the Prince and Princess of Wales than the Orange ones, and I hope to be able hereafter to give emphasis to them when I am Member for South Belfast;"

will he explain on what principle the Government consider that such declarations by a Civil Servant of his intention to seek a seat in Parliament do not constitute a breach of the Treasury Rule of November 12th 1884 (since made an Order in Council), which requires that any Civil Servant who, by an election address or "in any other manner, announces himself as a candidate," should resign his position under the Crown; is it the fact that Mr. Johnston, who

threatens next 12th July "to take my place with my Orange brethren," is the same official whose repeated political speeches compelled the Irish Executive to exact from him a promise in writing that he would never again interfere in politics while a public servant; whether, since the answers given in the House, denying that Mr. Johnston was a Parliamentary candidate, that official, as reported in *The Freeman* of May 1st, spoke as follows at a meeting in the Dublin Metropolitan Hall:—

"He would be followed by Mr. Russell, to whose labours they owed the Sunday Closing Act for Ireland, and if, as he hoped, Mr. Russell would have a seat in the House of Commons after the General Election, where perhaps he (Mr. Johnston) might also be able to complete the work that was begun in 1878;"

and, what course the Government will take under all the circumstances of this case?

MR. LEWIS asked, whether there was any restriction upon the utterance of religious convictions?

MR. HEALY: By officials.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Two points are raised in these Questions. The first is whether Mr. Johnston, by recent declarations of his intention to become a candidate for election to Parliament, has come within the Rule laid down by a recent Order in Council, which says that a Civil servant shall resign his office as soon as he issues an address, or in any other manner announces himself as a candidate. On examination, it appears to us that the words used did not constitute such a definite announcement as is contemplated by the Order in Council; and a letter has been received from Mr. Johnston, dated May 2, in which he says:—

"The idea of my being a candidate for a Parliamentary seat at the General Election has now been abandoned."

[MR. HEALY: Now!] The second point is whether, in several recent speeches, Mr. Johnston has not departed from that neutral attitude in political and Party matters which ought to be maintained by a public servant; and whether he has not in particular infringed the undertaking he gave in February last year to

"refrain from taking any active part in any public Party meetings or discussing in public any Party questions."

The Government take a most serious view of these speeches as reported, and we are in communication with Mr. Johnston on the subject.

MR. HEALY: When shall I put another Question on this subject?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: In about a week.

LUNATIC ASYLUMS (IRELAND)—RICHMOND LUNATIC ASYLUM—GRIEVANCES OF ATTENDANTS.

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN (for Mr. HARRINGTON) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the memorial addressed to the Board of Governors by the male attendants of the Richmond Lunatic Asylum on the 10th of June 1884, as directed by the then Chief Secretary, on the subject of their grievances, and other applications prior and subsequent to that date, have been yet considered; if any decision has been arrived at; and, if so, when the memorialists may expect to receive an answer?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I find that the Board of Governors of the Richmond Asylum transmitted to the Inspectors in January last some proposals in favour of the attendants, and that, for some cause or other which is unexplained, the Inspectors have only very recently submitted the proposals to Government. I have asked for an explanation of the delay, and have given instructions for the matter to be pressed to an early decision.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES)—PENSIONS TO TEACHERS.

MR. BRODRICK asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether he can state the number of pensions granted to teachers appointed 1846-1851, awarded since the Debate of April 29th, 1884; what sums were awarded, and what total annual charge has been added to the Consolidated Fund beyond the £6,500 granted in 1876; and, whether he would object to giving a Return of the pensions granted, with the names of the teachers, and the schools to which they were attached?

MR. MUNDELLA: The number of pensions, varying from £20 to £30, granted since the debate of April 29, 1884, to teachers appointed 1846-51 is 200. The total sum charged on the Con-

solidated Fund beyond the £6,500 granted in 1876 is £4,705. In addition to the foregoing there are a considerable number of applications for pensions, which will be dealt with within the next few days. There are serious objections to the granting of such a Return as that suggested in the hon. Member's Question.

THE COMMISSIONERS OF IRISH LIGHTS—BALLYSHANNON HARBOUR.

MR. SEXTON asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he has learned of the existence of a dangerous wreck at the entrance to the harbour of Ballyshannon, county Donegal, and whether the wreck, if not soon removed, will block up the entrance, and render navigation impossible; whether, also, a wreck has been lying for some time nearly opposite Mount Charles, Donegal Bay, in the fair way of navigation to Donegal; whether a fishing boat struck the wreck in November last, and the lives of the crew were only saved by assistance from the shore; whether it is the duty of the Board of Irish Lights to inquire into these matters; whether that Board has taken action in regard to them, or made any report with reference to them; and, whether the wrecks in question will be now removed without delay?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I have communicated with the Irish Lights Commissioners, and am informed by them that, although the steamship *Rockabill* was sunk off the entrance to Ballyshannon Harbour as far back as May 25, 1884, the Commissioners did not become aware of the occurrence till the month of January last, when they at once invited tenders for the removal of the obstruction. Two tenders were duly received—one for £1,980, and the other for £970; but these amounts appearing excessive, and looking to the fact that no application for the removal had been made by those interested in the trade of Ballyshannon, the Commissioners decided to defer consideration of the matter until the Inspecting Committee had visited the locality while on their general tour of inspection during the coming year, and had advised the Committee on the subject. Subsequently, however, the Town Commissioners of Ballyshannon brought the matter under notice by a letter dated April 7 last; but the Commissioners having been given to understand that steps were being taken to constitute a local harbour authority for that port, they still decided to await a Report from their Inspecting Committee. With reference to the wreck off Mount Charles, Donegal Bay, the Commissioners have no knowledge of the occurrence, it having never been reported to them.

COMPANIES ACT, 1862, SEC. 51.

MR. KENNY asked the President of the Board of Trade, If his attention has been called to the judgment of Mr. Justice Chitty on April 16th last, in re the Railway Sleeper Supply Company (Limited), reported in *The Times*, relative to the construction of the 51st section of the Companies Act, 1862; if he is aware that great inconvenience may arise in many cases, if special resolutions passed, previous to Mr. Justice Chitty's decision, should in any instance be declared invalid, when too late to remedy any alleged defect therein; and, if he will consider the necessity of introducing a short Bill to provide that the fourteen days referred to in that section shall not be computed so as to exclude the days of holding the two requisite meetings, necessary for the Company to pass a special resolution?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I have seen a report of the judgment of Mr. Justice Chitty to which the hon. Member refers, and I am informed by the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies that this judgment is in accordance with a decision given on the same point by Vice Chancellor Bacon as far back as August, 1882. I am also informed that these decisions are in accordance with the view which has always prevailed at the Registry of Joint Stock Companies; and, under the circumstances, I do not propose to initiate any legislation on the subject.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS—DEATH OF A STUDENT AT KING'S COLLEGE SCHOOL.

MR. ACLAND asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the death of the lad named C. F. Bourdas, aged 12, who died from injuries received at King's College School, and to the verdict of the coroner's jury thereon; and, whether, in consequence of that

verdict having been given, he intends to take no notice of the matter?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I am glad my hon. Friend has called attention to this case, because I think it is a most serious one. I do not think there is any greater blot on our social system than the abominable practice of bullying which takes place in the great schools, and, for the matter of that, in some of the small schools of the country. The history of this case is this—This unfortunate child was taken ill on the 10th of last month; but it was not till several days afterwards that the father could get the child to tell him what was the cause of his illness. He says—

"On Tuesday I asked him if he had had a blow on his back, and he said that, if I promised not to tell Dr. Stokoe, the Head Master of the school, he would tell me. I promised him. He said that on the 10th inst., when leaving the dining hall, the big boys, those belonging to the upper forms, ranged themselves along the corridor in great numbers, each boy administering a blow with his fist on the back of each little boy, and that he got about a dozen blows. He said that this had occurred twice previously."

The poor boy died from concussion of the spine produced by these blows. Now, I will venture to say that I think both parents and masters are greatly responsible for allowing the state of things, which is not peculiar to this school, to go on. A system of terrorism exists, of which we have had an example in the case of this poor boy. He did not venture to tell what had happened, and when it comes to the knowledge of the parents, they are afraid that if they make a complaint the boy will suffer; and the masters of the school allow these things to go on for fear of mischief happening to the school. They do not inquire, and do not take measures in order to put a stop to things of this kind. By this system of terrorism which is carried out, immunity is secured to those brutal tyrants who exercise these cruelties. As soon as I heard of this case, I wrote to the managers of King's College, and I received a reply which I do not regard as at all satisfactory. The writer says—

"I am sorry to be unable at present to give you any further information beyond what came out at the inquest. The school is at present broken up."

I do not see why that should be a reason why inquiry should not take place. The letter goes on—

"In the meantime, a special committee of the council has been summoned to meet on Friday next."

That is, Friday of this week. To my mind, that is not at all a satisfactory way of dealing with such a case as this. Therefore, Sir, three or four days ago I placed the case in the hands of the Public Prosecutor, with instructions, if possible, to obtain evidence and procure the conviction and adequate punishment of offenders of this description. There are hundreds of boys sent to prison for offences trivial in comparison with crimes of this description. I think the time has come for dealing with this matter seriously; and when big boys guilty of offences of this kind are punished as they deserve to be, and when schools managed so as to allow a state of things of this sort to be possible are made to suffer, we shall then get to the end of a system which makes a number of innocent young lives miserable and intolerable.

MR. ALDERMAN W. LAWRENCE wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he did not consider it to be the bounden duty of a Coroner in the case of a death arising from violence to summon before him the eye-witnesses of such violence before the verdict was given?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I think I had better not express any opinion now, as the matter is in the hands of the officers of public justice, who will see that the whole thing is inquired into.

PAPAL SEE—DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE VATICAN—MR. ERRINGTON.

MR. SEXTON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he is willing to lay upon the Table of the House a Copy of the record made from time to time, and preserved at the Foreign Office, of the proceedings of Mr. Errington on any of his visits to Rome; by whom, and from what material, these records have been made; whether a record is being prepared, or will be prepared, for preservation in the Foreign Office, of the proceedings of Mr. Errington on his present visit to Rome; and, whether communications are passing between Mr. Errington and any Member of Her Majesty's Government with respect to the filling up of the vacancy now existing in the Catholic see of Dublin?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I adhere to the pledge which I was authorized two years ago to give to the House, and which was accepted. The record will be the letters which have occasionally been written to and from Mr. Errington. I have to repeat that Mr. Errington has received no instructions to recommend any Prelate to fill up the existing vacancy in the Catholic See of Dublin.

MR. SEXTON: I should like to ask the noble Lord whether the letter of recommendation to Rome given by Lord Granville has ever been withdrawn; and, if so, whether, in the absence of any formal instructions, Mr. Errington is not in the position of an uncontrolled Plenipotentiary; and, whether there is any other instance of a Representative of this or any other country offering advice to a foreign Sovereign without any communication with his own Government?

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN: In reference, Sir, to the answer just given, in which the noble Lord says that Mr. Errington was not instructed to recommend any Prelate for the See of Dublin, I wish to ask the noble Lord whether Mr. Errington was instructed to object to anyone?

MR. MITCHELL HENRY: And I should like to ask whether it is not in the sole power of His Holiness the Pope to receive or to refuse to receive advice from Mr. Errington, or to decline to grant an audience to anyone?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: With regard to the different Questions that have been asked me, I must request any hon. Members who wish for further information to place their Questions on the Paper, because it is not in my power, without Notice, to give further information.

MR. BOURKE: But, Sir, as a Question arising out of the answer just given, the noble Lord says that the answer which he gave two years ago was accepted. I wish to ask by whom it was accepted? Certainly, it was not accepted by hon. Gentlemen sitting on this side of the House.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: When I said that the answer was accepted, I intended to convey that it seemed to me to meet with the acceptance of the House. It will be in the recollection of the House that a great number of Questions were asked at that time, and a considerable controversy arose. That controversy ceased as soon as the statement was made to which I alluded just now, and which was made on the authority of the Secretary of State.

MR. SEXTON asked to whom Mr. Errington addressed the letters which were recorded at the Foreign Office?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I have stated that the records are "To and from Mr. Errington."

THE CITY OF LONDON PAROCHIAL CHARITIES COMMISSION.

MR. BRYCE asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, When it is expected that the removal of the office of the City of London Parochial Charities Commission from Craig's Court to Gwydyr House, a step promised some months ago with a view to accelerating the business of that Commission, will be carried out; and, what progress has been made by the Commissioners in the work of preparing the Schedules of City Parochial Charity property directed by the Act of 1883 as a preliminary to the issuing of schemes for the better application of the charity funds for the benefit of the people of London generally?

MR. MUNDELLA: My hon. Friend the Member for Leeds will answer the first part of the Question. With reference to the second part of the Question, I must refer the hon. Member to the 32nd Report of the Charity Commissioners, page 13, which states that—

"Since the appointment of additional Commissoners under the City of London Parochial Charities Act, 1883, we have prosecuted the inquiry directed by the Act into the property of the charities subject to it. The whole of the scheduled parishes are now under investigation. In about one-fifth the inquiry may be considered as practically complete, and it is hoped that within a year from the present date the whole of this part of the work will have been accomplished."

POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)—PRESCOT (LANCASHIRE) UNION—APPOINTMENT OF RATE COLLECTOR.

MR. BIGGAR asked the President of the Local Government Board, Has he seen the report that it is proposed by certain guardians in the Prescot (Lancashire) Union to give the appointment of rate collector to Mr. John Kitchen, on condition that he allow Mr. Dunn,

who has been recently dismissed for embezzlement, £50 a-year out of his salary; and, whether he approves of such an arrangement; and, if not, whether he will use his influence to discourage that or any similar arrangement?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: We are informed that the election of a collector took place on the 30th ultimo. Mr. Kitchen's application for the appointment was not entertained by the Guardians, and no suggestion was made by any Guardian in favour of an arrangement such as that referred to.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—MISCONDUCT OF A POLICE CONSTABLE AT MULLINGAR.

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is true, as reported in *The Westmeath Examiner* of April 25th, that on the previous Sunday, in Mullingar Police Barrack No. 2, a detective policeman was guilty of grossly indecent behaviour towards a girl of tender years who was employed in the barrack; that this was the second time on which he was guilty of such behaviour towards the same girl; and that she is the third girl who has had to leave the employment of the police on account of his conduct; and, what action the authorities at Dublin Castle propose to take in the matter?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: This matter is still under investigation by the Inspector General, who informs me that, so far as has been ascertained, there is no truth in the statement as reported in the paper referred to. The only irregularity which has so far been discovered is the employment of girls of this age in the Constabulary Barracks. This is quite against the Regulations, and has been at once put a stop to.

STATE OF IRELAND—POLICE PROTECTION AT MARLINSTOWN, MULLINGAR.

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is true that police protection has been granted to a man named Fagan who has lately taken a farm at Marlinstown, near Mullingar; and, if so, in what manner will the cost of the protective force be charged?

Mr. Biggar

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Police protection has been given in this case, and it is considered absolutely necessary. The men form part of the free force of the county.

LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACT, 1883—INQUIRIES UNDER THE ACT.

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Irish Local Government Board are empowered to receive evidence in connection with the Labourers Act other than what is produced at the sworn inquiries held at the Union by their Inspector; whether evidence outside such inquiry was received in the case of a recent investigation in the Carrick electoral division, Mullingar; whether the requisition for a certain number of labourers' cottages in that electoral division was filled up and signed by twelve ratepayers, in due form of law; whether it is true that the bailiff on Captain Rochfort Boyd's estate induced some of those ratepayers, by threats of calling up the hanging gale of rent or other such menaces, to send a memorial to the Local Government Board withdrawing their signatures from the requisition; and, whether such intimidation constitutes an offence under the Crimes Act?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It is quite open to the Local Government Board to receive any information which may be furnished to them in these cases. In this instance they received a document, signed by several of the signatories of the original representation, purporting to withdraw their representation on the ground that they had appended their names without understanding the matter. The Board have no information as to how the signatures to the second document were procured; but they have decided to accept the signatures to the original representation as valid, and to confirm the Guardians' scheme, omitting one cottage which was intended for a man who is a cripple, and could not, therefore, be regarded as an agricultural labourer.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE VOLUNTEER MEDICAL STAFF CORPS—THE EDINBURGH STAFF CORPS.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he has received any communication

from the officers of the Edinburgh University Volunteer Medical Staff Corps, asking that the corps may be included in the new Volunteer Medical Staff Corps; and, whether there is any reason why their request should not be complied with?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Yes, Sir; such an application was received after the Army Estimates, which fix the establishments for the year, were issued, and no addition to the corps could then be made. The new Volunteer Medical Staff Corps is an experiment in a sense; and although it is hoped to extend the scheme, it is thought that at present there should only be one corps, any additions taking the form of outlying detachments. But no additions can be made except in connection with the next Army Estimates, and when the establishments for the whole Force are under consideration.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—INCIDENCE OF THE MALT TAX.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, What was the rate of the incidence of the Malt Tax on a quarter of barley before the abolition of that Tax; what is the equivalent Tax on a quarter of barley at the present rate of the Beer Duty; and, what will be the equivalent Tax under the proposed new Beer Duty?

MR. HIBBERT: The rate of the incidence of the Malt Tax, together with the burdens which accompanied it, on a quarter of barley before the abolition of that Tax, was calculated by my right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury at £1 4*s.* 6½*d.* At the present time it appears, from the Brewers' Return annually presented to Parliament, that the equivalent tax on a quarter of barley at the present rate of Beer Duty is almost exactly the same — that is, £1 4*s.* 6½*d.* If the Beer Duty is increased from 6*s.* 3*d.* to 7*s.* 3*d.* a barrel as proposed, the charge on a quarter of barley will be about £1 8*s.* 5½*d.*

IRISH NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS PENSION FUND.

SIR HERVEY BRUCE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the money subscribed by National Teachers in Ireland for the purpose of providing a pension for themselves on their retirement is wholly applied to that purpose; and, if not, whether he will state how much has been so applied in each year during the last ten years, what the balance has been in each year, and how it has been applied?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: All the contributions of the teachers are placed to the credit of the fund, and no payments whatever are made from it other than pensions and gratuities to retiring teachers, except the refund of their total premiums to those teachers who quit the service otherwise than by death or retirement on pension or gratuity. The scheme has only been in operation since January 1, 1880, and the annual disbursements have since been largely in excess of the teachers' subscriptions. For details I may refer the hon. Baronet to the accounts of the fund, which are annually presented to Parliament.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—PLEURO-PNEUMONIA AT FEARN (SCOTLAND).

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether a serious outbreak of pleuro-pneumonia has occurred in Ross, one hundred and fifty cattle having been slaughtered at Fearn, involving a loss of £2,800?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Local Authority of Ross have informed the Privy Council that pleuro-pneumonia exists at Fearn. We have not yet received the Inspector's Return, but a telegram received from the Clerk of Supply states that one animal was slaughtered by the owner; that two more were attacked; and that to-day the slaughter of the whole herd, numbering 135, has been ordered. The compensation will be calculated on the legal basis—full value for healthy animals, and three-quarter value for diseased animals—in neither cases fancy prices being given.

In reply to MR. ACKERS,

MR. TREVELYAN said, it was extremely doubtful whether foot-and-mouth disease had broken out in Yorkshire. That was the Report of the Inspector sent down; but there would be further inquiry.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—RIOT AT ORANMORE BARRACKS.

COLONEL NOLAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the police at Oranmore lately made a drain from the barrack cesspool into the stream from which the inhabitants of Oranmore draw their drinking water; if the Local Officer of Health and the Board of Guardians strongly objected to this contamination of the drinking water, and if the Board of Guardians succeeded in closing up this drain; if the inhabitants of Oranmore celebrated this stoppage of the pollution by assembling at the drain and playing music; if, upon this, the police prosecuted, under the Crimes Act, the Local Officer of Health and some others, and if the magistrates dismissed the summons; if he would direct that, for the future, the Crimes Act should not be used against people who, in their anxiety for pure water, assembled in a manner disliked by the Constabulary; and, if he would inform the police that cases of this kind had better be dealt with under the ordinary Civil Law?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It appears that a drain was about being constructed at the Oranmore Barracks, not for the purpose stated in the Question of draining the barrack cesspool, but to remove surface water. Some of the inhabitants assembled, and by force closed up the works, and they were not afterwards proceeded with. Notice was subsequently served on the 14th of March by the Sanitary Authority forbidding its construction. Eleven days after this a disorderly crowd forced their way late in the evening into the garden of the police barrack, accompanied by a band, took possession of the garden, and refused to leave. They remained for a considerable time, and conducted themselves in a very disorderly manner. The police authorities considered that if such lawless proceedings were allowed to pass unchecked great danger might arise to the public peace, and the principal persons were prosecuted for taking part in an unlawful assembly. The magistrates dismissed the case with a strong caution, holding that while the defendants' conduct did not, under all the circumstances, amount to an unlawful assembly, yet it was very gross, and brought them close to the verge of such unlawful assembly; and they cautioned them that if brought up for similar offences the Court might deal differently with the matter.

COLONEL NOLAN: The Chief Secretary has not answered the last paragraph, which is the most important. What I wish to ask is, whether he will direct that, in cases of this kind, recourse will be had to the ordinary Civil Law, and not to the Crimes Act?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN was understood to say that each case should stand upon its own merits.

COLONEL NOLAN: Has the right hon. Gentleman sent any reprimand to the constables who proceeded in this case under the Crimes Act?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir; I have sent no reprimand.

MR. HEALY: Would the right hon. Gentleman say whether the objectionable people at Oranmore were people who objected to having the wells poisoned by the drain coming from the police cesspool?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It is a long story, but I do not think that was the case.

CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT—REDUNDANT CLERKS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, What steps have been taken to transfer eligible clerks, redundant in one Department, to fill up vacancies in the Upper Division elsewhere; whether the statement which has appeared in certain newspapers, that the Treasury propose to transfer eligible redundant Customs clerks, not over thirty-five years of age, is correct; whether all the Customs redundant clerks, with a single exception, are not already over that age; and, whether, if there is good and sufficient evidence that there are several redundant clerks over thirty-five years of age on the establishment of the Customs and Inland Revenue Departments, who are eligible for transfer, the Treasury will offer to them Upper Division vacancies in other Departments?

MR. HIBBERT: My right hon. Friend has asked me to answer this Question; but I am afraid I can add but little to the statements on the subject of it made by him on the 7th of November and the 12th of March last. The Trea-

sury would be glad to see the number of redundant clerks reduced, and lose no opportunity of suggesting transfers where there is any possibility of their being practicable and advantageous. But there is no power to compel a Department to fill up a vacancy by means of a transfer; and the objections to such a course are obvious and strong, especially where the redundants are above 35 years of age, as is the case with all those at the Customs except one.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—SPAIN AND THE WINE DUTIES.

MR. WHITLEY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he can inform the House what are the existing obligations of this Country to France, Germany, Spain, and Italy with regard to the maintenance of the Duty charged on wine at its present rate per gallon?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The existing obligations of this country in the matter are contained in the Protocol of the 1st of December, 1883, and in the Declaration of the 21st of December, 1884, with Spain. These documents are given in the Parliamentary Papers, Commercial No. 5, of 1884, and No. 2, of 1885. Under these engagements the limit of the lower or shilling scale of Wine Duties is fixed at 30 degrees. There are no specific Treaty stipulations with France, Germany, or Italy in respect of the Wine Duties; but, as the hon. Member is aware, the produce of all countries obtains equal treatment in our tariff.

EGYPT (THE SOUDAN)—PRISONERS OF THE MAHDI.

MR. MONTAGU SCOTT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If his attention has been called to the following Letter in *The Times* of 1st May:—

"The Mahdi's Prisoners.—A Letter has been received at Cairo, on the 20th of March of this year, from Sister Therèse Grigolini, dated February 3rd, written with a pencil on a cotton pocket handkerchief. It briefly narrates the terrible sufferings of herself and the other sisters and priests imprisoned by the Mahdi at Omdurman, and suggests a plan to relieve them which it is not prudent to publish, but which is very hopeful. Another Letter, dated February 28th, was received at Cairo on March 18th, sent by M. Santoni. This last contains categorical replies to certain questions which it is not prudent to publish. M. Santoni went first to Abu Gussi, thence viâ Kordofan to Ambiliba, thence to Omdurman. At that place he actually saw and conversed with the priests and sisters. He was arrested and imprisoned as an English spy, but was subsequently released, and worked his way back with the Letter of Sister Therèse sewn in a fold of his shirt;"

and, if any steps can and will be taken by Her Majesty's Government to endeavour to obtain the release of these unfortunate prisoners from their terrible captivity?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The first of the letters referred to by the hon. Member has been forwarded to Her Majesty's Government by Sir Evelyn Baring; but they have no knowledge of the second letter. The subject is receiving the attention of the Secretary of State, who is in communication with the Italian Government in case any means may offer themselves of securing the release of these unfortunate women, who are believed to be Italian subjects. I must, however, add that, in a recent telegram to the Secretary of State for War, Lord Wolseley states that Sir Charles Wilson reports that there are at present no means of communication for ransoming any Europeans who may be captives in the hands of the Mahdi.

SUNDAY CLOSING EXTENSION (IRELAND) BILL.

MR. GIBSON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, bearing in mind that Her Majesty's Government brought in a Bill in the Session of 1883 to render permanent the Irish Sunday Closing Act of 1878, and extend its provisions to the five cities and towns exempted from them, and re-introduced it in 1884, when it was again withdrawn from want of time, Government intends to bring in the Bill during the present Session of Parliament?

MR. MAURICE BROOKS: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers the Question I would like to ask him whether, having regard to the fact that a large number of the working classes who are about to be enfranchised are the persons who are most interested in the restrictions about to be imposed by the Sunday Closing Act, he will consider whether it would not be better to leave the settlement of this question to the new Parliament, having in mind the warm manner in which this question—

[*Cries of* "Oh!"]

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. GLADSTONE: Without entering into any argument, and looking at the matter drily, and only as a matter of business, I will point out that I have commonly answered Questions of this kind by what is called a dilatory reply, asking hon. Members to wait until I can state on the part of the Government what Bills we can undertake to bring in with a hope of passing them. The time to do so is now approaching; but with regard to this Bill, viewing the time of year we have already arrived at—and certainly our view about the Bill is perfectly clear and strong, yet it is a Bill that is likely to excite opposition and require time—I do not see any reasonable probability of our being able to introduce and proceed with the measure during the present Session.

ARMY—DIVINE SERVICE—PRESBYTERIAN CHAPLAINS.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH asked the Secretary of State for War, How many Presbyterian commissioned chaplains are there in the Army, what are their salaries, and to which denomination of Presbyterians do they belong; how many of them are actively employed abroad with the Army; in whose hands does their appointment rest; what is the scale of their retiring allowance; and, how many Presbyterian soldiers are there in the Army?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: There are seven Presbyterian commissioned chaplains in the chaplains' department. Their salaries are regulated by Article 244 of the Royal Warrant for the pay of the Army. Five belong to the Scotch Presbyterian Church, two to the Irish Presbyterian body. Three are employed abroad, in Egypt. The appointment rests with the Secretary of State for War, who is usually guided by the advice of the Moderator of the Church from whose ranks the candidate is chosen. Retired pay is regulated by Article 979 of the Royal Warrant. According to the last general Annual Return of the Army, the number of Presbyterian soldiers was 12,619. The preliminary Return for 1884 shows 6,640 serving at home on January 1, 1885.

ARMY ORGANIZATION — THE TERRITORIAL SYSTEM.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the rumour is correct that the Adjutant of the Somersetshire Militia is to be appointed Adjutant of the Oxfordshire Militia, and in succession to Captain Boyle; if so, whether such an appointment is not in contravention of the territorial system as explained by Lord Cardwell and Mr. Childers, who gave it to be understood that all Adjutancies of the Auxiliary Forces would in future be supplied from the Territorial Regiments?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Both Line battalions of the territorial regiment being abroad, no officer could be spared from them to assume the duties of Adjutant to the 4th Battalion (formerly the Oxford Militia). At the request of the commanding officer of the 4th Battalion, the Adjutant of the Somersetshire Militia, who had formerly served in the 2nd Battalion (late 52nd Foot) was accordingly appointed.

ARMY — ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT — THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN—DEFECTIVE CARTRIDGES.

SIR FREDERICK MILNER asked the Surveyor General of Ordnance, If his attention has been called to the following description of the cartridges served out to the troops during the recent engagements in the Soudan:—

"Enquiries have been made on the spot as to the cause of the disastrous jamming in action, and the conclusion arrived at is that the fault is in the cartridge itself. The metal case is thin, papery, and in too many pieces. It bends and breaks in the men's pouches, and frequently expands with such force on being fired as to render the rifle useless. The extraction of the jammed case is a lengthy and elaborate process. Some of the rifles have been jammed at the very first shot, and the officers and non-commissioned officers have thus, from the commencement of the action, had to act as sort of gamekeepers to their men, clearing their guns, while they fought on with those of their dead and wounded comrades;"

whether it is not the fact that the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been repeatedly called to the dangerous condition of the cartridges served out to the troops for some time past; whether he will give the House a positive assurance that the present war preparations shall not include the manufacture of the same defective cartridges; if his attention has been called to the unserviceable condition of many of the bayonets used by the troops during the recent battles at Suakin; and, if he is still of opinion

that these weapons are perfectly serviceable ?

MR. BRAND: My attention has not been drawn to the statement to which the hon. Member refers, and I have no idea who made it. The attention of the Government has not been frequently drawn to the dangerous character of the Boxer cartridge. There has been a great deal of exaggeration about this matter. The Boxer cartridge has answered well in several campaigns, but it is inferior in some respects to the solid-drawn cartridge. As I have previously stated, the solid-case cartridge is in course of manufacture. My attention has not been called to the unserviceable character of bayonets to which the hon. Member refers, and I have no reason to believe that the bayonets in possession of the troops at Suakin are not perfectly serviceable. I have, indeed, received a statement similar to that made by the hon. Member, but without any evidence in support of it. If the hon. Member will furnish me privately with any evidence in support of his statement, I will cause a strict inquiry to be made.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL asked whether the new cartridge had been approved or not ?

MR. BRAND said, he did not say that the solid-case cartridge had not been approved for active service. What he did say was that no decision had been taken to use the solid-drawn case for practice. The Boxer cartridge, of which there was a large supply in store, was perfectly serviceable for practice purposes.

CAPTAIN AYLMER asked whether the failure was not due to old cartridges being refilled.

MR. BRAND: No, Sir.

GREAT BRITAIN AND RUSSIA—PORT HAMILTON (COREA).

VISCOUNT LEWISHAM asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is a fact that, in deference to the opposition of the Russian Government, Her Majesty's Ministers have abandoned the plan of occupying Port Hamilton near the Corea ?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have only to repeat the answer which I gave the other day on this subject—namely, that no communications have taken place upon this subject between the two Governments of Great Britain and Russia.

CENTRAL ASIA — RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—RUSSIAN ATTACK ON THE AFGHANS AT PENJDEH—THE NEGOTIATIONS.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is a fact that Her Majesty's Ministers have invited the Russian Government to submit to arbitration the question whether General Komaroff's attack upon the Afghans on 30th March was a breach of the "solemn agreement" of 17th March; whether the Russian Government have accepted this proposal; and, if so, who is to be arbitrator; whether the Russian forces will continue in occupation of the strip of Afghan territory south of the Khoja Saleh—Sarakhs line, which they have seized since the appointment of a joint Boundary Commission by the two Governments; and, how much longer it is expected that the British Commission will have to wait upon the frontier for its Russian colleagues ?

MR. GLADSTONE: I am not able to enter upon the points presented by the hon. Member in his Question; but I shall have a short statement to make relative to the subject of the Correspondence with Russia when I am free to do so.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: When does the right hon. Gentleman propose to make that statement—before proceeding to Business, or after ?

EGYPT—SUPPRESSION OF THE "BOSPHORE EGYPTIEN."

MR. GLADSTONE: The Question of the right hon. Gentleman gives me the opportunity of making a statement both in respect of that Question and with respect to another question in which an interest has been felt — namely, the incident of *The Bosphore Egyptien*. I will mention the latter first—it being, as I may say, now completed, and the Papers being now ready to be laid upon the Table. They will be in the hands of Members as soon as they can be got through the press. In the case of that paper the facts are as follows:—*The Bosphore Egyptien* was suppressed by a lawful decree of the Egyptian Government, and the British Government gave its distinct sanction to the act of suppressing that newspaper upon the grounds that were laid before it. The French Government made strong repre-

sentations upon the subject. They have declared that they wholly refrain from raising any question as to the suppression of the newspaper; but with regard to the manner of the suppression, they raised important questions, and made demands in connection with it. They declared that the seizure and the closure of the printing office, where the newspaper was carried on, and in which other business was carried on as well, was, in their judgment, illegal, and they complained of the forcible removal of the French Consul, who had attended personally and officially to protest, as he conceived himself entitled to do, against this illegal closure of the office, as they described it. The French Government thereupon founded two demands—first of all, the re-opening of the office; and second, the punishment of the persons concerned in the proceedings. In the meanwhile Her Majesty's Government had obtained a full Report from Sir Evelyn Baring as to all the circumstances of the case, and they had likewise taken advice upon the legal aspect of it. The conclusion to which they found it their duty to come was that the closure of the office was not warranted by law, and that the technical force used against the French Consular authority was upon that ground not justifiable. We therefore took note of the declaration of the French Government that there was no desire to shield *The Bosphore Egyptien*, and that they wholly refrained from raising any question with regard to the act of suppressing the newspaper. Further, they expressed their readiness to withdraw their demands for the punishment of those who had simply obeyed the superior orders that were given for the seizure of the office, and for what was consequent upon that seizure of the office, and who had acted simply under the orders of the Egyptian Government. Accordingly, taking into view the illegality in the method of this proceeding, which practically we cannot deny, we stated that Her Majesty's Government would by no means disclaim their responsibility for the suppression of the newspaper itself, but were ready to associate themselves with the regret which they advised the Government of the Khedive to express as to the incidents which had attended the suppression of the paper. They accordingly advised Nubar Pasha to give effect, without scruple, to what they believed to be the law upon the subject, and to remove the bar to the re-opening of the office. They also recommended that His Excellency the Khedive should visit the French Consul, and should, upon that visit, convey an expression of regret for the irregularities which had been committed in the course of the proceedings.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Will the paper be re-issued as before?

MR. GLADSTONE: Oh, no. A question of law, I believe, may arise as to the method of suppressing the newspaper, but the re-issue of the paper is not included in this arrangement.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—THE RUSSO-AFGHAN FRONTIER—THE NEGOTIATIONS.

MR. GLADSTONE: Now, Sir, with regard to the more important question—the Correspondence with Russia—I am glad to say that the impediments which have presented themselves to the friendly prosecution of that Correspondence appear to us to have been removed. The state of the case is this—that the two Governments agree together to provide means for any settlement which may be needful of differences between them arising out of the engagement at Penjdeh, the British Government agreeing with the Government of Russia that they do not desire to see gallant officers on either side put upon their trial. For this purpose they are ready to refer to the judgment of the Sovereign of a friendly State any difference which may be found to exist in regard to the interpretation of the agreement between the two Cabinets of the 16th of March, with a view to the settlement of the matter in a mode consistent with the honour of both States, and they trust that no difficulties will occur as to the details of this reference which in principle is completely agreed upon. The two Governments are prepared, under these circumstances, to resume at once their communications in London on the main points of the line for the delimitation of the Afghan Frontier—I say on the main points of the line, for the details of the line would be examined and traced upon the spot in conformity with the conditions which were provided for in the Commission

appointed for that purpose. This negotiation, of which it would be quite premature for me to anticipate the results, will be much facilitated as regards Her Majesty's Government by the more full and exact knowledge which, since the meeting at Rawul Pindi, they have obtained of the views of the Ameer with regard to the points of the Afghan Frontier, and likewise by the valuable topographical information which has reached the India Office. I may also say, on another point of interest, that the Russian Government have expressed their willingness to consider the question as to the removal of the Russian outposts when the Commissioners meet. That, I think, is all I can say. I cannot speak yet with regard to the time of the presentation of the Papers; but if matters proceed as I hope they will, there need be no long delay in their presentation.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman what is the precise point that is to be referred to the mediation of a friendly Power?

MR. GLADSTONE: I put down the words which I intended to use. I am anxious to be very accurate on the subject. They are these—

"To refer to the Sovereign of a friendly State any difference which may be found to exist with regard to the interpretation of the agreement between the two Cabinets of the 16th of March,"

—that is, the agreement with regard to the advancing or attacking, on the one side, or on the other—

"with a view to the settlement of the matter in a mode consistent with the honour of both States."

I trust that no difficulty may arise.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: May I ask whether, under these circumstances, which appear to differ materially from those under which the Prime Minister made his important statement to the House the other night, Her Majesty's Government propose to proceed with the Vote of Credit to-night, and whether the House may not have further time to consider the matter?

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir; this process is still going on, and we must not assume things which have not happened. In consequence of what has happened, our views and expectations have changed; but, in our opinion, we can only ask Parliament to proceed with the Vote.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I beg to ask whether it is not a fact that the determination the Government has come to—to decide the boundaries, to a certain extent, at all events, in London—is not one which hitherto this Government has always resisted, and the Russian Government has always pressed?

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir; the answer to that question will require a more summary mode of expression than the hon. Member appears to expect. I rather think that it was the Russian Government that originally proposed the settlement on the spot. Certainly, since that time, the British Government have been disposed to look for a settlement on this point in London; but a variety of circumstances has happened which my hon. Friend will be better able to appreciate a short time hence, when the Papers are on the Table, which have led us to enter into this agreement, not at all by way of concession to the Russian Government. [*Laughter.*] With respect to that indication of feeling, I should not be in the least degree ashamed of this agreement, even if it were a concession, provided it was a good and sound concession. But it is not a concession to the Russian Government. We are entirely of opinion with the Russian Government that, in the state of matters now reached, it was very desirable indeed that the main points in controversy should be settled in London.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT begged to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether this new arrangement which had just been submitted to the House implied the abandonment of the whole frontier line which the Joint Commission was appointed last July to delimit; whether Her Majesty's Government had agreed to give up Penjdeh to the Russian Government; whether that was part of the arrangement, either private or public; and whether there was any point fixed from which the Russian outposts would be withdrawn, or to which they would retire?

MR. GLADSTONE: In due time I have no doubt the desire of the hon. Member will be satisfied. It is really premature to bring forward this matter. I have announced that we are on the point of proceeding to consider the dif-

ferent points of a frontier line in London without delay. I hardly think that it would be consistent with the public interest that I should now touch upon those points in reply to the hon. Member.

ARMY—EXAMINATIONS FOR COMMISSIONS.

MR. HENEAGE asked the Secretary of State for War, If it is true that candidates for Commissions in the Army are prohibited from competing at the examinations in March, July, or in any subsequent month, unless they have attained the age of nineteen previous to the 1st of January in the year in which such examinations are held; whether such rule was made by the War Office or the Civil Service Commissioners; and, whether he will consider the advisability of altering an arbitrary regulation which involves, in many cases, the loss of a year's seniority to the candidate, and entails a heavy expense on parents, without any advantage to the public service?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The rule referred to by the hon. Member applies only to the Militia candidates for Line commissions. It was made in 1879 by the War Office, and was a concession in the interests of the candidates. If the ages of candidates were reckoned from July as well as from January, those who at the beginning of the year were approaching the maximum limit of age, and had only served for one training, would be permanently disqualified for commission, for, not having served for two trainings, they could not compete in March; and if they reached the age of 22 between January and July, when the Militia training takes place, they would by age be ineligible for competition in September. Consequently, as regards the maximum age, the rule confers a great advantage on candidates. As regards the lower limit of age to which the hon. Member's Question is directed, candidates whose birthdays fall in the early months of the year are under some disadvantage. Their admission into the Army is postponed for some months. The rule, however, has been in force for six years, and parents can make arrangements for their sons' education accordingly. If they desire their sons to enter the Service at an earlier age than the Militia rule allows, they can resort to admission by open competition. In fixing the lower limit of age, care must be taken not to give Militia candidates an advantage over those who enter the Army by open competition. Whatever date is fixed, apparently hard cases must inevitably occur when candidates' birthdays fall immediately after that date. The advantage given by the rule in question to the older candidates, who would, if it were altered, be permanently excluded from the Army, appears to me to be so much more important than the inconvenience which some delay in obtaining their commissions may cause to the younger candidates, that I see no reason for making any change in the regulations.

THE REGISTRATION BILLS.

MR. HEALY: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, When the statement which the Chief Secretary promised would be made to-night on the subject of registration is to be made, by whom, and under what circumstances?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I was about to make a statement on the subject on the Motion to proceed with the Orders of the Day; but I will make it now in answer to the hon. Member. Her Majesty's Government have had to consider, since the debate and division on the Irish Registration Bill on the 24th of April, whether they could make any proposal to meet in part the views put forward by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite. As regards Ireland, a special and temporary grant of a few thousand pounds was made in 1868 for the acceleration of registration. We have prepared for the Irish Bill a clause which follows generally the precedent of 1868, which will be found in the 31 & 32 *Vict.* c. 112, s. 27, with two exceptions—first, the benefits of the clause are extended to collectors of poor rates, which is now deemed proper owing to the much larger number of new voters in 1885; secondly, such Clerks of the Peace as receive salaries from the Votes and are bound to give their whole time to the public are not to get any extra pay. There were none in this position in 1868. The expenditure in 1868 was about £6,200. This year, allowing for the changed conditions, it will be about £10,000 as a maximum. Provision is, as the House knows, already made for

the payment of additional Revising Barristers out of voted moneys.

MR. HEALY: Does the £10,000 include the pay of the Revising Barristers?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: No; it is all for the purposes I have mentioned—the purposes for which the £6,200 was made in 1868. As regards England and Scotland, we cannot be parties in the last year of a Parliament to proposing that the whole charge of Parliamentary registration should permanently be thrown upon the public in general taxes. No proposal with regard to England and Scotland was made in 1868! We are, however, prepared to make a temporary proposal for the present year which will leave the matter open for the consideration of the new Parliament, either in connection with the reform of local government and taxation generally or otherwise. The expenses of overseers are not separated in the local taxation returns from expenses connected with municipal registration and the preparation and printing of jury lists. Neither is there any return distinguishing what proportion of the overseers' expenses is for county and what for borough registration. The direct repayment of the overseers' expenses would be almost impossible for reasons which we are prepared to give in debate. There are also the expenses of the Clerks of the Peace in counties, including remuneration for their services which are subject to an allowance by Quarter Sessions paid out of the county rate. These expenses in 1883—excluding a few counties in which no return was made—were in England, £12,572. As regards boroughs, scarcely any additional trouble or cost will be occasioned by the Franchise Act. County voters in boroughs are included in the county register in England. The pressure will be in the counties, and there, no doubt, especially in the present year, it will be great. Our proposal is to make a grant to the counties in respect of the county registers and the other expenses of the Clerks of the Peace in England, and the assessors of the Valuation Rolls and other officers in Scotland, whose labour and expenditure will be very largely increased at the coming registration. In order to guard against extravagance and abuse we shall propose that this Vote shall be calculated on an estimate of the number of voters on the register for 1886. A contribution of 2*d.* a name would amount in England to about £20,000, which could be remitted with very little trouble to the county treasurers to the credit of the county rate, and a similar amount would be transmitted to the Commissioners of Supply in Scotland. That is the proposal which we shall be prepared to submit to the House in Committee of Supply.

LORD JOHN MANNERS asked whether it was proposed to give £20,000 to Scotland as well as to England?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I said a corresponding sum to Scotland. I meant at the rate of 2*d.* a name.

COLONEL NOLAN: Do the calculations of the Government show that the £10,000 for Ireland will cover all the expenses now paid by the Poor Law Unions?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: As the Irish proposal will be made in a clause of the Bill, I would suggest to the hon. and gallant Member that it would be better to discuss it on the clause.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked whether the proposal with regard to England would be embodied in a clause, so that the House might know what they had before them? As far as he gathered, the Government only proposed a temporary grant of £20,000 to England, although the registration expenses under the present system were more than £100,000.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: What the registration expenses are it is difficult to estimate. Our proposal is as the right hon. Gentleman has stated, and I shall be glad to answer any question respecting it which on reflection the right hon. Baronet may think fit to give Notice of. No clause will be necessary. This will be a matter for settlement by a Vote in Supply.

MR. GORST asked if he was right in understanding that the proposed subsidy was to be entirely in relief of those expenses of registration which were charged upon the county rates, and if no relief would be given in respect of those which fell upon the poor rates?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: In our opinion it will be impossible to repay the overseers' expenses which in the case of a great majority of parishes amount to only a few shillings.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, that the Scottish Bill which had passed through Committee contained a clause by which the Sheriffs were enabled in their discretion to employ any number of assessors, and to fix seven guineas a-day as their remuneration. He wished to ask whether the Local Authority would have any control in regard to the expenditure?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): There are only two or three places in Scotland where any such employment would be necessary at all—Lanarkshire and possibly one or two others.

MR. GIBSON: In view of the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, I wish to ask is the £10,000 to be proposed for Ireland a temporary sum for the purposes of the next revision? Secondly, is the £10,000 a sum that will give a greater or less proportion for each vote than 2*d.*?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: A greater proportion.

MR. GIBSON: How much?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: How much more depends upon whether you count the borough as well as the county votes.

MR. HEALY: I wish to ask the Solicitor General for Ireland if he can state whether the Government have now made up their minds with regard to the Question I asked the Irish Secretary on Friday—Whether the Government will ask the Local Government Board to put down the exact scale on which they purpose to remunerate the officials, unless they intend, as we press them to do, to leave it to the Boards of Guardians; and whether, as the Bill is now being reprinted, the Government will put down their own Amendments, and also re-arrange the numbering of the clauses?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, with respect to the last remarks of the hon. Member, he had anticipated them; with respect to the former, a statement would be made on Report.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. SERJEANT SIMON asked, When it was expected to make further progress with the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that would be in some degree dependent on the progress of the Scottish and Irish Registration Bills. He did not know whether right hon. Gentlemen opposite would think themselves in a position to proceed to-night with the English Registration Bill? [*Cries of* "No!"] Seeing that was not the case, they should propose to proceed to-morrow with the English Registration Bill, putting the Reports of the Scottish and Irish Bills after it. Should they not get through the three stages to-morrow, they should put them down for Wednesday; but supposing they got through these stages to-night, the next stages of those Bills would be placed for Wednesday, and under those circumstances they should propose to take the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill on Friday night.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked whether any Minister was present who could state what would be the course of Business to-night?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the proposal was that they should take either the English Registration Bill or Supply until 10 o'clock; that they should then report Progress in order to get on with the Vote of Credit. He understood it was not convenient to right hon. Gentlemen opposite to take the English Registration Bill. They therefore proposed to take Supply till 10 o'clock.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Under these circumstances I wish to give Notice that I shall resist, as strenuously as I possibly can, any progress with Supply to-night, and I shall do my best to force Her Majesty's Government to bring the Vote of Credit at once under the notice of the House.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Under these circumstances, I will take upon myself to say that we will give the whole evening to the Vote of Credit.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—THE MALT TAX.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, that the Secretary to the Treasury had, in answer to the Leader of the Opposition, said that the Malt Tax was originally 24*s.* 5½*d.* a-quarter. As he remembered, the tax was 20*s.* 8*d.* and 5 per cent, or 21*s.* 8*d.* in all. He wished

to know, in order to avoid misapprehension, whether he was not absolutely correct in that statement?

MR. HIBBERT said, that when the tax was changed, it had been stated by the First Lord of the Treasury to have been 24*s.* 5½*d.* a-quarter, and he had himself stated that up to the present time the tax substituted for the Malt Tax was calculated to be of the same amount. If the additional 1*s.* were placed on the barrel—6*s.* 3*d.* instead of 5*s.* 3*d.*—the tax would be at the rate of 28*s.* 6½*d.* a-quarter.

REGISTRATION EXPENSES—RELIEF AS TO BOROUGHS.

SIR MASSEY LOPES asked, Whether the Government proposed to give any relief to the boroughs as well as to the counties?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that the hon. Gentleman's own Friends had not proposed in 1868 to make such a suggestion. The present proposal was a temporary one, and would be open to the revision of the next Parliament. The work had scarcely increased at all in the boroughs, and, indeed, had long been less than it had been in 1868.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE VOTE OF CREDIT.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked whether the announcement made by the Prime Minister would be followed by any change in the manner in which the Vote of Credit would be put before the House? There was very little chance of the troops in the Soudan being engaged elsewhere. Had the Government considered the advisability of separating the Vote into two items?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Yes, Sir; the Government have considered it, and they do not intend to make any change in the form of the Vote.

MR. ONSLOW asked whether the decision of the Government regarding the negotiations recently concluded between Russia and England had been communicated to the Viceroy of India, and had been accepted by him; and whether they had also been communicated to the Ameer of Afghanistan, and whether he was a consenting party?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I think the hon. Member had better ask those questions on the Vote of Credit?

MR. BOURKE reminded the right hon. Gentleman that during the debate on the Vote of Credit it would not be possible to obtain information from the Government by means of questions. The fact of every Member of the Government, with the exception of the President of the Local Government Board, having gone out of the House before they could be questioned with reference to the Prime Minister's statement had placed the Opposition in an unsatisfactory position. He wished to ask several questions. He desired to know whether there was any truth in the report which had appeared in the newspapers that certain coolies, who, having been ordered back from Suakin to India, had, on their arrival at Aden, been told to return to Suakin? He hoped he should get a definite answer to that important question. Secondly, whether the Government had received any Reports from Lord Wolseley with respect to their policy of abandoning the Soudan—a policy which was sprung upon the House in a most extraordinary manner? Thirdly, whether any Report had been received from Lord Wolseley with respect to the engagements which that noble and gallant Lord solemnly made to the Chiefs at Dongola and along the Nile that they would not be deserted when he returned in the spring to take Khartoum? Fourthly, whether the Government had received any information from Lord Wolseley respecting Osman Digna, with regard to whom Lord Wolseley had stated most distinctly that the Military Authorities were determined to crush? [*Ministerial cries of* "Order!"] He did not wish to do anything irregular; but the Opposition were placed in a very awkward position by the extraordinary desertion of the Treasury Bench by the Members of the Government. Then there was another question which he desired to ask. The right hon. Gentleman had told the House distinctly that there were two capital heads of negotiations on the Russo-Afghan Question. First, that the breach of the agreement of March 16 was to be referred to arbitration. [*Ministerial cries of* "No, no!"] That was what he understood the right hon. Gentleman to say. The other head was that the negotiations as to the delimitation of the frontier were to be proceeded with in London. He wished to know whether these two subjects were

to be dealt with simultaneously? He wished also to know whether the Papers were to be presented to the House forthwith, and, if not, when? Until these questions had been answered thoroughly and satisfactorily it was impossible that the House should be in a position to proceed with the debate on the Vote of Credit. In the circumstances, would it not be reasonable to move the postponement of this Vote?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The right hon. Gentleman, in the form of asking questions, has made something like a speech. In answer to the last question, it is, in the opinion of the Government, imperatively necessary, in the interests of the country, that the Vote of Credit should be proceeded with. With regard to the first question, as to the coolies, I must ask him to give Notice in the usual way? It seems to me eminently a question of the class requiring Notice. As to Lord Wolseley's Report, I have myself read his despatches, and I do not think that if they were laid before the House they would bear out the view the right hon. Gentleman seems to take. No doubt, they will ultimately be laid before the House. But I imagine they are not despatches of the kind which it would be customary, during such operations as are now taking place, to lay before Parliament.

MR. BOURKE: What about the other question as to Russia?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I imagine the Prime Minister's statement was to the effect that the difficulties which had prevented the going on with the Frontier Question were now in the course of removal or solution, and that, therefore, it was now possible to go forward with the consideration of the question.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked how they could go on with the Vote of Credit in the absence of the Prime Minister and the Heads of every Department concerned in the Vote?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The Prime Minister and the Heads of the other Departments are at present meeting a few yards off, and they are prepared to come back the moment the discussion on the Vote of Credit begins. They would not be absent at this moment were it not for important Public Business.

MR. CHAPLIN asked that the Prime Minister's statement should be read again to the House?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that the most important part of the agreement had been already read a second time by the Prime Minister.

MR. GIBSON: The right hon. Gentleman has stated that the Prime Minister repeated the most important part of the agreement, that is, with respect to what he called "the sacred covenant." Will the reference to arbitration include the point whether that "sacred covenant" has been broken; and, if so, will the Power who is to arbitrate be requested to indicate what reparation is to be made for its violation?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: My right hon. Friend said that it was not possible to state more fully at the present time the nature of the arrangement come to between the two Governments. I do not understand that the actual terms of reference to the friendly Power have as yet been agreed upon.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Though the terms of reference may not have been drawn up, Her Majesty's Government surely must have made up their minds as to the matters with which the arbitrator will have to deal. The Prime Minister stated that Her Majesty's Government had agreed to refer to the Sovereign of a friendly State any differences of opinion as to the violation of the agreement of the 16th of March, but that the gallant officers were not to be put upon their trial. What is the question to be referred to arbitration if not the conduct of those officers? I must press for an answer. Unless we do have an answer it will be quite impossible to go on with the discussion.

MR. R. T. REID: I wish, before that question is answered, to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he considers it is for the public interest that questions of this character should be asked at this time without Notice?

MR. ONSLOW: Does Russia agree to be bound by the decision of the Sovereign who is to arbitrate on this question?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I understand that while I was absent from the House a request was made that the terms used by my right hon. Friend should be repeated to the House. I am prepared to do that now; but I do not

think I am in a position to make any further statement. [The noble Marquess then repeated the words used by the Prime Minister with reference to the agreement between the two Governments.]

LORD JOHN MANNERS: Do not those words imply this—that any action taken by one or other of the two Powers consequent upon their interpretation of the "sacred covenant" shall be taken into consideration by the arbitrator?

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether the words "the gallant officers" refer to General Komaroff and Sir Peter Lumsden, or to General Komaroff and the Afghan officer?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have no authority to interpret a term of this kind; but if the noble Lord asks me my opinion, I should say it refers to anybody that falls within the definition of officers on either side.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: "The two general officers" is the expression.

MR. GLADSTONE: The words are "the gallant officers on either side." There are other persons who had a share in the transaction than Sir Peter Lumsden—British officers who were near the scene of the engagement.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: As it is evident that the Government do not know the meaning of their own statement, I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the House is to understand that the words which he has read to the House as expressing the so-called arrangement between the two Governments are words drawn up by the Russian Government, and not by the English?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If I rightly caught the statement made by the Prime Minister, the question which is to be put to arbitration is the interpretation to be placed upon the agreement of the 17th of March; but I think the matter in dispute between the two Governments was not the interpretation of the agreement, but the action of the Russian officers, and I should like to know which of these two things is to be submitted to arbitration?

MR. GLADSTONE: Here again, Sir, I cannot carry the agreement further than the language of the agreement. But if my hon. Friend should ask me my opinion, I should say the question has never been the trial of any officer at all. What the arbitration has to do with is the honour of the Governments involved in the agreement of the 16th of March, and we have the right, and the Russian Government have the right—each party to a compact of that kind has the right—to hold the other party to the execution of that agreement. That is the point of view from which alone I think we can try the question.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Do we understand that to mean that the one Power considers that the agreement has been violated, and that the other Power considers that it has not, and that it is to be referred to a friendly Power to decide whether the one or the other is right?

MR. GLADSTONE: The reference is to be made in the terms of the agreement itself, and I could not bind myself to say—I carefully avoided saying on Monday night—who had violated the agreement. I simply said that there had been a failure in the fulfilment of its terms. Beyond that I did not go and do not go.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: I would ask the Prime Minister whether he did not say on Monday night that the attack was a Russian attack? If he did, I wish to know whether the question is to be raised again whether this was a Russian attack or not; and, if not, whether the Prime Minister withdraws his expression or qualifies it?

MR. GLADSTONE: No; I adhere expressly to my statement.

MR. STAVELEY HILL: Does the right hon. Gentleman suggest that the question to be referred between England and Russia can go no further than this—namely, whether the Government of St. Petersburg passed on at once the terms of the solemn covenant to General Komaroff?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have no power or disposition to place any such limitation as the hon. Gentleman has suggested upon the meaning of the words.

MR. MAC IVER asked whether it was the fact that Russia was to retain the fruits of General Komaroff's action, or whether it was intended to withdraw the Russian troops pending the arbitration?

LORD JOHN MANNERS: I must repeat the question which the Prime Minister has omitted to answer—namely,

whether the agreement will exclude the consideration by the arbitrating Power of any action taken in consequence of disagreement as to the interpretation of the agreement?

MR. GLADSTONE: The ground upon which I am invited to enter is entirely beyond me. It is not in the power of one of two States which have agreed to an arrangement to claim an exclusive right of interpretation. What I would suggest is that the House should wait until it has the agreement before it. I think it will be found to be sufficiently clear.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: Will the Sovereign of a friendly State have power to determine who has broken the agreement?

MR. GLADSTONE: The Sovereign of a friendly State will have the power of determining on any difference which may be found to exist as to the interpretation of the agreement between the two Governments.

MR. MACARTNEY asked whether it would be competent to submit to the arbitrator the advance of the Russian Army, and whether that was to be considered tantamount to putting on his trial the officer who commanded?

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (who was received with cries of "Oh, oh!") said: I am not going to ask any embarrassing question; but perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would answer this question, Whether "the Sovereign of a friendly State" included the President of a Republic—say France, Switzerland or America, or whether the arbitrator was confined to Sovereigns in the sense of Kings or Emperors?

MR. GLADSTONE: We have not made that matter the subject of any particular investigation.

MR. MACARTNEY: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman to answer my question?

[No reply.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—VOTE OF CREDIT.—REPORT.

Postponed Resolution [27th April] *further considered.*

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £11,000,000, be granted to Her Majesty, beyond the ordinary grants of Parliament, to defray the Charge which may come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886, for—(1.) Remaining Charges in the Soudan and Upper Egypt; (2.) Special Naval and Military Preparations."

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, it was with utter consternation that a very large proportion of Members heard the unprecedented statement which fell just now from the Prime Minister. It was his opinion that the news announced by the Prime Minister was terrible news, terrible news, at any rate, to those who were deeply anxious for the security of our Empire. There were three points about which, undoubtedly, issues had arisen between the Government of Russia and Her Majesty's Government. The first and original point was the delimitation of the Afghan Frontier; the second point was the conflict at Ak Tapa; and the third point was whether the delimitation could be settled on the spot or in London. The Prime Minister had announced to-night that on every one of these points Her Majesty's Government had made a base and cowardly surrender. He greatly feared, though he hoped his fears would not be realized, that we might lose India—[*Cries of* "Oh!"]—not lose it in the actual technical sense of the word, for he did not mean to say that our Army and our officials would have to bundle out of India to-morrow, bag and baggage, as the Prime Minister wished to bundle out the Turks from Europe—[MR. GLADSTONE: Never!]—but he greatly feared that by the action that Her Majesty's Government had taken under the present extraordinary circumstances, they had lost for a long time, and perhaps for ever, the respect and loyalty of the Natives, and whatever affection existed between ourselves and our Indian subjects, which constituted the virtue and the vigour of our government. He felt certain that when the news of what had been stated to-day in the House of Commons reached and was widely known in the bazaars of India, from Lahore to Delhi and from Bombay to Hyderabad, the respect and sympathy of the Indian people would be greatly alienated from a Power which they had only to look upon to see how it had fallen from its high estate. The news had come upon the House so suddenly that it was, he admitted, difficult to discuss it. He had hoped against hope that Her Ma-

jesty's Government were really in earnest, particularly when the Prime Minister made the speech the other night, in which he indicated that by no action of theirs would they jeopardize one jot of the interests of this country or of India. He had hoped that; and he believed that every one of the Opposition entertained the same hope, for even the Prime Minister acknowledged that the attitude of the Opposition was eminently patriotic when they abstained from putting questions and from inconvenient debate on this subject. But now their hopes were utterly shattered. The steps that had been taken could not be retraced, the surrender to Russia could not be recalled. Under these circumstances he contended that it was a perfect farce to proceed with the Vote of Credit. One more point. The Prime Minister denounced the Vote of Credit of the Conservative Government of 1878, because he said it was unparalleled and unprecedented that a Power should come together with a friendly Power for the highest pacific purposes, and should have their Conferences wantonly disturbed by the clash of arms. How did this arbitration with a friendly State, and these amicable Conferences between the two Powers—how did they differ from the Conference of 1878, for which the then Conservative Government asked for a Vote? Why, if the right hon. Gentleman's contention was sound, did he now invite the House of Commons to depart from the maxim which he himself had laid down, and disturb this Conference with Russia and a friendly State by the clash of arms? This was not his argument; he would not give twopence for it. He did not believe in the lines upon which it was based or in the contention by which it was put forward. His argument was that a Vote of Credit so enormous was the largest demand which a Government could make upon the confidence of Parliament, and he contended that the circumstances which on Monday last might have been more or less favourable to a unanimous expression of confidence, were now distinctly unfavourable. He did not think it was possible for any Member of that House opposed in political views to Her Majesty's Government to allow this Vote to take immediate effect without debate and protest, for if they passed it without protest they would be thereby expressing confidence in the Government which it was perfectly impossible to entertain. The Prime Minister in his speech on Monday said that the time of bringing forward a Vote of Credit was not the moment to bring the Government to book. That was a most extraordinary contention, and he could not refrain from asking what the Liberals did in 1878. He looked upon the action of the Government in 1878, and the Constitutional action, whatever else it might have been, of the then Opposition, and he wanted to know why the Members of the Tory Party were to depart from such Constitutional action when the Liberal Government was in Office? He submitted that a Vote of Credit was the only opportunity which independent Members had of calling attention to the policy of the Government. If the Leader of the Opposition, as the mouthpiece of his Party, desired to call in question the conduct of the Government, he had only to frame a Motion and lay it on the Table to find an opportunity given him to discuss it; but independent Members, like those sitting near him, had no opportunity of placing their views before Parliament and the country unless they took advantage of these Votes of Credit. Now, the granting of a Vote of Credit of £11,000,000 which the Prime Minister had demanded was the most unlimited mark of confidence in a Government which Parliament could show. There were at the present time many weighty reasons why many hon. Members could not feel that confidence in the Government, and many reasons against allowing it to appear to the country or to Europe that they had confidence in the Government in this matter. What he wanted to point out was that the responsibility of Parliament with regard to this question was greater than the responsibility of the Government. The Prime Minister in his Mid Lothian campaign insisted, and rightly and properly insisted, that he was not arraigning the Government of England, but Parliament, which had sanctioned the action of the Government. The responsibility of Parliament, therefore, became very heavy, and could not be lightly assumed. But if Parliament protested against the action of the Government, the responsibility remained upon the shoulders of the Government. Whatever others might now do he, at any rate, wished to

enter a protest against the conduct of the Government in submitting a Vote of Credit without giving the slightest information as to the nature of the policy which they meant to pursue by means of that Vote. He entered a reservation because even now it was obvious, from what had passed across the Table to-night, that it was impossible to elicit from the Ministers what was the exact point at issue between the Government of Russia and the English Government, and he wished humbly, but still as earnestly as he could, to raise a warning to the Government and to the House as to the nature of the Power with whom we were dealing, and as to the nature of the interests of India. For that purpose he would venture to ask the indulgence of Parliament. There were two parties with whom independent Members of the House of Commons had to deal in this matter. They had to deal directly with Her Majesty's Government, and indirectly with the Government of Russia; and it was perfectly certain, and he thought he should be able to prove it to the House, that in the Government of Russia the Parliament of England could place no confidence. He thought it would also be obvious to the House, from what he should lay before them, and from what had passed to-night, that in the Government of the Queen the Parliament of England could place no confidence. He did not know whether there were many Members who were aware that at the present moment, and for a long time past, Russia had been deliberately violating a solemn agreement entered into by her, and curiously enough, an agreement more or less based upon arbitration. That agreement between the Government of Russia and the Government of the Queen was the result of negotiations which extended over more than two years—from 1869 to 1872. The negotiation was commenced by Lord Clarendon and Prince Gortchakoff, on the proposal of Lord Clarendon. In reply to Lord Clarendon Prince Gortchakoff said—

"The Czar looks upon Afghanistan as completely outside the sphere within which Russia may be called upon to exercise her influence."

Shortly afterwards Lord Clarendon and Prince Gortchakoff happened to meet in Germany, each of them taking the German waters. They had an interview at Heidelberg, and Prince Gortchakoff assured Lord Clarendon that Russia had no further intention of going South, and that extension of territory was not the object of the Imperial Government. So things went on, and unfortunately Lord Clarendon died and was succeeded by Earl Granville, and it was quickly decided that the boundary of Afghanistan was to be fixed, and that the arbitrator or referee to whom all British plans and views and British maps were to be referred was to be General Kaufman, who was on the spot. Time dragged on, and General Kaufman made no Report which was communicated to the British Government, upon which Earl Granville showed the only signs of energy and courage which he had ever been able to detect in the whole of that great man's career. The noble Earl wrote a somewhat dignified and even peremptory despatch to the Russian Government, saying that he should not wait any longer for the Report of General Kaufman, but that he would himself define the boundary of Afghanistan. The noble Earl did so, and the boundary he laid down was deliberately and solemnly accepted by Prince Gortchakoff in the year 1873. In a despatch of the 19th January, 1873, alluding to the boundary and other details, Prince Gortchakoff wrote to Baron Brunnow, the Russian Ambassador at this Court—

"Considering the difficulties experienced in establishing the facts in all their details, considering the great facilities which the British Government possesses for collecting the precise data, and, above all, considering the wish of His Imperial Majesty not to give to a matter of detail an importance which is not due to it, we accept the boundary line laid down, and trust that our doing so will be accepted as a proof of the desire of our august master to maintain and consolidate friendly relations with the Government of Queen Victoria."

Thus agreement was arrived at, and curiously enough an article written by the Prime Minister and describing that agreement appeared in *The Nineteenth Century* just a year after it had been concluded. The Prime Minister in that article said—

"During the existence of the late Administration [his own Government] a wise, pacific, and friendly negotiation, due to the forethought and initiative of Lord Clarendon, was instituted with Russia to promote the tranquillity of Central Asia and to insure a good understanding between the two Empires in that portion of the world. It was an essential part of this understanding, and was so recorded in

many avowals, that Russia should abstain from all endeavours to exercise excessive influence in Afghanistan; while England, on the other hand, was to use her best efforts for inducing the Ameer to fulfil the duties of good neighbourhood towards his northern neighbours, who were the neighbours, on the other side, of Russia."

That agreement, entered into after long negotiation, was the agreement which Russia was deliberately breaking at the present moment, and which she had been breaking for many days. The agreement so accomplished and entered into by the British Government was relied upon by the British Government, although three times previously Russia had voluntarily given pledges to this country with respect to Central Asia, and had deliberately broken those pledges. In 1864 the Russian Forces captured Tchenken, in Turkestan, and defeated the Ameer of Bokhara. Prince Gortchakoff, on hearing of these successes, at once and voluntarily issued a manifesto to Europe in general, and England in particular, in which he declared that—

"The final point of Russian advance had been reached, fixing for us with geographical precision the limit up to which we must advance and at which we must halt."

That declaration could hardly have been considered by our Government and Parliament, before in 1865 Russia again declared war upon Bokhara, and captured the city of Tashkend. Prince Gortchakoff thereupon voluntarily issued a second manifesto addressed to Europe in general, and England in particular, in which he declared that the Czar had no desire to add further to his dominions. This despatch was scarcely considered by the Government and Parliament before the Russians again advanced, captured the town of Khojend in 1866, and annexed the province of Khokan in 1867. Again, another manifesto from Prince Gortchakoff declared that the limits of Russian advance had been reached. All these declarations were made voluntarily on the part of the Russian Government and were not called for by the British Government. In 1868 Russia again declared war against Bokhara, annexed Samarcand, and finally forced the Ameer of Bokhara to become a subject of the Czar. These were the three pledges which, prior to the negotiations between Lord Clarendon and Prince Gortchakoff, Russia had voluntarily given, and which she had deliberately broken. In the circumstances, the negotiations of 1869 to 1873 were begun and finished. He now came to what he might call the crowning act of treachery. While the negotiations were going on, and towards the close of them, the news came to England of a large Russian expedition which was being prepared for the conquest of Khiva. This caused great apprehensions in England, and in order to allay them the Czar sent a special Envoy to England—Count Shouvaloff—who arrived in 1873. He informed the Government of the present First Lord of the Treasury, through Lord Granville, who was then Foreign Secretary, that the expedition to Khiva was a very little one, consisting of only four and a-half battalions, and that its purpose was to punish acts of brigandage. He then declared in words aftrwards embodied in a despatch from Earl Granville—

"Far from its being the intention of the Czar to take possession of Khiva, positive orders have been issued to prevent it."

At the time that Russia was giving this distinct and unsolicited pledge, what was the real nature of this very small expedition? It consisted of five columns of 12,000 men. General Kaufman was the Commander-in-Chief; Khiva was stormed and the whole territory of the Khan of Khiva was annexed. He did not hesitate to say that of all the duplicity and treachery of which examples might be found in the annals of diplomacy and international intercourse nothing exceeded this for blackness and perfidy. It was the greatest and most deliberate falsehood which was ever told by one great Power to another with which it professed to be in friendly relation. What happened? This state of things was so terrible that Lord Granville utterly collapsed; it was altogether too much for him. He wrote at once to Prince Gortchakoff, and he used language just like that which the Government were now using, and resembling that of the Prime Minister that afternoon. He said he

"Saw no practical advantage in examining too minutely how far the Treaty arrangements are in strict accordance with the assurances of Count Shouvaloff."

Was there not a similarity between that and what was said now? The noble Earl at once expressed a hope of ar-

riving at a frank and clear understanding regarding the respective position in Central Asia. Curiously enough, the Prime Minister had written an opinion upon the Khiva incident, showing how far he would go to meet the enemies of his country. In January, 1879, the right hon. Gentleman wrote a curious article well worth the attention of the House of Commons, which appeared in *The Nineteenth Century*, with the title of "The Friends and Foes of Russia." Speaking of the Emperor of Russia, he said—

"It is true that he gave to England assurances about Khiva which he has been unable to fulfil. The assurances were that positive orders had been issued to prevent the annexation of Khiva. But the military measures taken against the Khan apparently had in view the real necessities of peace and order in that region, from which plunder and kidnapping had been expelled. There is little in their accompaniment either of profit or of power, which would warrant the imputation of an unworthy motive. It is more just to ascribe the Emperor's original promise of entire abstention to an honourable anxiety for the friendship of England and as an over-sanguine expectation than to denounce as an act of bad faith a resort to force which has every appearance of reason and of justice."

That opinion was written six years after the occurrence, and therefore it had no effect upon the negotiations of the time. Prince Gortchakoff seemed to be greatly pleased at the attitude of the English Government, and it must have been almost more than he expected. He wrote back to Lord Granville a letter in which he expressed his entire satisfaction with the just view Lord Granville had taken, and reiterated the positive assurance that the Imperial Cabinet persisted in considering Afghanistan as entirely outside its sphere of action. He went on to add that the Imperial Government had no intention of organizing an expedition against the Turcomans. Now intervened the Emperor of Russia personally, and he told Lord Augustus Loftus—"Happen what might, the Imperial Government would never interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan." Then came the Emperor's visit to England, and Prince Gortchakoff wrote to Baron Brunnow in 1874, in order apparently to make things pleasant all round in England, that the order of the Emperor had been issued that no expedition should be undertaken in the direction of Merv—that was, against the Turcomans—in such peremptory terms that no local ambition would dare to take the liberty of transgressing them. Did the House know that at that very moment Prince Gortchakoff wrote that despatch to Baron Brunnow the Russian General in command in Central Asia was issuing a circular to the Turcoman Chiefs informing them that he had been appointed to supreme authority over the country between the Caspian Sea, Merv, and the Oxus, and summoning the Chiefs to come in and make their submission at Krasnovodsk? That pledge was violated, he made no doubt, with the knowledge of the Russian Government at the moment. Naturally enough, the English Government took the opportunity of calling the attention of Russia to the singular discrepancy which had taken place, and Prince Gortchakoff's reply was sublime. He said he could not comprehend in what way the incident could affect Great Britain. And yet this was a promise voluntarily given and deliberately broken. They then came to the year 1875, when a Conservative Government was in Office. Prince Gortchakoff wrote to Count Schouvaloff that the Emperor had no intention of extending the frontiers of Russia such as they then existed in Central Asia, either on the side of Bokhara or on that of the Attrek. In the same year the Emperor of Russia finally annexed the entire Province of Khokan. In 1878, when there was a great deal of friction consequent upon the Russo-Turkish War, the Russian Government voluntarily declared to the English Ambassador that all their former assurances in regard to Afghanistan had recovered their validity. That was in the month of September, 1878. In the month of November the Russian Government sent their Mission to Cabul. Then, in 1879, M. de Giers wrote to inform Lord Dufferin—

"In the most positive manner that there was no intention on the part of the Russian Government to go to Merv."

A few days later M. de Giers again wrote to Lord Dufferin conveying the—

"Express approval by His Majesty (the Emperor) of the assurances he had given as to the non-advance of Russian troops on Merv."

A fortnight later the Emperor himself

"Was pleased to assure Lord Dufferin that there was no intention of the Russian troops advancing on Merv."

Then he came to the year 1880, when

the present First Lord of the Treasury and Lord Granville returned to Office. In 1881 was effected the final conquest of the Tekke Turcomans; the whole of the territory was annexed by Russia, and the railway was concluded to Kizil Arvat. Curiously enough, he found by a comparison of the dates that at the very moment when the Tekke Turcomans were thus conquered, and their territory annexed, the First Lord of the Treasury, his Indian Secretary, and his Viceroy were engaged in destroying the last remnant of the railway between Quetta and Sibi, and offering the rails for sale in the Indian markets as old iron. Then they came, in 1881, to the communication from Baron Jomini to Mr. Wyndham, British Chargé d'Affaires, when the question of the boundary of Afghanistan was raised. Baron Jomini said—

"That their furthest point now was Askabad, but that General Skobeleff had discovered some very fertile country further south, where a complete state of disorder existed; that there was Sarakhs also to be considered; that it was not Persian, and it would be necessary to establish some form of government there as elsewhere."

What was the nature of the position at that moment? It was entirely changed from the position of affairs in 1869 and in 1873, when the Duke of Argyll, and even Mr. Disraeli himself, said that he had no objection to Russia advancing to a given point. In 1881 they had a greatly increased knowledge of the designs of Russia; they were aware of General Skobeleff's plans; they had in their hands the compromising correspondence of Russia with Cabul; and they had also a distinct movement forward on her part towards Afghanistan. Well, in 1882, Lord Granville wrote to Sir Edward Thornton—

"The friendly relations between England and Russia had rarely, if ever, been on a better footing;"

and he suggested

"an agreement between England and Russia and Persia for the settlement of frontier now undefined."

But the Russian Government by that time took a very fair estimate of the British Foreign Secretary, and did not make the smallest attempt to conceal their contempt for any suggestion that he made. Count Lobanoff intimated, in reply, that the boundary between Russia and Persia was a question between those two States, and that England had no right to interfere. He also subsequently intimated that he was instructed to say his Government acknowledged the continued validity of the agreement between Prince Gortchakoff and Lord Clarendon, by which Afghanistan was admitted to be beyond the sphere of Russian interference. There was some laughter on the part of the Home Secretary when he (Lord Randolph Churchill) attached some importance to that agreement between Prince Gortchakoff and Lord Clarendon; yet the Russian Government acknowledged its validity only two years ago. [Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Hear, hear!] But they were breaking it now. If the Home Secretary would allow him to hand to him across the House the despatch in which that agreement was set forth with the boundaries of Afghanistan he would find that the Russian Army had long ago passed those boundaries. He challenged any Minister to deny it. Lord Kimberley himself had admitted it in the House of Lords. He said, then, that they were attempting to negotiate now with a Government which deliberately violated the agreement into which it had entered and the continued validity of which it acknowledged in 1882. The Home Secretary would perhaps take part in that debate, and he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would attempt to sustain his view by argument. Lord Granville and the Secretary of State for War had an interview with the Russian Ambassador in March, 1882, and being together he supposed that they became courageous, because they insisted on the right of England to have a voice in the determination of the boundaries of Persia; and the Ambassador replied that that matter concerned Russia and Persia exclusively. Lord Granville again collapsed and wrote a despatch, in which he said he saw no objection to the matter being settled between Russia and Persia. That was in March, 1882; and then the news reached England that on October 28, 1881, the Russian Colonel had concluded a Convention with the Elders of Merv preparatory to their submission to Russia, although, on the 18th of June, 1881, M. de Giers and Baron Jomini had stated to Mr. Wyndham that "there was no question of negotiating a Treaty with the Merv Turcomans." On Feb. 15,

1884, Sir Edward Thornton telegraphed from St. Petersburg in the following terms:—

"His Imperial Majesty has determined to accept the allegiance of the Merv Turcomans and to send an officer to administer the Government of that region."

There all their official information ended. And what was the nature of that information? It was a series of pledges voluntarily given, and deliberately broken, a long and uninterrupted tissue of treachery, fraud, and falsehood. Now came the question of the Boundary Commission. The Prime Minister said that he thought that it was first of all suggested by Russia. All they knew was that it was arranged between the two Governments that a Boundary Commission should meet on the spot; that we were to send our Commissioner, and the Russian Government were to send theirs; and they knew that Sir Peter Lumsden went hoping to meet the Russian Commissioner, and found no Russian Commissioner, but found a hostile Russian Army advancing with drums beating from Sarakhs. Sarakhs, Pul-i-Khisti, and Penjdeh had all been rapidly occupied, and Herat now at any moment was admittedly within the grasp of the Russian Army. All these proceedings which he had endeavoured rapidly to summarize to the House had occupied a period of 20 years—from 1865 to 1885—during eight of which the Conservatives had been in Office, and during 12 of which the Party of the right hon. Gentleman opposite had been in Office. But, curiously enough, the chief and worst features of all these Russian advances had taken place under the Administration of the First Lord of the Treasury and Lord Granville. It was important, therefore, to recall the recorded views of the First Lord of the Treasury as to the Russian advances. All these things were being negotiated upon now by Her Majesty's Government; they were called upon to place an immense Vote of Confidence in Her Majesty's Government, and, therefore, he would say that before they hastily and rashly gave that Vote of Confidence it was not without importance to recall the views of the First Lord of the Treasury himself. It was supposed that at one time the First Lord of the Treasury attached a great deal of importance to the Komaroff incident. He had grave doubts as to the genuineness of that opinion of the First Lord of the Treasury, because he remembered another similar incident that took place in the Khivan campaign of 1873—an incident similarly in the nature of an unprovoked aggression, but widely different in its far greater ferocity, cruelty, and treachery. It had been a terrible incident — one of the most awful things, perhaps, that had ever stained the history of conquest by any State—the extermination of the tribes of the Tekke Turcomans by General Kaufman, after Khiva had fallen. Curiously enough, the First Lord of the the Treasury had written an elaborate article containing a most ingenious and powerful defence of that proceeding. It had appeared in *The Contemporary Review* in 1876. In that article of the First Lord of the Treasury there was one opinion with regard to Russia and Asia—and he attached great importance to it, because it was in writing and was undoubtedly within the knowledge of Russia and her Ministers—in which the Prime Minister had said—

"I know of no reason why Afghanistan and Herat should not for an indefinite time separate Russia from Indian Asia; no reason for imputing to Russia an ambition of aggressiveness which, in my opinion, is not less absurd than guilty; no reason for believing, but every reason for disbelieving, that if that odious imputation is to be made and also to be verified, and if a military contest were to arise, her means of conducting it are either superior or even equal to our own."

Now to come to the year 1880, when the First Lord of the Treasury, as the Leader of the Liberal Party, had gone down to contest Mid Lothian. He found that the Prime Minister's opinion in 1880 as to the Russian advance was to this effect. Speaking at West Calder, he had said—

"I have no fear myself of the territorial extensions of Russia in Asia, no fear of them whatever. I think the fears are no better than old woman's fears."

The old woman alluded to had been Lord Grey; at least, it had been supposed so at the time. In the fifth Mid Lothian speech, a few days later, the First Lord of the Treasury described one of the causes of the Afghan War as—

"Absurd jealousies of your own with respect to schemes from Russia which are impossible and impracticable."

Perhaps the Prime Minister or some Member of the Government would ex-

plain, if that were his opinion in 1880, why the House of Commons was now asked for £11,000,000 to defend the interests of India against schemes which were "impossible and impracticable?" That had been in 1880, and undoubtedly their knowledge had increased. Between 1880 and 1884 they might think that the First Lord of the Treasury would have altered his opinion; but no; his last recorded opinion was to be found in his second progress in Mid Lothian last year. In his second speech, again, alluding to the late Afghan War, the Prime Minister talked about it having been caused by—

"That supposed ambition of Russia about which your susceptibilities are sometimes acted upon."

Would the First Lord of the Treasury say, if that were his opinion in 1884, whether the Vote of £11,000,000 was an attempt to practise upon the susceptibilities of the unfortunate Radical Party opposite? He wanted to know how, in the face of all that historical description of the advances of Russia, and the recorded opinion of the highest authorities, the Government and the First Lord of the Treasury had the face to ask the House for £11,000,000, without vouchsafing to Parliament the slightest information; but, more than that, how the First Lord of the Treasury had the courage to lay down the opinion that the Vote of Credit, under all these circumstances, was not a moment for bringing the Government to book? He thought he had shown reasons why the House of Commons should place no confidence in any declaration that had been made by the Imperial Government of Russia, and why he thought Parliament could place no real confidence in the Advisers of the Crown. But when they remembered other incidents—the famous declaration in the Speech from the Throne that the Government would maintain the authority of the Crown in South Africa, and that that authority had not been maintained; the declaration that the Government would rescue General Gordon, and that General Gordon had not been rescued; the declaration only a few months ago that Her Majesty's Government intended to smash the power of the Mahdi, and that that power had not been smashed, and was not to be smashed; the disgraceful and degrading incident of how Her Majesty's Government had led that poor little protected Government of Egypt into a horrible muddle, and had forced that poor little Government to wallow in the gutter before France, and had gladly associated themselves in that act of humility—when they remembered all this in connection with the incidents specially connected with the Russian advances, it was impossible for them to repose the slightest confidence in Her Majesty's Government. The hon. Member for Northampton and others might perhaps say to him—"Why are you dragging up all these questions? You want to inflame the situation—["Hear, hear!"]—you want war; you belong to the War Party." ["Hear, hear!"] He was sure that those cheers would come. All that he could say was that such an accusation would be a very wrong one, a very foolish one, and a very superficial one. His object in recalling all this to the notice of the House of Commons—an object which he had had before he came down to the House, and which had since been greatly strengthened—had been to show the impossibility—the hopeless impossibility—of providing for the security of India by any agreement with Russia. They might make any agreement with Russia that they chose; but the security of India must be sought for by other methods and other ways. Those methods and those ways did not necessarily include war. As a general rule, war was a pastime of fools who had nothing better to do; but actual war was rarely contemplated, much less resorted to, by persons of intelligence, experience, and seriousness. But as to the security of India, he would indicate only a few of the methods by which it could be provided for. It could be provided for, in the first place, either by the improvement and perfection of our Frontier, by the negotiation of powerful alliances, and by the tightening of the bonds of union and of common action between England and her Dependencies, or it might be provided by the concentration of inexhaustible and irresistible defensive resources. There were many other methods; but what he feared was this—that these methods would all be neglected and postponed in the extravagant—perhaps purposely extravagant—attention which was being given to a little sandy strip of desert and the paltry skirmish between two

barbarian Chiefs. If these were neglected or postponed, he knew that great and incalculable damage would accrue to the Empire. In the last speech he ever made the late Lord Beaconsfield said that the key of India was London—that it lay in the resources of the English people. In one sense Lord Beaconsfield was wrong, or it might be that he was only half right. He agreed that the key of India was not at Herat nor at Penjdeh, or in the hands of General Komaroff or of Sir Peter Lumsden; but it was not altogether London in the sense Lord Beaconsfield supposed. The key of India was in that House—on the Treasury Bench—in the hands of those right hon. Gentlemen upon whose decision it would depend whether the key should be turned and the lock opened, or whether the door should be for ever bolted and barred. He should be glad if he might make one short concluding observation with regard to India itself, which was so closely and so inseparably, and he might say so anciently, connected with the events now under the consideration of Parliament. It was very bad form, indeed, for any man to go to a country, pass a certain time there, and then come forward and think he was empowered and entitled to prophesy or lay down the law in any way about the condition of affairs in that country. He had made a careful effort to avoid any imputation of that kind; but, at the same time, he might say that he did not think it possible for any human being of ordinary intelligence to go to India under the extraordinary advantages which it was his high good fortune, for some reason or other, he did not know what, to enjoy, and to be brought into contact with all the great personages of the land, Native and European, and to hear what they had to say, without arriving at some fairly accurate general conclusion, some fairly reliable estimate, as to the British position in India. Well, that being so, if he might put the case with these qualifications, he would say that he doubted whether it was possible for anyone who had not visited India, even Members of Her Majesty's Government, to realize how incredibly strong, and, at the same time, how incredibly slender, our position in India was. It was strong far beyond ordinary human strength so long as we showed ourselves capable of ruling; but it was weaker than the weakest the moment we showed the faintest indications of relaxing our grasp. It was his good fortune to hear from an Indian official one of the finest descriptions of the Mutiny he had ever heard. He was told how the Government, which appeared so strong, so durable, so splendid, so elaborate, and so terrible, was in the space of 24 hours rolled and crumpled up like a scroll of paper, so completely did it disappear that no man might know that any Government had ever existed there before. [*Cries of* "No!"] That was the description given him by one of the highest officials in the North-West Provinces of the state of that part of India. ["Oh, oh!"] Would the right hon. Gentleman who derided him——

MR. GLADSTONE: I said nothing.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he was alluding to the Secretary of State for the Home Department. Would he deride him when he told him that the gentleman to whom he referred was no less a person than Sir Alfred Lyall? As we were then so we were now. Our Government in India was still a most magnificent machine; but it lived on nothing but character and credit. In addition to that, there were many difficulties and dangers in the way of India. He did not know whether Her Majesty's Government was aware of it, but discontent of a most serious kind existed in the Indian Army owing to the pay, and, in a great measure, to the impossibility of Native soldiers rising to any rank above that of a subaltern officer. In the second place, many of the Indian Princes had great grievances against the Calcutta Government, some of them legitimate, and more or less well-founded. All had gone on for a long time neglected by the Government. Then there was an extraordinary political movement going on all through India, a movement which was copying with wonderful fidelity the most perfect forms of organization such as were dear to the minds of hon. Gentlemen opposite, and which had for its object the acquisition by Natives of a much larger share in the Government. That was one of the new difficulties which they were bound to contend against. There was also an extraordinary movement of the masses of India to and fro all over India. It was an extraordinary migration of hundreds of thousands conveyed by railway

from one part to another, producing what we had never before had to deal with in India—a novel and formidable solidarity and unanimity in Native thought and action. In addition to that was the Native Indian Press, conducted every day with more ability, knowledge, and discretion, increasing in circulation, owing to the very system of education provided, but which would by no means conceal the knowledge of facts which the more obedient English Press would suppress. Those were among the dangers to which our rule was exposed in India. He believed that every one of them might be successfully met if we emerged from the present crisis with an increased sense of security and with credit undiminished; but he felt sure that all these difficulties and problems would assume gigantic proportions and become insoluble and unmanageable if the result of these negotiations with Russia terminated in humiliation for England and in diminished security in India. He knew perfectly well how very powerless one Member of Parliament was against a great Government; and he knew well how powerless, even from numerical weakness, was the action of a united Party. That being so, it was not his intention to make even an appeal, for he was too weak; but he would make a supplication, couched, if they wished it, in any terms, however humble, which their dignity demanded, because he felt earnestly upon it. He implored Her Majesty's Government in dealing with this crisis, if it were not too late, which he feared it was—this crisis which, he believed, if wisely and properly treated, might turn out one of those great opportunities which occurred rarely in the life of a nation—he implored them in dealing with this crisis to allow two thoughts chiefly to prevail. In the first place, to keep a vivid memory for the past perfidy of Russia and a clear and unclouded view of her present attitude and position; and, on the other hand, to think only of the interests of our Indian people and of the immeasurable duty which we owed to them. If these thoughts only were to animate their minds and guide their actions, he believed that even Her Majesty's Government at that hour, late though it was, might effectually protect and preserve the honour and dignity of the Empire.

MR. LABOUCHERE, in moving to reduce the Vote by the sum of £4,000,000, said, he could not help sympathizing with hon. Gentlemen opposite, who were led to think last Monday that the Premier was going to begin a policy of adventure, but who now found that peace was practically assured, and who thereupon assailed the right hon. Gentleman with a number of questions which, in reality, were a protest against peace. It seemed to him that the noble Lord was angry both with Conservative and Liberal Governments, because they had not made war with Russia whenever Russia made the slightest approach within thousands of miles of India. Certainly the noble Lord had not by his speech done anything to further good feeling between Russia and this country by speaking of Russia's treachery, fraud, and falsehood. For his own part, he rejoiced greatly that the war cloud had been dissipated, and he was never more satisfied than when he heard the observations which fell from the Prime Minister. At the same time he had hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would conclude his statement with an intimation that the whole of this Vote would not be required. It was because the right hon. Gentleman had not done so that he proposed his Amendment. The right hon. Gentleman, in his speech on Monday last, said that it was not in accordance with precedent that a Vote of this nature should be discussed, and he quoted three cases. The first was the China War; but we were actually engaged in war with China. The next case was that of 1870; but then there was no question of our going to war. The third case was that of 1878; and here he did not think the Prime Minister proved his point. In 1878 they were engaged in negotiations with Russia, and there was a certain tension in their relations. That was precisely the case now. If the Prime Minister was justified in opposing the Vote in 1878, they were equally justified in opposing the Vote on this occasion. He thought it would be far better to put this money to objects—such as the building of ironclads and the strengthening of coaling stations—which would be of permanent advantage to the country. What, he asked, was at the bottom of this dispute? It was their old friend "the road to India." They had always been in a

state of semi-craze with regard to the Russian advance on India. This led them into the Crimean War, and this it was that led Lord Beaconsfield to spend large sums of money in 1878, and this was at the bottom of their whole Egyptian policy. In India it was the same. It was often said that if you wanted to avoid war you must prepare for war. That was true as a general proposition; but it did not appear to be absolutely true in regard to negotiations. If the object to be sought was not of sufficient importance to justify a war being waged for it, then a Vote of Credit for military preparations was not necessary. He was not going into the present dispute. It was to be referred to arbitration. The noble Lord had used very strong language. He said it was a base and cowardly surrender on the part of this country. Why the reference of the matter to arbitration should be a base and cowardly surrender he could not see. He had all along considered the matter mere border fray. We had not sufficient facts to come to a proper conclusion, and he felt it would be monstrous to go to war in such a case. He did not care sixpence whether the arbitrator decided in favour of this country or of Russia, so long as the matter was fairly decided. Hon. Gentlemen opposite seemed to be exceedingly indignant that the delimitation of the Frontier was to take place in London instead of on the spot; but what did it matter so long as the dispute was finally settled? It did not signify, so far as India was concerned, whether the debatable land belonged to Russia or Afghanistan. Nor did he think it mattered much whether Herat belonged to Russia or Afghanistan. The late Government proposed to give up Herat to Persia, and in the Guarantee to the Afghans to protect their territory Herat was specially excepted, as it did not belong to the Afghans. It ought to be distinctly understood that though we had given a pledge to Afghanistan that pledge was not reciprocal; and, as far as could be learnt, the Afghans were not prepared to allow our troops to occupy their country even in the event of war. The Ameer had accepted our pledges and our money; but he was quite unable to control his own subjects. As to the Afghans, they were utterly untrustworthy. Sir Lepel Griffin, who knew them well, said he had met only two Afghans in his life whom he could trust, and they probably deceived him. It would be far better for them to stand on their own Frontier. The military men of India were of opinion that a sounder and safer boundary they could not have than at the Bolan Pass; and he should like to ask what possible chance the Russians would have if they defended that Pass? He, therefore, hoped that the Government would take this opportunity of reviewing the whole position of the Afghan Frontier, and arriving at a clear and specific understanding as to what that Frontier was, and of withdrawing from those pledges to the Afghans which could give this country no possible strength. It was said that Herat was the key of India; but, in his opinion, it would be better if we were to place it out of our consideration altogether, and to do our best to preserve our own Frontier. The Ameer was not a very warm friend of ours. The Afghans themselves would oppose resistance either to us or to any other Power that attacked them. What they desired was that they should occupy an honourable position of independence between the two Powers of England and Russia. They did not wish to be in any way mixed up in our quarrels, and so long as neither of us interfered with them they would be perfectly satisfied with the friendship of both Powers. We had pursued an alternative policy of fighting them and giving them money without obtaining their friendship. He would be inclined to let the Afghans negotiate as much as they pleased with Russia and to take as much of their money as they could get, because he was certain that they would be no more friendly with Russia than they were with us. The noble Lord had talked a great deal about the loss we should sustain in the public estimation of India if we were to allow Russia to take possession of Herat.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL remarked that he had said nothing of the kind.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, that he thought he had heard the noble Lord talk about the cession of Herat resounding through the bazaars of India. In his opinion, however, the Indian people looked to their own self-interest, and probably out of the 250,000,000 in

India not 5,000 cared one straw whether we were in or out of Herat. Sir John Lawrence had expressed an opinion that our proper course was not to advance our troops beyond our present Indian Frontier, but to put our house in order by giving the people of India the best government in our power and by consolidating our resources. In discussing this matter we should not lose sight of what would be the interests of India. Sir Peter Lumsden had stated that if we were to occupy Herat it would cost India £3,500,000 a-year, which would alienate them from our rule, and do infinitely more harm to that rule than the Russians could possibly do in the vicinity of Herat. He thought the noble Lord and his Friends would find that the country was with the Prime Minister in his anxious desire for peace. Of course, in London drawing rooms and London music halls there might be shouts for war; but that was not the opinion of the operatives all over the country, who knew that the money for war, thrown in the first instance upon incomes or what they liked, came eventually out of their pockets. The operative classes would be as patriotic as any in the defence of their country; but they could not understand a war for a few acres of steppe, or because there was a party border raid between Afghans and Cossacks; nor could they understand how, after spending £20,000,000 to fight the Afghans, we should spend £100,000,000 more to fight for them. He was at a meeting in the East End the other day. He took the chair, and spoke in favour of the candidature of Mr. Howell, a labour candidate. It was a large meeting, and the room was filled by intelligent operatives, and when the speakers protested against the war every single man in the room was with them. The noble Lord would find that was the view which the operatives throughout the country would take of the question. In proposing to reduce the Vote he did not wish to reduce the £4,500,000 for service in the Soudan, because, as it was to be used mainly for the purpose of getting the troops out of that country, it could not be better employed; neither did he desire to oppose the £2,500,000 for naval preparations, as he thought it very possible that their Navy might require to be strengthened; but he should move to reduce it by the £4,000,000 which it was proposed to spend upon military objects for the purposes of a war with Russia. He did not know how many hon. Members would vote for his proposal; but at all events he intended to take the sense of the House upon the point. Believing as he did that the Afghan dispute was not worth a war, whether they came to an arrangement or not, he thought he was only logical in moving that the Vote be reduced by the sum of £4,000,000.

Amendment proposed, to leave out "£11,000,000," in order to insert "£7,000,000," — (*Mr. Labouchere,*) — instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That £11,000,000 stand part of the proposed Resolution."

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he thought the House could not fail to have been struck with the extraordinary contrast between the two speeches which had just been delivered. The speech of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) was couched in tones of extraordinary levity, while the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), on the other hand, spoke with a sense of deep responsibility. No one could listen to the speeches of the noble Lord, since his return from India, without feeling how deeply he had been impressed with the responsibilities we were under to that country. The noble Lord had not urged that we ought to go to war with Russia or should occupy Herat; but he said that, in the present circumstances in which we found ourselves, we must not be satisfied solely by making emotional speeches. What we ought to do in this matter was to pursue a firm and consistent policy. The House had felt very deeply the absence of information with regard to this Afghan question. He regretted very much that the Government had not thought fit to give the House earlier information with regard to the course they were pursuing. He greatly doubted the wisdom of the course which the Government had adopted in withholding that information. It would have been far wiser in their own interests for the Government to have taken the country into their confidence. He did not mean that the Government ought to have informed the House day by day of every step in the negotiations they were carrying on with

Russia; but, at all events, they should have confided to the House the general aim and object of their policy. The people of this country had known that the English Government had addressed to the Government of Russia a demand for the withdrawal of the Russian troops from the debatable territory, and they had heard with some astonishment that that demand had been allowed to lapse. They had seen the advance of the Russian troops from position to position, until they had occupied nearly every inch of the debatable ground; then they had seen a Commission, originally proposed by Russia and accepted by this country, sent out for the purpose of delimiting the Frontier between Russia and Afghanistan; they had seen that Commission allowed to spend five months in absolute idleness; and they had seen that, whereas our Government, in the first instance, insisted that this question must be settled on the Frontier itself, now, after all, practical questions arising out of the delimitation of the Afghan Frontier were about to be settled in London. He did not think that this country could afford to allow this Commission to kick its heels in Afghanistan any longer, and to go on awaiting the good pleasure of the Russian Government, or to be made simply the instrument for registering a foregone conclusion. The speech of the Prime Minister last week hardly touched at all on questions of permanent interest affecting the security of the Frontier of the North-West of India. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that the main subject was the incident at Penjdeh. Still, although that was undoubtedly important, it was only an incident in the great question at issue between England and Russia. Referring to that incident, the right hon. Gentleman spoke, as it seemed to him at the time, in a tone worthy of the occasion. He was, therefore, surprised to find that a week afterwards the right hon. Gentleman came down to the House to announce that that matter was to be brushed on one side by being submitted to arbitration. They were told, forsooth, that one of the conditions attending upon arbitration was that gallant officers on either side were not to be put upon their trial. That was a concession to Sir Peter Lumsden—a man who in most difficult circumstances had endeavoured to do his duty, and who had the entire confidence of the country. But the right hon. Gentleman had made it exceedingly difficult for anybody to understand what it was that was to be referred to arbitration. He had not told them how the arbitration was to be enforced. Supposing that the friendly Power decided in our favour, the right hon. Gentleman had not told them how the award was to be enforced. Supposing that the friendly Power decided that the Russian Government had broken the agreement, fought the Afghans, killed several hundreds of them, invaded the debatable territory, and advanced on country which was Afghan territory, how was reparation going to be made? As far as the Prime Minister had put the facts before the House, they had an indefinite reference, and would have a practically useless award. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) told them that he did not care which way the arbitration went, and he did not think it mattered much. Arbitration was being used to get rid of the question altogether; but what would be the effect in India and in Central Asia when it became known how utterly useless had been the solemn demand made by us for reparation?

MR. GLADSTONE: I did not say there was a demand for reparation.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he understood that a communication had been addressed to the Russian Government with respect to the Penjdeh incident, expressing to them our belief that an act of unprovoked aggression had taken place. Certainly the Prime Minister said that in the House of Commons, and he presumed that the right hon. Gentleman had also addressed that statement to the Russian Government. Such being the case, what would be the effect upon the people of India and upon the tribes on the Afghan Frontier when they found that that demand had been practically allowed to lapse? Because this arbitration meant nothing else but that. This reference to arbitration was simply a roundabout way of getting rid of an awkward incident and other matters which remained to be adjusted between the two Governments. If a settlement were made, what security had we of a permanent character against the recurrence of these things? If the result should be merely a patched-up truce that could not last more than a few

months, it must be a preliminary to future troubles in an aggravated form. The time had come when they could no longer overlook the repeated breach of the assurances given by Russia against future advances — breaches which took place almost before the ink was dry. The truth was that the only peace which we desired to see, and which we ought now to obtain, was one possessing some elements of permanence; and such a peace could only be of a permanent character if it imposed, in a definite and distinct form before all the world, a limit to the advances of Russia. In order to attain that end he did not believe for a moment in an alternation of hot and cold fits on the part of Her Majesty's Government. He did not believe in a whining indignation against Russia one week and a complete surrender the next. The experience of the past justified not only a preparation at the present moment, but also a preparation for the future, whatever the result of this settlement might be. The constant apprehension of Russian advances was ruining the finances of India, and it would put them into a position absolutely intolerable. The only way to avert the difficulties now before us, and the only way to make a settlement of a question that was vital to India, was by adopting a firm and definite resolution, by taking upon ourselves a policy which was not for the moment, but which was destined to establish firmly the settlement of all the difficulties that now existed, and which no squeezing, no amount of diplomatic pressure, and no threats of military action could induce us to alter or destroy.

MR. ONSLOW said, he was somewhat surprised and alarmed at the statement of the Prime Minister. The question at issue was not so much one between England and Russia as between England, Afghanistan, and our subjects in India. He and others had during last Session brought the question before the House; but the Government treated it with neglect. When Sir Peter Lumsden's departure was announced to the House many Members urged that he should go on his Mission with definite views, and that it was useless to send him as Commissioner unless all the preliminaries had been arranged. The House was informed that the arrangements had been completed, and that Sir Peter Lumsden would within a reasonable time meet the Russian Envoy. They all knew how that expectation had been disappointed. The right hon. Gentleman ought to put himself in the position of the Ameer and the English Commissioner. When Russia occupied Merv the Prime Minister promised the House that if, owing to this circumstance, diplomatic action should arise the House should be informed. The Government ought seriously to have taken the question into consideration at that time, and to have come to a final arrangement with Russia. The Under Secretary for India last July expressed a hope that the Commission would begin its work in October. He thought at the time the expectation was too sanguine, and it would now seem that Russia was befooling us. Since that time they had had no information, and they had not been able to ascertain whether any written agreement existed between this country and Russia that the Russian Envoy should meet Sir Peter Lumsden. If not, Sir Peter Lumsden ought never to have been sent, and the Government ought to have seen that Russia never intended to carry out the arrangement. In 1881 the noble Lord who was then Secretary for India expressed himself thus—

"Russia knows now that the present Government holds Afghanistan to be outside the sphere of its influence."

The noble Lord also said that any interference on Russia's part with Afghanistan would mean a rupture of the friendly relations existing between England and Russia. The Government were now frittering away the words of the noble Lord, and it would seem that they were prepared to yield on all points. What would the people of India think of such a policy? What would the Ameer say? It was known that our Afghan ally had had a satisfactory interview with Lord Dufferin. He had left Lord Dufferin on the most amicable terms; but he ventured to say that if the Ameer had known that the Government had not intended to take most serious notice of the aggression on Penjdeh, he would not have left the Viceroy in the amicable spirit he had done. When the people of India became aware of the action of the Government, he believed an enormous amount of dis-

satisfaction would be created, and that, notwithstanding the great loyalty which had recently been displayed by the Rajahs and the people of India, that loyalty would now be severely tested. If we flinched in the slightest degree from any of the promises made by Lord Dufferin to the Ameer of Afghanistan, if we showed to the people of India and to the people of Afghanistan that there was some hesitation about the action we should take in support of the Ameer, our credit would be vastly shaken in that country. The advance of Russia on India had latterly come upon us with appalling rapidity. It was said many years ago that it would be impossible for Russia to reach Merv in this generation, owing to the natural obstacles which lay in her way. Not only did Lord Lawrence think so, but many other equally distinguished men. Now, however, we must accept the advance of Russia upon Merv as an accomplished fact. She had, indeed, gone a great deal further than Merv, and it was no use saying that she was to stay her advance where she was at the present time. The question was where we should draw the line; and unless we put down our foot firmly and said that no further advance would be tolerated, this country would quickly lose the affection, not only of the people of India, but of the people of Afghanistan. It had been stated that Penjdeh and the territory where Russia had established herself was not Afghan territory; but he contended that all the maps and all the intelligence they possessed on the subject led them to the conclusion that Penjdeh had always been tributary to Herat, and that Herat had formed a portion of Afghanistan for many years past. Indeed, the people of Penjdeh had been in the habit of paying tribute to the Ruler of Herat; and all those concerned in the administration of our Indian Provinces did not doubt that Penjdeh and the adjacent territory belonged to the Ameer of Afghanistan. The Prime Minister in 1880 had told the people of this country wherever he went that there was no fear of the advance of Russia. He had told the people of Mid Lothian that so long as we had the supremacy at sea there was no fear of the attacks of Russia; but did the right hon. Gentleman believe that, even if we had now that supremacy at sea to which he then referred, Russia would not be able seriously to cripple our power in Afghanistan? His own opinion was that this unfortunate incident could have been avoided if the Government had exacted from Russia pledges in black and white, and had not been content with a simple verbal arrangement before Sir Peter Lumsden went to Afghanistan. If the Government had obtained from Russia a pledge that whatever boundary was fixed she would abide by it, that would have been the best means of solving this complicated question. The Prime Minister had made many statements regarding the foreign policy of this country, and none more remarkable than those which he enunciated during the Mid Lothian campaign. In the course of that tour he said that—

"The great duty of a Government, especially in foreign affairs, was to soothe and tranquillize the minds of the people."

Did the right hon. Gentleman think that he had soothed and tranquillized the minds of the people by his policy in regard to this boundary question? Every morning the newspapers contained some startling incident, which was well calculated to upset all notions of tranquillity; and this state of things would continue to exist so long as the Prime Minister remained in power. Whatever might be the result of this affair there was one fact which would remain patent to everyone, and that was that the Government had created a permanent addition to the burden of the taxpayers of India. The whole of our military system in India would have to be re-organized. We should have to build fortresses and other appliances for the protection of the Indian Frontier; and the important public works which had been promoted by successive Viceroys would be brought to a standstill because the national defences would have become the primary consideration. The policy of the Government, for the time, at all events, had interfered for years to come with the progress of those useful public works which the Government of India had been prosecuting. The Prime Minister had been a lover of Russia in bygone years, and he had been equally prominent in his hate of Turkey. He had described Turkey as "that fabric of iniquity;" but he contended that if we were to be successful in stemming

the tide of Russian aggression in the East, it could only be done by having the Ottoman Power on our side. He hoped that this question might be settled without going to war; but he hoped that, however short-sighted and culpable had been the action of the Government, still we had not yet arrived at such a state of affairs which would justify the remarks of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock, when he said that the present proceeding of the Government would be the ruin of our Empire in India; still, if we flinched one iota from any promises made by Lord Dufferin, and if we showed that there was some hesitation about the action we should take as to our ally the Ameer, then if India was not ruined, our credit would be vastly shaken in the country, our possession of it would be imperilled, and the prestige of this Empire would be lost.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Question put.

The House *divided:* — Ayes 79; Noes 29: Majority 50.—(Div. List, No. 151.)

Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, that, before speaking upon the question which was now uppermost in the minds of hon. Gentlemen, he should like to say a few words on that portion of the Vote which related to the Soudan. It was now just 13 months since General Graham's Force achieved two striking and sanguinary victories near Suakin. After those successes, the road to Berber was fully opened, and the fate of the Soudan rested entirely in the hands of Her Majesty's Government. It only required a little courage on their part, and, perhaps, a little extra expense for transport, to secure the safety of Khartoum, the rescue of General Gordon, and to prevent those scenes of massacre and agony which had prevailed ever since. The opportunity was, however, lost. There was a little Radical agitation, Ministers' hearts failed them, and General Graham was recalled in haste, the consequence being that the Soudan then became once more the scene of rebellion and anarchy. Now, the state of affairs at the present time was much the same as existed 18 months ago. Osman Digna's tribes had again been defeated, the road to Berber was once more open, and the Government exhibited the same dangerous inclination to abandon the country which had then such melancholy results. He did not propose that the cream of the British Army should be kept in the neighbourhood of Suakin and Berber; for he believed that the whole difficulty might be overcome by having the necessary duties performed by means of Indian troops. If, however, it were thought undesirable to send out more Indian troops, they might have recourse to General Gordon's own recommendation and send out Turkish soldiers under British officers. He really could not understand how Ministers could go back on their own statements as the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for War had done. Speaking at Bath, some few months ago, the Financial Secretary to the War Office (Sir Arthur Hayter) proclaimed that the Government were determined not to rest until our standard was placed on the ramparts of Khartoum, and until Gordon was either rescued or revenged. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War, speaking only two months ago, said—

"A lesson must be taught, not only to the people of Africa, but to the whole world, that the policy of the British Empire is not to be reversed by the single act of a traitor in General Gordon's camp. . . . We owe something to the people of Egypt, for whose affairs we are responsible, and can it be supposed that so great an encouragement could be given to the forces of anarchy, which are opposed to civilization as it exists in Egypt, without inflicting a heavy blow upon all the prospects of the regeneration of that country? We owe something, not only to the people of Egypt, but also to other Powers who have interests in Egypt. We owe something to our Ally, France, which has interests in Egypt. We owe something to our Mahommedan subjects. We also owe something to our Indian Empire. What would the Mahommedans of that Empire think if they beheld the spectacle of British civilization retiring before a barbarous form of Mahommedan fanaticism? Then, we owe something to every one of our own Colonies which are brought into contact with savage races; and we owe something to every Colony in the world to which the name, the credit, and the honour of England are dear. . . . That would be. . . . a new departure and a new step of a momentous and most disgraceful character."—(3 *Hansard*, [294] 1702-3.)

After that, he (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) failed to see how Ministers could again go back upon their declarations of a determination to establish a stable Government in the Soudan, and yet still retain Office. A new departure had been taken—a step of the most momentous and disgraceful character; for the Government were reversing the policy which they announced but a short time time ago; and he was surprised that the noble Marquess could any longer retain his place among them. The policy of "scuttle" and of abandoning the Soudan to anarchy and slavery was, in the words of the noble Marquess, disgraceful to the lowest degree, most humiliating, and cruelly unjust to the people of Egypt, who were left in a state of anarchy, and liable to be severely dealt with by the Mahdi or his chief officer, Osman Digna. We owed something to the Soudan, something to Egypt, and something to the Mahommedan world; therefore we ought not to leave that country to the pandemonium we had inflicted upon it. Her Majesty's Government had spent over £20,000,000 in Egypt and the Soudan, and they had made a needless sacrifice of something like 60,000 lives. They had thrown away every British interest, and sacrificed the rights of the people of Egypt by giving them up to a Multiple Control, and now they found themselves bound to submit to such a humiliation as no Great Power had endured for many years. He could have imagined what would have happened if France had treated this country in the life of Lord Palmerston as she had treated it now. And now he would make a few observations upon a subject which was attracting universal interest at this moment. It was evident, from the statement of the Government to-night, that they had grasped at what they considered a settlement of the Afghan Question, which was extremely discreditable and humiliating to this country, and which practically meant the surrender of all that they had been contending for during the last eight months; and he should be very much surprised if it did not lead to further compromises and concessions, without even in a minor degree contributing to the security of India, which it was the evident intention of Russia to wrench from our grasp. The statement of the Prime Minister showed that the Government had decided to put up with the affront offered to the Mission of Sir Peter Lumsden, whose work had been taken from him to be carried on by the feeble Cabinet in London, who did not even know the meaning of the arrangement into which they had entered. That Mission might as well never have gone to Central Asia, because its strongest recommendations had been despised. They had been kept waiting for six months for their Russian Colleagues, and now they were told that the decision was to be taken out of their hands. He should be very much surprised if events did not show that the position of Penjdeh, which had obtained unusual importance by reason of the dispute between the two countries, was abandoned to Russia. Was there ever an instance before of a Government being unable to inform the House of the meaning which they attached to the reference to which they had agreed? By their unwillingness to submit the action of the officers to trial, they were putting Sir Peter Lumsden on the same level as General Komaroff, whose action had been described by the Prime Minister as an unprovoked aggression. The Government had not actually considered the question whether the word "Sovereign" included the President of a Republic, as well as a Sovereign in the ordinary sense. He hoped the arrangement did not mean that the railway should not be completed to Candahar. There were three points which were essential for a due understanding of our position with regard to India and the Russian advance. The first was that the Russians had made up their minds and intended to have British India, if they could get it. That had been the aim of their policy for many years. There was no other object worthy of the immense efforts they had made in Central Asia. The corrupt and aggressive Russian bureaucracy looked upon India in much the same light as Blucher did upon London when riding through the streets, he exclaimed—"Mein Gott, what a city to sack." The second point was that British India could only be safeguarded by British courage, arms, and skill, and by kindly and resolute statesmanship. British India was only to be protected by British pluck and British bayonets, and it

would be the height of folly to trust its defence on the Afghan Army. Great reliance was placed upon the friendship of Afghanistan. Its friendship was, no doubt, better than its enmity; but the Government which placed its confidence in the friendship of Afghanistan would be guilty of an act of gross folly. At any moment the Ruler might be bribed into the support of the Russian Power. The third point was, that both in a military and political point of view, it was absolutely necessary—in fact, vital—to keep the Russian Forces out of Herat, and, as far as possible, from the Indian Frontier. Placed near the Indian Frontier, Russia would be a perpetual source of annoyance and danger to India. She would be able to intrigue in India, and however well we had governed that country, there were within it ambitions and dissatisfied feelings which would afford ample scope for Russian intrigue. If we allowed Russia to obtain a secure position on the range of hills which dominated the Indus, she would be able to attack us whenever we were hampered by war. He did not say that our line of defence ought to be at a great distance from India; but he did say that we ought to prevent the Russians from obtaining Herat. Herat would be a splendid base for accumulating Russian Forces for attacking India. The Government should therefore fortify Herat in the strongest possible manner, occupy it with British Forces, and make it a strong outpost of the Indian advance. Then came the great question of the possession of Candahar. There was no doubt that Candahar should be turned into a fortress of the first class. It might be impossible just now to place an English garrison there; but, at all events, the Government were bound to complete the railway with the least possible delay, and to make such an arrangement with the Ameer that, in a few days, a large number of troops could be conveyed to Candahar. They had been told that the abandonment of that place by Her Majesty's Government secured to us the friendship of the Afghans; but it was ridiculous to suppose so, for, to his mind, it was the real cause of the present depressing war-cloud, and he would not recommend any Government to place reliance upon the friendship of the Afghans in the matter of the defence of our Indian Empire. Had Her Majesty's Government held Candahar, and completed the railway laid down by Lord Beaconsfield in the direction of that city, our position there would have been so superior that no Russian Force would have dared to approach the Frontier of Afghanistan. The abandonment of Candahar was now costing this country millions of pounds; and as years went on it would cost England and India millions and millions in ever-increasing proportion, unless we were prepared to abandon the most precious Dominions of the Crown. There was in this morning's papers a very suggestive and, to some extent, painful warning from India. They were told how the people of that country were looking with anxiety to the position of Her Majesty's Government, and how thay regarded the question of Penjdeh as a very important one, from a military point of view, for the protection of Afghanistan. In view of what had happened, the future of Penjdeh, as bearing upon the defence of India, was regarded as critical. Russia, in that part of the country, had committed a breach of faith, had invaded Afghanistan, had broken her solemn engagement of March 17, and had attacked our allies, defeated them, slaughtered them, and chased them from their possessions. All this had been done with a motive so obvious that no one but the craven occupants of the Ministerial Bench could possibly be blind to it. Russia had taken up her present position by fraud and force; and now Her Majesty's Government had meanly accepted a miserable compromise, the meaning of which they did not know themselves, or, at all events, could not put into intelligible language. Now they saw that the Power which had been advancing thousands of miles, while this country had been stationary or retreating, had gained her point, and England had given way to Russia's military power. A Russian newspaper spoke of the attack on Penjdeh as a happy accident which would neutralize the importance of the conference between our Viceroy and the Ameer, and that view would be taken by the people of India. The facts worthy of our attention were that the Russians were in positions that dominated Herat, and which would be a splendid base for an attack on India, and that the Russians had invaded Afghanistan and de-

feated our allies. For the past 20 years England had made no practical advance in Asia. Within that period Russia had pushed onwards hundreds of miles towards our Indian Frontier across the Khanates of Central Asia, and from the Caspian Sea to Herat. We now stood at the very crisis of our fate. Within the next 12 months the future of our splendid and beneficent Empire in the East would have been decided. The decision rested now with the resolution of our statesmen and the courage of our people. It was for the English nation and their Leaders now to determine whether the 250,000,000 of their fellow-subjects in India, who now enjoyed peace, security, just laws, and good government under the British flag should continue to prosper and progress, or be handed over to the blighting tyranny and extortion of the tyrant of Poland, the devastator of the Caucasus, and the butcher of the Turkomans, to the Ruler of a country which might be described as the scourge of humanity. The British interests involved in the retention of India were enormous and vital. An annual trade to the amount of over £100,000,000 depended upon it. Our whole Eastern commerce was at stake. Employment for hundreds of thousands of energetic Englishmen rested upon our Indian Empire. The cataclysm, financial and political, which the loss of India would cause to this country was too appalling for contemplation. It would involve ruin to thousands of families; it would mean the reduction of our wage-fund by at least one-fourth. That was not a prospect which Englishmen could regard with equanimity. It would be worth undertaking almost any sacrifice and any effort to safeguard our precious Indian Empire. As he had said, there was only one way in which India could be protected, and that was by British bayonets in sufficient force, backed up and directed by vigilant and resolute statesmanship. Do not let the Government be led away by the desire to patch up an arrangement, in view of a General Election, to agree to such a surrender as had been indicated that evening.

MR. TREVELYAN said, that the noble Lord who commenced the debate (Lord Randolph Churchill) in his speech protested against the Prime Minister having deprecated the Vote of Credit as being a somewhat doubtful and questionable occasion for entering upon the general policy of the Government. He (Mr. Trevelyan) was bound to say that the speech of the noble Lord, interesting though it was, did not disprove the dictum of the Prime Minister, and the speech of the hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) confirmed that dictum. If those two speeches were directed to a practical issue, their object must be opposition to the Vote of Credit; and yet, if that was the noble Lord's object, why did he lay before the House, in such stirring terms, the extraordinary danger of trusting Russia and the extremely unprincipled character of Russian proceedings? for, if all that was true, was it the object of the noble Lord to say this was not the time for asking for an exceptional Vote to strengthen the naval and military preparations of the country? If the noble Lord seriously meant that Russia was a nation with which this country ought not to treat then he (Mr. Trevelyan) deliberately took issue, and said that was not the sort of language which ought to be used. There were such adjectives as "black" and such nouns as "falsehood;" and the noble Lord talked of Russia as the enemy of our country, and of a series of pledges readily given and deliberately broken. The noble Lord used words the only result of which must be to inflame the feelings of two nations which, in the interests of this country, in the interests of Europe, and in the interest of the civilized and uncivilized world, it would only be too well if they now could meet together on honourable terms. The noble Lord entered into an account of the shortcomings of Russia; but he would only follow him in respect of the Correspondence between Prince Gortschakoff and Lord Clarendon; and he said that Correspondence contained pledges which Russia had broken by its recent conduct. The essence of the Correspondence between Lord Clarendon and Prince Gortschakoff, to which the noble Lord alluded, consisted in the general description of a Frontier by the British Government. That Frontier was undoubtedly a Frontier which, in a general way, the English and Indian Government had had in their minds for a long time, and equally certain was it that it was a frontier which the Russian Government

had in their minds in a general way. But it was also equally certain that the Russian Government had never had in their minds any accurate definition of the Frontier; and the advantage of the present situation, to be weighed against its many disadvantages, was that there was a golden opportunity of settling that question once for all, and the Frontier separating the two countries once defined would place England and Russia in such a position that neither country could, by a square yard, transgress those boundaries without committing a wrong against the other in the face of the world. If there was anyone who ought to subscribe to that doctrine of his it was the noble Lord, because the noble Lord told them he was not prepared to say that they were engaged in a worthy quarrel, if they were to fight over a few miles of barren desert, or over the question of which of two barbarian Chieftains (meaning by that the Czar of Russia or the Ameer of Afghanistan) was right in the course which his Generals had taken in an obscure affray. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), referring to the delimitation of Afghanistan, took exception to the fact of their undertaking to guarantee the whole of that country to Abdurrahman Khan. The hon. Member said that from that guarantee Herat should be specially excepted; but he (Mr. Trevelyan) maintained against the hon. Member's criticism that they were absolutely bound to guarantee Herat, just as they were bound to guarantee the rest of Afghanistan. At the moment when they entered into the guarantee, Afghanistan was, as a State, in great distress. There was a rival to the Ameer, and he was in possession of Herat; but none the less was Herat a portion of the old country, so to speak, of Afghanistan; and it was quite plain that the Ameer would have a very serious cause of complaint against them if, when his affairs were settled and he claimed the advantage of their guarantee of Afghanistan, they refused to include in it Herat. The hon. Member for Northampton spoke of the Afghans as being turbulent and unreliable; and that raised the real question of whether or not they were at that moment at issue merely as to some few miles of barren desert. He (Mr. Trevelyan) said they were at issue on a much larger question—namely, whether England and Russia in Asia were to be co-terminous, or whether they were to have another country between them. He could quite understand the argument that it might be better that the two countries should be co-terminous, putting aside the difficulties of arriving at that state of things; but if they were not to be so, and were to have another country between them, what sort of a country would they like to have? Would they like to have an unwarlike country with fertile plains—a country the diplomatically intriguing Natives of which were always anxious to be dragged in the wake of some larger Power; or would they rather have a country the Natives of which, as the hon. Member said, were turbulent and unreliable, but to be relied upon only in this—that they always hated and attacked the invader for the time being? The latter was the peculiar character of the Afghans, and that was the reason why, if they were to act, as the phrase was, as a buffer between two such Powers as England and Russia, as in the old days the high-spirited Swiss acted as a buffer between the House of Austria and the House of France—that was the reason why, in order to preserve the *status quo*, it was desirable to make such diplomatic efforts as the Government were making, and why the House should be asked to back up those efforts by rapidly passing the Vote of Credit in the confidence which he believed the House felt that it would be rightly used. The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock went into an interesting account of the advances of Russia in Central Asia; and in listening to that account he (Mr. Trevelyan) was rather anxious to know what deduction the noble Lord would draw from it. If he drew from it the deduction that the Liberal Government before the present one, that the Conservative Government which intervened, or that the Liberal Government now in power ought to have gone to war with Russia in Central Asia, or for Central Asia, he entirely differed from him. It was after the Russian advances which the noble Lord had described that Lord Salisbury made use of the memorable expression as to reading history with the help of large maps; and it was after the most important of those advances that Lord Beaconsfield, during the existence of his Ministry, said that

he was not of that school which viewed the advances of Russia in Central Asia as some people did; that Asia was large enough for the working out of the destinies both of England and of Russia; that, so far from looking with alarm upon it, he did not see why Russia should not conquer Tartary as England had conquered India, and that he only wished that the people of Tartary would gain as much advantage from being conquered by Russia as the people of India had gained from being conquered by this country. That was spoken long after the advance upon Khokhand. Those words of Lord Beaconsfield were, he believed, words of high wisdom; and if the English Government had listened to the well-meant but frightfully dangerous advice that was offered to it, the calamities in which they would have been involved would, he believed, have been far greater than any that had ever befallen the nation. The noble Lord had spoken of his visit to India and of his interest in that country. He (Mr. Trevelyan) himself boasted the same interest in India as the noble Lord felt. He hardly ever, indeed, had India out of his mind; and if they lost India he did not know that he should much care to be an Englishman. But if there was one prospect more than another that filled him with dread and horror, it would be that they should advance a British and Native Army from the Frontier of India into Turkestan, 1,200 miles; to advance it from those circumstances in which it could fight with military advantage into a country into which Russia could bring many more troops than we could do; because then, if disasters happened, a temptation might be offered to everything that was hostile to our power in India that could not be resisted, and, instead of defending India, we should run the greatest risk of losing it. The noble Lord did not approve of the manner in which the Government endeavoured to check Russia and to protect India, and the noble Lord himself mentioned three means of doing that. The first means that he named was alliances. Well, they had got the only ally who was of value on the spot. They had the alliance of Afghanistan, and he could not see that it became an hon. Member sitting on the Benches opposite to charge them with having neglected the alliance of Afghanistan, because, although he (Mr. Trevelyan) did not wish to make that a Party debate, he must remind hon. Gentlemen opposite that the principal objection entertained, rightly or wrongly, by their opponents to their policy in Afghanistan was that it alienated the Afghans as allies. The hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) talked of the fatal abandonment of Candahar; but where, he should like to know, would they be at this moment if they had not left Candahar? They would have had an immense line of communication to keep open, and they would have had on the flank of that line, constantly making irruptions against it, the most formidable guerilla enemy that they could find, he supposed, in Asia. For what was the character of guerilla forces? They might not be very formidable in pitched battles; but they were men who, after months and years of fighting, still continued carrying on warfare when their foes were tired. With regard to the Colonies, the noble Lord had said that we should conciliate them; but if he (Mr. Trevelyan) were to admit that they were guilty of all the shortcomings with which hon. Members opposite charged them, he would only exaggerate the loyalty of those Colonies who had declared that not only upon their own shores, but wherever the flag of England waved and the interests of this country were concerned, they would stand by us to the last man. The third method which the noble Lord had mentioned for defeating Russian aggression had been that we should also conciliate India. Although he had been very glad to hear those sentiments expressed by the noble Lord, he thought the picture he had given of the feeling in India was ill-timed and entirely overdrawn. He did not believe that the Indian Army or the Indian Princes were specially discontented now. On the contrary, he believed that during the last four years more had been done to conciliate Native feeling in India than had, perhaps, been done in any eight, or 10, or 12 years preceding; and if hon. Members would read the recent accounts of the loyalty of Native feeling, they would have to allow that it must be a most singular policy which, whilst unsound in itself, had produced such satisfactory results. It was all very well for the hon. Member for Eye

to speak as he had done; they knew pretty well what he meant, and they knew pretty well what the noble Lord meant; but what he wanted to know was this—what did hon. and right hon. Members opposite mean to do on this occasion? He had listened with great interest to the speech of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope), and he had been much struck by one sentence in which the hon. Member had said that the first time the British Government had shown symptoms of resolution the Russian Government had shown symptoms of concession. That he interpreted to mean that as soon as the Russian Government had seen on Monday last that this country was united, and that no Party spirit entered into their feelings on this question, that they were one nation and one Parliament, that then they had known that the time had come to make up their minds, and that there was a more satisfactory temper existing among them than some people in this country had feared. At that critical moment were hon. Gentlemen opposite now going to undo that good work? The hon. Member had said that the people of Central Asia did not understand this delay on the part of the Government. He (Mr. Trevelyan) thought that the people of Central Asia and of Central Europe too, and of all the capitals of Europe, would not understand the delay in carrying the later stages of this Vote, on which there had been so great an unanimity at an earlier stage. The hon. Member had spoken of putting gallant officers on their trial. He could not think that the hon. Member referred to Sir Peter Lumsden. Sir Peter Lumsden had not been in command of the Afghan Forces. What the hon. Member meant was, that the matter was between the two Governments, and not that it was between the servant of one Government and the servant of the other. In using those words, the hon. Member had not the slightest intention of conveying any reflection upon those officers who were at this moment with the Delimitation Commission. ["Hear, hear!"] He was glad that the hon. Member accepted that interpretation. What was the meaning of arbitration? It meant that people arbitrated instead of going to war; that arbitration stood in place of that which was litigation between nations. As to the question who was to enforce the result of this arbitration, he took it that when two nations agreed to refer a question to arbitration, it meant that they were prepared to put that in the place of a more barbarous and fierce mode of settling the difficulty. He thought that he had gone through all the practical arguments which had been brought before them that night, and he would conclude by referring to the closing words of the noble Lord and the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire. The noble Lord had said that they were to keep two things in memory; one was the previous actions and the probable policy of Russia, and the other was the welfare of India. The Government undoubtedly felt at this critical moment that in what was going on now they had to take into consideration the fact of Russia being a formidable and advancing Power in Asia; and most assuredly in what they were doing now they should be acting not only in the interests of this country, but perhaps even more—trying to do their best for India. The hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire had wound up by saying that the only way by which they could protect the interests of this great country and of India was by adopting a firm resolution and taking up a definite policy. They had been told that they had adopted a different policy in 1878. He should not make any unbecoming allusion to the policy of this country in 1878; but it must be remembered that in 1878, to a very great extent, they on that side differed from the objects of hon. Gentlemen opposite, and they had explained in their speeches at the time how they differed. But he was certain that right hon. Gentlemen opposite did not differ from the present Government in their object, which was this. There was a very grave crisis on the Indian Frontier. Two armies were close to each other. The peace of the Frontier was very seriously threatened, and if the peace of the Frontier were broken the peace of very much more than the Afghan Frontier would be in very great danger. The object of the Government was to bring that state of things to an end at the moment, and to establish there a certain defined line which neither could pass without knowing that in passing it they were doing wrong, not only in the face of his immediate neighbour, but in the eyes of the whole world. That Frontier

had not yet been defined and laid down in such a manner that it could not be mistaken; but under Providence he trusted and believed that if this nation were firm and cool and conciliatory—but not more conciliatory than it was firm—that result would be produced, and would be of the greatest benefit to India. He trusted and believed that the result of such a settlement would be in every way satisfactory.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, that the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Trevelyan) had congratulated himself on having replied to all the arguments advanced from the other side of the House, either by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), or by the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope). He (Mr. A. J. Balfour) did not think that those who had been in the House during those speeches would join the right hon. Gentleman in his congratulations. The right hon. Gentleman had dilated upon the weakness of the noble Lord's military strategy; whereas the noble Lord had not said a word with respect to military matters. The right hon. Gentleman had said that he would not follow the noble Lord through his account of the Russian advances for the last 25 years, with one exception—namely, the arrangement between Prince Gortschakoff and Lord Granville in 1873—and the right hon. Gentleman had actually asked the House to believe that the arrangement then come to as to the borders of Afghanistan was not a definite one; but if the right hon. Gentleman took the trouble to refer to Lord Granville's letter, he would see that Lord Granville had in the most elaborate manner fixed the Frontier. The right hon. Gentleman had dilated upon the merits of Afghanistan as a most important buffer between England and Russia, and had compared its position to that which Switzerland once occupied between France and Austria. But he appeared to forget that Switzerland was an independent State in which neither France nor Austria had any rights of interference, or any share in the direction of its foreign policy. But was that the position which the right hon. Gentleman wanted Afghanistan to occupy between England and Russia? Did he desire that England should have no more rights in directing the foreign policy of Afghanistan than Russia? If that were his desire, he could only say two things—firstly, that he had abandoned absolutely the position taken up by every other Government on this question, whether Liberal or Conservative; and, secondly, that such an Afghanistan, so far from being a buffer between England and Russia, would be a standing menace to our Indian Provinces. The right hon. Gentleman had informed them that a war with Russia in Asia could scarcely be successfully conducted, so that it appeared that they were to understand that his Government were coming down to the House and asking them to entrust them with £11,000,000, telling them at the same time that, if those £11,000,000 were to be used for war, that war must end in disaster. Of that sum they were now asked to vote together about £6,500,000 for war preparations and £4,500,000 for the Soudan. Those £4,500,000 were absolutely wasted; not a single result of any sort or kind or description would remain from that part of the expenditure, except the butchery of a certain number of Arabs and the loss of a certain number of English lives. However ready they might be to grant the money for war preparations without objections, it was impossible to allow Supplies for the Soudan to be taken without severe criticism. He should, therefore, have thought that it would have been to the interest of Her Majesty's Government to do what the Conservative Party asked them to do, and divide the Vote into two, for they must be aware that if they lumped together Supplies demanded for such very different objects they would inevitably force upon the world the conviction that in the policy which this money was to further the Government were not supported by a unanimous Parliament. He trusted that these negotiations and this expenditure would end in a settled and durable peace — a peace settled on such terms that it would not be in the power of any unscrupulous Russian Government, if unscrupulous Russian Governments existed, or any undisciplined and disobedient Russian Commanders, if such existed, to disturb, when it suited them, the tranquillity of India and of Europe, and compel whatever Government might be in power to come down to the House of Commons and ask this country suddenly to impose great sacrifices upon itself. That

was the kind of peace which they asked to be established; and he wanted to know whether the peace, the outlines of which had been sketched out to them by the Government, was or was not likely to be a peace of that kind? He had no desire to say hard words about Russia. It might be all his noble Friend (Lord Randolph Churchill) had said it was, or, on the other hand, it might be all the Prime Minister had said it was in 1876. Whether Russia were honest or dishonest, the fact came out clearly and obviously that, whatever the motive or the cause might be, there was no more certain sign of an approaching Russian advance than a formal announcement by the Russian Government that no advance was intended. There was a curious correspondence between the policy of England and the policy of Russia; they appeared exactly to fit in with one another; because, whereas the plan of the Russian Government was always to make a declaration which they proceeded to break, the plan of the English Government was to make a demand which they proceeded to withdraw. The permanent peace which those on his side of the House desired must be made more difficult by anything in the nature of a surrender. Whether the battle-ground that now presented itself was a good one or not, it was the one deliberately chosen by the Government, and it was to that battle-ground the Indians would look; and if the Government now made any settlement which resulted in any district which they claimed as belonging to Afghanistan being given up to Russia, they would undoubtedly suffer in the eyes of all India, of all Afghanistan, and of all Europe for the loss of prestige which followed a great diplomatic defeat. He feared that, in the announcement made with respect to Russia and Afghanistan, the Government had added, or were about to add, one more to the many dishonourable retreats which they had forced upon the country during the past few years. Cheap dishonour might be tolerable; but he could not believe that the country would find tolerable a dishonour which cost £11,000,000. The right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down reproached the Opposition for their action that night; because, he said, it destroyed that appearance of unanimity which the action of the preceding Monday had produced. In defending the honour of the country he (Mr. A. J. Balfour) believed they would be one House and one nation; and if that night were a contrast to the last occasion on which the Vote was discussed, it was because, on the last occasion, they thought the Government had, for once, adopted a dignified and decided policy, and were about, for once, to shake themselves free from their old habits and inveterate traditions. If that night they were bound to divide the House it was because the results of the cross-examination to which Ministers were subjected at Question time was such as to convince them that in those expectations they had been deceived, and that they could no longer entrust to the occupants of the Treasury Bench the honour of this country or the safety of the Indian Empire.

MR. GLADSTONE: The evening is now fast advancing, and I think it may be for the convenience of the House that we should know what is to be the end and what is to be the upshot of this debate here. No declaration has been made of opposition to the Vote that is before us; at the same time, nothing has been said which would justify me in concluding that there should be no such opposition. The debate has been one of a somewhat unusual character, not sought by us—I may say not expected by us. The time for debating a subject of this kind, the time for bringing to trial the conduct of the Government—if so much as a show of impartiality is to be preserved—is when the information bearing upon the case is before the House. But Gentlemen like my hon. Friend who has just sat down (Mr. A. J. Balfour) feel no difficulties whatever from the absence of information. Their course is so easy in alleging that upon every occasion the Government has been wrong, and that upon this occasion it is wrong again, that, of course, to persons whose mental proclivities are thus directed, and who can arrive at their conclusions and give their verdict without the evidence, there is an immense satisfaction in getting rid of all the difficulties which the examination of the evidence involves in being free from all the responsibilities under which Ministers lie, and in having one planned formula, described by the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, of universal condemnation of what has

been done by the Government. The hon. Gentleman differs entirely from the estimate which I certainly had formed of the speech of my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan). For my own part, I am perfectly satisfied with the manner in which my right hon. Friend answered the arguments of the noble Lord opposite (Lord Randolph Churchill) and the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope). The angry attempt which the hon. Member who has just sat down has made to impeach the sufficiency of that speech of my right hon. Friend has totally failed, because the only point he made was to ascribe to my right hon. Friend an argument which he had never used. The hon. Member said that my right hon. Friend's contention was this—that whatever diplomatic agreements were forced upon us by Russia we must accept; and why? Because he said my right hon. Friend had stated that to march an English Army 500 or 600 miles beyond the Indian Frontier would be disastrous. My right hon. Friend nowhere said that the British means of action were confined to a mode of proceeding so extreme, and he did not give the smallest colour to the argument imputed to him by the hon. Member. Why does the hon. Member say that the Government have abandoned the grounds upon which they were proceeding on Monday last, when he says, by a wonderful exercise of charity, he did stretch his understanding to the belief that for once we might have been right? It is not for me to enter upon that question, because I should be doing wrong if I attempted to make a mere verbal explanation pass current in this House as a sufficient ground for our action. For the present I will only say that there is not the smallest evidence, either in the possession of the hon. Gentleman or of the House, of our having altered our minds in one single particular since the Government, in my unworthy person, addressed the House on Monday last, when the hon. Gentleman says he believed that for once we might have been right. I hope we are still in a position to deserve the approval of the hon. Gentleman. The hon. Gentleman says that what he wants is to have a final and permanent peace, and he is not prepared to be content with us unless we give him a final and permanent peace. Those are rather hard terms. I never heard, in politics, any mode by which, when a diplomatic difference arises, it is possible absolutely to guarantee permanent peace, except when one of the Parties is strong enough not only to subdue, but to annihilate the other. What he may fairly expect from the Government, and what I think the Government have laboured for, and not without effect, is that we should adopt the best means which, humanly speaking, are in the power of statesmen to adopt towards the establishment of a final and permanent peace. What are we doing? We are endeavouring to obtain, and I trust we shall obtain—although I do not think that the speeches of the hon. Gentleman opposite and of those who sit near him will help us much to obtain—I trust we shall, notwithstanding those speeches, obtain the delimitation of an understood and definite Frontier. The hon. Gentleman says that there is a Frontier already. There is no Frontier definite in this sense — in the only sense worth having — namely, that it has been traced out upon the ground, so that consequently you are in a condition to say—"By passing beyond that Frontier you have broken the convenant." It is perfectly true that in a despatch of my noble Friend (Earl Granville), dated some considerable time back, certain Provinces are mentioned, which Provinces are assigned territorially to a particular jurisdiction. But those Provinces in Central Asia, what are they? Why, Sir, the Central part of Asia, not more than one generation ago, was totally unknown to the mass of mankind, and even to geographers; and even now, when we speak of Provinces in Central Asia, we do not speak of them as we would of any country in Europe, or even Provinces in India. You must have absolute delimitation.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: There is in the despatch of Lord Granville absolute delimitation.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I entirely join issue with the hon. Gentleman. Where are the terms?

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: If the right hon. Gentleman will permit me I will read them. I can only do it by the courtesy of the right hon. Gentleman. There is the absolute delimitation of the Frontier of Afghanistan which I did not like to trouble the House with

this afternoon. There are four paragraphs in the despatch of Earl Granville to Lord Augustus Loftus.

MR. GLADSTONE: What is the date?

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: The date is October 17th, 1872. That despatch states—

"For your Excellency's more complete information I state the territories and boundaries which Her Majesty's Government consider as fully belonging to the Ameer of Cabul, viz.:—(1.) Badakshan, with its independent district Wakhan, from the Sarikal (Woods Lake) on the east to the junction of the Kokcha river with the Oxus (or Penjdeh), forming the northern boundary of this Afghan province throughout its entire extent. (2.) Afghan Turkestan, comprising the districts of Kunduz, Khulm, and Balkh, the northern boundary of which would be the line of the Oxus from the junction of the Kokcha river to the post of the Khojah Saleh, inclusive, on the high road from Bokhara to Balkh. Nothing to be claimed by the Afghan Ameer on the left bank of the Oxus below Khojah Saleh. (3.) The internal districts of Aksha, Seripool, Maimenat, Shipperjan, and Andkoi, the latter of which would be the extreme Afghan frontier possession to the north-west, the desert beyond belonging to independent tribes of Turcomans. (4.) The western Afghan frontier between the dependencies of Herat and those of the Persian province of Khorassan is well known, and need not here be defined."

MR. GLADSTONE: I am obliged to the noble Lord for saving me the trouble of inflicting upon the House the four paragraphs he had just read. It is those four paragraphs that I mean. I put out of view the first and the second paragraphs. [An hon. MEMBER: Oh, oh!] Does the hon. Gentleman who has interrupted me know anything of the subject? The first and second paragraphs have reference to parts of the country which are not now in question. That, I suppose, is a reason for putting them out of view. What does the fourth paragraph say? That the Western Afghan Frontier is to be between the Dependencies of Herat and those of the Persian Province of Khorassan. Where is the delimitation of the Dependencies of Herat, and who knows what are the Dependencies of the Province of Khorassan? What is the authoritative document to which reference can be made, when you are about to call another Power to account, and perhaps to subject it to war, for not having fulfilled its obligation? Then, the third paragraph which the noble Lord read has reference to the internal districts of Aksha, Seripool, Maimenat, Shipperjan, and Andkoi, whereas my argument had been that the districts were mentioned in the engagements, but that the mention of those districts was perfectly insufficient, because of those districts no legal, no historical, no conventional definition exists. Therefore, I go back to my point, and I say that there is now no Frontier of a definite character with regard to which one Power can bring another Power to account, and, bringing it to account, can require and exact of it the performance of a binding engagement. I think that it is a part of the wisdom of the statesman to endeavour to substitute a definite and carefully-traced Frontier for those vague and practically unintelligible statements, which are referable to no historical and no legal standard.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: It is Lord Granville's own despatch.

MR. GLADSTONE: Certainly; and what was Lord Granville engaged in? He was engaged in a preliminary process in connection with a most useful and important policy—namely, to obtain from Russia, where formerly there was no acknowledgment whatever, those general acknowledgments which, in the absence of anything more definite, would, at least, afford a general indication of the views of that Power. It appears to me that that is an ample justification of Lord Granville's despatch, and at the same time a perfect proof that it had nothing whatever to do with the question now before us, and does not, in the slightest degree, disprove the necessity of what we are now about. What is the doctrine of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour), who has come down here to instruct us in so high a tone and from so lofty a position? The hon. Gentleman says there was a Frontier already established from Sarakhs to Khojah Saleh, and that we ought to have adhered to it, and to have compelled the Russians to adhere to it, and that if the Russians had refused to adhere to that Frontier, we ought to have held ourselves justified in resorting to measures of force. That is the doctrine of the hon. Member for Hertford.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No.

MR. GLADSTONE: I distinctly heard the hon. Member say that there was a Frontier to which we ought to have adhered exactly. If I have not stated

accurately the Frontier which he meant, let the hon. Member correct my statement.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: The Boundary Commission.

MR. GLADSTONE: I was not referring to the hon. Member. We are not always bound to speak to the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett). There are a great many occasions—perhaps, even to satiety—when we are; but at some times I may, I hope, claim the right of referring to another speaker. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Hertford distinctly referred to another Frontier, and charged it upon us that we were abandoning territory which was secured to Afghanistan, if we had that Frontier. It was the foundation of his whole indictment against the Government. It was this abandonment of territory already secured to us which he said would be fatal to us in our predominance in India, and to our character and reputation generally—if, indeed, we had any left, for, in the view of the hon. Gentleman, what remains of our character and reputation is hardly worth considering. Now, Sir, I want to know whether the hon. Gentleman is really serious? He has got this Frontier of his own, and he says—"You are not justified in agreeing, on any terms, to any Frontier short of that." I believe I am representing the hon. Gentleman accurately.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: What I said was that we should entirely lose prestige in India by giving up land which we foolishly or not foolishly—I did not say which—had undoubtedly claimed for Afghanistan.

MR. GLADSTONE: Then what does the hon. Member recommend? Does he recommend us to give it up, or does he not? His speech was perfectly distinct, and it was to the effect that we should not give it up.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I should not give it up by arbitration.

MR. GLADSTONE: Then let the hon. Gentleman, if he likes, make a Motion, impugning our proposal referring to arbitration what the Russian Government have agreed to refer to arbitration, and we will meet him on that ground. He has been encouraging us strongly in his speech to adhere to his supposititious Frontier. Well, Sir, it is useless to ask whether that Frontier was wisely claimed or not. What the hon. Member insisted upon is that the effect of not adhering to it will be ruinous.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Very serious.

MR. GLADSTONE: Only very serious? We were to lose our character in India—and I go a great way with him in thinking that the maintenance of our repute in India is a great strength, though I think that justice and equity are the instruments by which we should maintain it; but what I want to point out is this—the unwisdom, if I may venture to say so, of my hon. Friend in determining to settle all this question, spurred on by his animosity against the Government, in the absence of the Papers which will give him information. Observe what he has recommended. He recommends that we should adhere to this advanced Frontier in all circumstances. Suppose he were to find that the Ameer of Afghanistan himself was not in favour of adhering to it. Then I understand my hon. Friend to hold that it is the duty of this country, if need be by force—by policy in the first instance, but if need be by force—to claim for Afghanistan that which, on the supposition I have made—I am arguing entirely upon an hypothesis—[MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Hear, hear!]—I am proposing to bring the hypothesis to a test of facts when the Papers are produced, whereas my hon. Friend's contention is that you ought to decide the matter without knowing anything about the facts. His contention is that we are bound to claim for Afghanistan a territory even though the Ameer might not claim it, even though he might, by the hypothesis, desire to be rid of it. Can the hon. Member be serious in thinking that upon a basis such as that the people of this country would condemn the Government? Sir, I am afraid that I shall not carry the assent of my hon. Friend to another proposition I am about to make. I have said that it appeared to me that we were bound to labour for a stable and permanent peace by the establishment, as one means of peace, of a definite and solemn covenant as to a Frontier capable of being traced and defined, which does not now exist. I do not appear to have the assent of my hon. Friend to that. There is another argument we ought to bear in mind, and to which I am afraid I shall not

have his assent either; and it is that we can only secure a definite and solid peace by the establishment of good relations with Afghanistan, by respecting their independence, and the independence of the country, by consulting their feelings, and by observing towards them the strictest relations of honour. This is the purpose which we have borne in mind, and shall bear in mind, and which we think, in all the difficulties of the case, to be a capital instrument towards procuring a definite and sound peace. With regard to the previous speeches of this evening, I am quite content to fall back upon the speech of my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster; and, therefore, I shall not refer to some points which I confess appear to me to be extremely difficult points in the speech of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill). What I wish to do at the present moment is this—to point out to the House that, in our judgment, if they will allow me to say so, it would be a wise course if they will be disposed to go forward and sanction to-night the Vote for which we asked on Monday last. [*Cries of* "No!"] I respectfully claim it as my right and my duty to point out why it appears to me that that course ought to be taken. I may observe that until this Vote is reported we have not obtained the authority of the House of Commons to spend the money which it embraces. The Vote of the Committee is only a preliminary proceeding. I cannot say how much I was gratified by the unanimity and rapidity with which it was granted. I did not entirely expect what has happened this evening; but, at any rate, in addressing the majority of the House I must observe that in order to make the proceeding regular, and to enable us to spend this large sum of money, it is absolutely necessary that the House should give its sanction to the Vote of Credit which has been passed. We have no title, so far as my recollection goes—and I do not expect to be contradicted—to spend any part of the Vote of Credit until it has been reported to the House. This is the Vote which we were to have disposed of on Thursday night, had not circumstances, entirely accidental, prevented us from reaching this discussion on that evening. With respect to the policy of the Government, I cannot imagine the House to be so weak as to suppose that I should gain any advantage by attempting to flinch from a discussion of that policy; but I do put it confidently to the House, whatever the Vote may be, that though strong opinions may be pronounced and strong feeling manifested, no real progress can be made until the course of these negotiations is before them, together with their results. But I will venture to say this—as such severe condemnation has been so unhesitatingly pronounced—that I entertain the most undoubted assurance that when our case is before the country, and when the authentic Papers are produced, the opinion of the country will be that we have faithfully discharged our duties as Ministers of the Crown, bound to study the honour and interests of the nation. That is my anticipation. I am speaking only for myself. With regard to some of the sentences of reprobation which have been pronounced upon us this evening, the state of the case with regard to the Vote is, I admit, in some respects, peculiar. It has no effect until it is reported, and until we obtain the sanction of the House to spend a portion—I am afraid a large portion—of the money expressed in it. We asked for this Vote at a time when the circumstances of the case were in a certain degree, menacing in themselves. We stated that there was a case for preparation. That was the basis upon which our application for the Vote was founded. These preparations were proceedings on both sides. That is a matter of notoriety. I am not aware that, so far as Russia is concerned, any change has taken place, nor should I think that we were in the slightest degree entitled to expect that a change should have taken place at this moment. The fact is, that you cannot depend upon the first favourable turns in a negotiation which has many stages, and in regard to which it would be presumptuous to argue that because it is not now in a dangerous state it can never be in a dangerous state again. As men of sense, at the first turning of a favourable character opening out the first piercing rays of light into the gloom, you will not introduce fundamental alterations into your preparations. But perhaps it will be said—"What is the position of the House?" The noble Lord has said

that a Vote of this kind is, in the highest sense, a Vote of Confidence. In part I agree with him, and in part I differ from him. It appears to me that in a great many cases there may be vital differences in the politics of the Government; there may be a Government to which you would entirely decline to give your confidence on general grounds, yet, in another respect, you would not hesitate to give them a Vote when it was demanded on grounds connected with the safety and honour of the country. Therefore, I would say to the noble Lord that he is not called upon, in being asked to give this Vote, to express his confidence in the Government. It is impossible to conceive a case of the Government of this country being prepared to acquiesce in the task of putting aside that Vote, and prepared, at the same time, to carry on the government of the country. Do not let it be supposed for a moment that I hold the absurd opinion that because the House has voted this sum in Committee, and I hope will proceed to ratify it by sanctioning it in the House, that I hold the House to have thereby given an unconditional right to the Government to spend the money. Very far from it; it is a conditional Vote. It is a Vote upon the supposition that it shall be found necessary for the discharge of engagements; but as regards everything prospective, it is meant to be a Vote conditional on the necessities of the case. Whatever Vote we may obtain from the House of Commons, we remain bound to render a strict account to the House of Commons when the House chooses to exact it; and whatever we spend prospectively under this Vote, so far, I mean, as the special preparations are concerned, we shall be bound to show cause for it, or be liable to censure if we fail to show cause. It is part of that high stewardship which belongs to an Executive Government, and which sometimes may be reposed in feeble or unworthy hands, but which, at the same time, you cannot separate from the function and the work and the very existence of an Executive Government. Unless you can get rid of it, and are prepared to put another Government in its place, there is no course so foolish as to cripple and discredit it in the case of a Vote of this kind; because, in doing so, you cripple and discredit the country. Observe, I carefully separate the case where you object to the Vote on principle. If you object to the Vote on principle, you are not only warranted in opposing it, but you are bound to oppose it to the length of displacing the Government, and undertaking the responsibility of governing the country. Of course, should events continue to run a favourable course, it would be our duty to study what we can do to save the resources which the House has so generously, in Committee, proposed to place at our disposal. We cannot think that the moment for resolving on a momentous change of that kind has already arrived, nor can that moment be judged of, in the first instance, by the House of Commons. That judgment must of necessity, from the nature of the case, be allowed to devolve on the Executive Government. I trust, Sir, that we shall receive the Vote sensible of the gravity of that charge. I am bound to say that, in my judgment, any appearance of hesitation on the part of this House to sanction the Vote of the Committee would be a very serious public evil. I do not undertake to say how far that evil might reach. I wish to speak in the language of moderation, and I say in that language it would be a very serious public evil. I do not object, in the slightest degree, to those sweeping condemnations of the Government which we have heard to-night. I regard them as a matter of course. Perhaps I am too much disposed to regard them as commonplace, and almost as truisms. I confess that is the aspect in which they sometimes come before me; but, however well reasoned they may be on this or on any other occasion, I shall not seek to evade them. I am speaking simply of the action of the House in the circumstances of the moment, when, happily, there has been a turn towards a favourable issue in the grave negotiations now going on between the two countries. I entreat the House not to derogate from the effect of what the Committee has already wisely and patriotically done. It will lose nothing by persevering in that course; and I must say I think even opponents would admit that if, with transactions of such difficulty and anxiety on hand, we cannot be trusted with this authority under the responsibility of the future judgment of Parliament, the sooner the House takes another step and releases

us from all responsibility the better. I have not the smallest objection to the raising of that question. It is a question that has been raised pretty freely of late, about as often in the present Parliament as in all the Parliaments, 11 in number, antecedent to it in which I have had the honour of sitting. I do not object to lengthening the goodly catalogue of those indictments. By all means let it be done; but let it be done with knowledge; let it be done in circumstances which would, as any adverse or hesitating step to-night undoubtedly would, be a serious injury to national and Imperial interests.

MR. GIBSON: I hope everyone who takes part in this discussion will remember the gravity of the crisis in which the country is involved, and that the Prime Minister called upon us to do nothing at this time which would cripple or discredit the Government. But the right of hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House, and, indeed, of all sections of the House, is plainly this—to watch earnestly and see that in every step and stage of the difficulty with which the country is involved the Government itself does nothing to cripple or discredit the country. It is our bounden duty carefully to ask for explanations, carefully to seek for information, and carefully, by every method in our power—by speech, by question, by suggestion—to elicit whether the Government themselves realize exactly what it is that they are doing. The Prime Minister has given us not too much credit—not more than fair and sufficient credit—for the way in which we met his proposal on Monday last. Silently, with rapidity and with unanimity, we gave him all he asked to strengthen his hands in the difficult crisis in which the country was placed. We did that because we knew it was right, and because we thought his language on that occasion was not unworthy of a Minister of a great country. But contrast that with the position to-night. We had a statement, of which the Prime Minister read every word, thereby giving increased significance to it from the fact that he read it. What was the character of that statement? I pass no final judgment on it now. The crisis is too important, the matter too urgent; the circumstances require too deliberate action on the part of those who are about to arrive at a responsible decision upon it to express any final opinion upon it now; but I do draw attention to the fact that the Prime Minister felt it was so grave that he plainly balanced every word, and considered every emphasis, in which he announced it to the House; and the right hon. Gentleman had hardly sat down when more Questions were asked in reference to it than were ever asked in regard to a statement like it. Why was that? When, on Monday, we were asked for this Vote, without question or hesitation we voted the money. To-night we had to hesitate. To-night we had to ask Questions, because it was plain to the minds of those of us most anxious loyally to strengthen the hands of the Government in this crisis, that there was matter for grave doubt as to whether the Government had themselves realized what they were doing. Have the doubts excited by the statement of the Prime Minister been removed by the speeches of to-night? Unquestionably they have not. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster made, as he always does, an interesting speech in reply to the speeches delivered in the course of the debate; but he did not utter a syllable to elucidate the meaning of the Government intention or plan. And so it was with the speech of the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister got into discussions and explanations with my noble Friend (Lord Randolph Churchill) as to what was said in the past. But as to what the Government intend now, as to their present arrangements with Russia, or what they think their present arrangements with Russia are, we are just as much in the dark as when the right hon. Gentleman made his first statement. Now, we are told that we can see the first piercing rays of light, and we are told that the Government intend to refer the whole matter to arbitration.

MR. GLADSTONE: This is the inconvenience of hon. Gentlemen not waiting to see the Papers. I said that in regard to the delimitation of the Frontier it was not for me to anticipate what the result would be.

MR. GIBSON: But we are asked to pass the Vote of Credit to-night, in the absence of the Papers, and without waiting for the Papers, and we are asked to do that upon the assumption that the Prime Minister has made a state-

ment so full and complete as to obviate the necessity for the production of Papers. ["No, no!"] Therefore, I am entitled to say that the statement of the Prime Minister is one which calls for an earnest and an attentive examination before the House founds upon it a judgment as to the action it will take on the Vote now submitted to it. We are told by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) that we should adopt this Vote without delay. The Prime Minister told us to pass it without question; the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster told us that we should pass it with full confidence. We did so on Monday, because the Government treated the House to a statement and a method of utterance we thought not unworthy of it; but to-night the Government have spoken in a way open to such question, and doubt, and hesitation, that we cannot proceed with that rapidity and confidence which we are asked to display. The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster has asked a most extraordinary question. He says—"Where should we be if we had not left Candahar?" I will not go into that question now; I have no wish to raise a fresh debate and to wander into other points. I answer simply that we should have been in Candahar if we had not left it, and we should then be a great deal stronger in dealing with this question than we are now. The right hon. Gentleman proceeded to say that this was a golden opportunity of settling matters once for all. But where does the right hon. Gentleman find anything that can lead the House to the conclusion that this is such a golden opportunity? Is there anything in the history of this question, or in the words of the Prime Minister, that shows us that this is a golden opportunity for settling these matters once for all? The circumstances are grave and momentous. Everyone on this side of the House desires to see a peaceful solution. We, on this side of the House, are desirous that there should be a peaceful solution, without the expenditure of money or of blood, but with the maintenance of the honour of the country. The Prime Minister spoke of a stable and permanent peace. I adopt those words. We would all desire that. It is because we are left in a state of doubt and anxiety on all these essential points that we ask for further information. I do not know what other Minister of the Crown will speak next; but I should like to put a few plain questions which have much disturbed our minds in the course of this discussion, but which are not conceived in a spirit or desire to put the Government in a difficulty. We are told—and the Prime Minister used the words twice, to show how significant he considered them—that the Government "have referred"—and it is the only thing they have referred — "any difference that may be found to exist as to the interpretation of the agreement of the 16th of March." I want to know what is the meaning of that? It is the one thing that is to be referred. When the Prime Minister was asked the question again as to what it was exactly that was to be referred, for fear he might be mistaken he himself picked out the words to read again to the House; and, therefore, the only solitary thing referred at this anxious time is "any difference that may be found to exist as to the interpretation of the agreement of the 16th of March." What is the meaning of that? What is the meaning of the sacred compact? What is the interpretation of the agreement that was made between England and Russia? This is the one thing to be referred to arbitration. But is there any reason to believe that Russia herself feels the smallest particle of uncertainty as to the meaning of that agreement? I have read the previous speech of the Prime Minister on the subject since this debate opened. There is not a word in that speech of the Prime Minister which displays the least doubt as to the interpretation to be put on the sacred covenant. Then, what is it that is to be referred? The Prime Minister, on Monday, indicated some circumstances that might be in dispute in a very different method, and with apparently a very different object, but never suggested that there was any dispute as to the meaning of the agreement. He used these words—

> "We thought it our duty . . . to take it"—that is, the covenant—"as conceived in honour and good faith."

There was no question, therefore, as to what the conditions of the covenant were, but simply whether it was conceived in honour and good faith. The right hon. Gentleman proceeded—

"It was one of the most sacred covenants ever made between two great nations . . . and that if unhappily a deviation occurred there would be a generous rivalry between the two Powers to search it . . . and to exhibit to the world how that deviation had come about."

That shows that there was no dispute whatever on Monday last, or a vestige of doubt in the mind of the Government, as to the meaning of the sacred covenant; and the only point was that, if a deviation occurred, how that deviation was to be set right and put straight? The Prime Minister said further on Monday—

"All I say is this—that that woful engagement of the 30th of March distinctly showed that one party or both had, either through ill-will or through unfortunate mishap, failed to fulfil the conditions of the engagement."

There is no question there as to what the conditions of the covenant were, or any uncertainty as to its meaning. The only question is whether either or both parties, through ill-will or mishap, had failed to fulfil the conditions of the covenant. Then, I ask, what is it, in the name of common sense, the Government think they have referred to arbitration that was in doubt? I have shown that up to the very moment at which I am speaking there was nothing in the Ministerial statements which threw one shadow of doubt as to the meaning or interpretation of the agreement entered into, and yet that is the only thing that the Government have referred to arbitration. The information for which I ask, and which I am entitled to ask, is of the first importance. It underlies the whole question; and, I ask, is there anything else to be inferred, or has there been a mistake or a slip, or is there anything which the Prime Minister has insufficiently expressed? Is there anything that Ministers desire to supplement? I desire to point out that neither the Prime Minister, speaking at great length just now, nor the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster—a perfect master of English—has supplemented in any way the matter to be referred to arbitration. Are we to suppose that the arbitrator, when found, is to decide whether a breach of the covenant by one or both parties has been committed? Is that the matter intended to be referred for his judgment? That is a plain question. Is it merely intended to state what the agreement was; is it intended to go into the breach of it; and, if so, is it intended that he should state who is answerable for such breach? Then I come to the further words of the Prime Minister, which are very remarkable in this connection. He says—"We do not wish to see gallant officers on either side put on their trial." I do not pretend to say what officers are meant; but I suppose the Government meant something when these words were put into the statement of the Prime Minister. I wish to ask whether the breach of the covenant is to be inquired into; and if inquired into, is any power to be given to the arbitrator to fix the blame direct, or to suggest reparation? That, I think, is a reasonable element in the discussion of the question; and, so far, we have received no reply to it. I have directed attention to the narrowness, incompleteness, and utter uselessness of the reference, and I think I am entitled to a plain answer. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster said that England was pledged to guarantee Herat and the whole of Afghanistan to the Ameer. Let me test this by another question. As far as we know, by the theory of the facts, the Government theory of Afghanistan is that Penjdeh is a portion of Afghanistan. Is it in support of that theory that the Government have agreed to refer the question to arbitration. Is that the form of guarantee to the Ameer that finds favour with Her Majesty's Government? The right hon. Gentleman says we are bound to guarantee Afghanistan to the Ameer. Is that satisfied by referring piecemeal, as Russia advances, the question of the Ameer's property in any part of his dominions? There is another matter I should like to clear up. We all know, through the usual source of public information, that the Government have several methods and several opportunities of stating their views. We have been favoured to-night with the statement read by the Prime Minister; but another of his Colleagues (Earl Granville) in "another place" has made a statement of an apparently different character, and presenting a meaning which certainly requires further elucidation. It is said, with regard to Russia, that Her Majesty's Government have agreed with Russia to submit the Penjdeh incident to full investigation. That is not the statement made here. It is an infinitely wider statement than that made here, and I have a right to

ask if that statement is correct, and if not, in what particular it is incorrect? Also, which of the Ministers is going to clear it up, and to what extent?

MR. GLADSTONE: Probably the right hon. and learned Gentleman does not remember the words used, which I think were identical with those used "elsewhere"—that the two Governments have agreed to provide the means for a settlement of any differences between them arising out of the incident of Ak Tepe.

MR. GIBSON: That is merely translating the same thing into long Government language. It is very unfortunate that the Ministers representing the Government in the different Houses have explained the contention referred to arbitration by selecting language not identical. The statement "elsewhere" is certainly a wider statement, and it might mean a good deal more than what the Prime Minister said; but, on the other hand, it might mean less, or merely nothing, when subjected to the action of vigorous criticism. This language was used—

"Penjdeh will, during the negotiations, remain neutral, and the Russian Government has stated its readiness to consider the question of removing its troops should the Boundary Commissioners decide against them."

Here is a plain and tolerably distinct statement as to which the right hon. Gentleman, in this House, is absolutely silent. Well, the House of Commons is the body that votes the money, and it has the right, at all events, to as full a statement as that made "elsewhere," as to what the agreement entered into with Russia is. That statement of the Russian Government is open to this criticism. According to Lord Granville, the Russian Government would be willing to consider the question of removing their troops; but that is very different from saying that they will be willing to remove them if the award of the arbitrator is against them. At any rate, we have a right to have this important matter cleared up. A Minister of the Crown in this House ought to explain whether that statement was made "elsewhere," what is the foundation for that statement, and if it was made, what do the Government now believe was the agreement with Russia if the award should chance to go against their action at Penjdeh? I do not propose to go into any further discussion. My object in rising was simply to ask questions fairly conceived to the extent, as far as I could, of getting information to clear up doubts which very much obscure our minds at the present moment. The Prime Minister has said that we should have time to deliberate on this matter. I think that is not unreasonable. I should have been glad if the statement had been presented in a way that enabled us at once to grasp it, without difficulty and without doubt, in order to free our minds from anxiety. We have shown throughout this matter that we were not captious, and the Prime Minister has himself acknowledged it more than once. When we do ask questions not unfairly conceived, I think it should be taken that we are animated by an honest desire to obtain fuller information upon the points with respect to which we inquire. Unquestionably a vast change has taken place in this question by the statement to-day. It has been presented to us with an entirely different mouth, in an entirely different tone, in an entirely different form of language, and I repeat that I offer no final judgment as to the statement or its bearings. I have asked questions; I have pointed out the differences between the statements made here and "elsewhere;" I have pointed out how very narrow is the reference proposed to be made. I ask if the Government adhere to that narrow reference, or do they really intend it to have a wider bearing? I think I am entitled to an answer to the questions which I have put to Her Majesty's Government, and that the House is entitled to the information. I think the answer should be sufficient and clear, and that when it is given we should not be attacked for having asked for this information.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I shall be very happy to endeavour to answer the questions which the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gibson) has asked as far as I am able to apprehend them. The first point he asks, if I understand him rightly, is whether any other matters were to be referred to arbitration besides those mentioned by the Prime Minister at the commencement of this discussion? To that I have to answer very distinctly in the negative. There are no other matters to be referred to arbitration, and I think that answer is plain enough.

MR. GIBSON: That is only interpretation.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: My right hon. and learned Friend is a distinguished ornament of the Profession to which he belongs; but to-night, by his extreme over-technicality—I will not call it special pleading—he appears to me to have been engaged in one of the most difficult tasks of the Bar—namely, in endeavouring to set aside an award before it is made. I never heard more technical pleas urged against an arbitration, against the appointment of the arbitrator, against the terms of the arbitration, and against the award. The speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman contained admirable arguments to address to the Court of Chancery; but it was hardly an admirable speech as addressed to a Government in a great political crisis. One of the most remarkable things which he has charged against the Government was that in "another place" it had been stated that what was to be referred to arbitration was the incident at Penjdeh; and he said that that was a totally and entirely different question from that which was stated in this House as the matter to be referred. He does not allow even the possibility of the variation of a phrase, for I cannot suppose that the right hon. and learned Gentleman, with all his study of the question, can be ignorant of the facts. I should have thought that no one could have doubted that the phrases "the differences between them arising out of the engagement at Ak Tepe," and "the differences arising out of the incident at Penjdeh" were absolutely identical. Anyone who knows the mere A B C of the matter will understand that the two phrases mean absolutely one and the same thing. That is my answer to the second charge of the right hon. and learned Gentleman.

MR. GIBSON: The "incident" at Penjdeh was not mentioned by the Prime Minister at all.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: That is what I say. I understand that the incident at Penjdeh was described in "another place" as the subject to be referred to arbitration; and I should have thought that the right hon. and learned Gentleman, and everybody who knew anything about the question, would have understood, when the Prime Minister said that what was to be referred to arbitration was the differences between the two Governments arising out of the engagement at Ak Tepe, that the phrase meant exactly the same thing as if he had said "the incident arising out of the engagement at Penjdeh." Well, that is the second point, as I understand the questions of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. Then he objects to the statement in this House not having been identical with the statement made in "another place." So far as that goes, I do not know what the statement made in "another place" was; but upon the special point to which the right hon. and learned Gentleman refers the two statements were precisely identical. It has been agreed, said Lord Granville, that the district of Penjdeh shall be neutralized during the negotiations; and the Russian Government have intimated their willingness to consider the propriety of the removal of the Russian outposts when the Commissioners meet. The Prime Minister also stated that that is the authentic state of the facts; and, as far as I have been able to carry the questions of the right hon. and learned Gentleman in my mind, I think I have given a complete answer to them. The right hon. and learned Gentleman has entangled himself in his own subtleties, otherwise a very elementary acquaintance with the subject would have shown him that there was no difference at all.

MR. GIBSON: There were two other very important questions which I asked the right hon. Gentleman—namely, whether the question as to who had violated the agreement was to be referred to arbitration, and whether it would be open to the arbitrator to say what should be done with the party in fault?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I really did not think that that was a question seriously put, or I would have answered it before. Of course, as has been stated by my right hon. Friend, the arbitrator is to say what is to be the result of the arbitration. I will read the passage again, for I do not think it is possible to put the matter more clearly—

"Any differences that may be found to exist between the two Cabinets in regard to the interpretation of the agreement of the 16th of March, with a view to the settlement of the matter in a mode consistent with the honour of both States."

Of course, the arbitrator is to state what is to be the result of the arbitration consistently with the honour of both States —that is, whether either State is to make an *amende* for what has been done; and, if so, how it is to be made. It is perfectly obvious, from the words used by my right hon. Friend, that it must depend upon the decision of the arbitrator. That is my answer to the further question of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. Then, what is our situation with reference to the whole question? [Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Hear, hear!] I will tell the noble Lord. The right hon. and learned Gentleman says things are very much changed since Monday. [Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Hear, hear!] Of course they are changed, and because they are changed the noble Lord gives expression to his vexation. It will be known to-morrow, in the country, what is the cause of that vexation. It will be known from the noble Lord's speech, because the noble Lord has made a speech to-night, which, if he had the responsibility of the Government of this country, would be absolutely incompatible with the peace of the world. He has used language of irritation, of provocation, and of insult to a great European Power. It is the change which has taken place that provokes the noble Lord, and makes him cheer in that violent manner my observation that there has been a great change since Monday. Yes, Sir; there has been a great change, because, as the Prime Minister said, there is a real prospect of peace, and it is to disturb and to destroy that prospect of peace that the noble Lord has made that speech to-night. It is not I, nor the noble Lord, who will judge that matter. It will be judged to-morrow, by the nation, who has laboured to keep the peace of the world, and who has laboured, if he can, to prevent that peace being accomplished. But, Sir, it is not of the noble Lord I will speak. We have heard very different language and a very different tone from those who are responsible for the conduct of the great Party which sits opposite, and who, if this Vote of Credit is to be refused or delayed, would be responsible for the conduct of the affairs of this country hereafter. And what, I ask—are they intending—what is the Party opposite intending, at this critical moment, when upon the delay of a single Vote may depend whether these negotiations may result in peace or war? [Oh, oh!"] Yes; the noble Lord is playing with fire to-night. It may be sport to him; but it may not be sport to a great many others. Therefore, the question which the House has to consider to-night is, whether they will, in what the Prime Minister has called the first rays of hope of a peaceful solution, take a course which may cloud and may destroy this hope, whether they will indulge in any policy which may involve the great calamity of war, and prevent the negotiations from resulting in a peaceful solution. Well, what is it that the Government announced to-night? [Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Surrender!] I hope that that remark of the noble Lord will be reported to-morrow. That is the language by which men, like the noble Lord, try to taunt and to irritate great nations into war. You may depend upon it that no man who has the responsibility of the conduct of affairs would allow himself to be provoked by taunts of that description. What we have proposed is, that with reference to the unhappy incident which occurred at Penjdeh, there shall be a fair and honourable arbitration, and that has been accepted by the Government of Russia. That, I think, is a highly favourable and highly honourable result to both nations. Is it that which the noble Lord desires should not go on? Is that what the noble Lord calls "surrender?" ["Hear, hear!"] The noble Lord assents. Then he declares against the reference of a question of that kind to arbitration. [Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Hear, hear!] Well, that is the position distinctly taken up by the noble Lord and his Friends. Let us have no mistake about it. Then, what is the other question now at issue? That matter being disposed of by arbitration, the Government are prepared to go with the Government of Russia into a definition of the Frontier of Afghanistan. Is that what is objected to? [Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: In London.] The noble Lord objects to its being done in London. Is that the point? [Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Hear, hear!] That is one of the points on which the noble Lord is prepared to go to war rather than to arbitration. The point upon which the noble Lord is

going to have a European quarrel is whether the determination of the Frontier shall be made in Afghanistan or in London. Well, Sir, we are not prepared to go to war upon that ground. The noble Lord may, if he chooses; but I hope he will not have the opportunity. Let us see what are the points mainly put forward and clearly indicated by hon. Members opposite. I now turn from the noble Lord, who, happily, has not the conduct of these affairs. The question now is, how is the matter to be dealt with? That there is a fair and reasonable prospect of negotiation which shall establish not merely an honourable peace for the present, but a security of peace in the future, by the delimitation of a clear and intelligible Frontier, no man can deny. I say there is a hope and a prospect of peace; but it is not a certainty. It rests very much, no doubt, with hon. Gentlemen opposite to destroy these hopes, and to make that certainty impossible. They may so weaken the hands of the Government in the negotiations as to make the negotiations fail; but then they must, in that case, be responsible for the consequences of the failure; and they must be prepared to defend to the country and to Europe this position—that under no circumstances whatever will they have an arbitration; that under no circumstances whatever will they enter into a negotiation for the settlement of the Frontier. [An hon. MEMBER: In London.] That is the position hon. Gentlemen opposite must be prepared to adopt. An hon. Member says, "In London." I forgot to observe that they will have a negotiation; but under no circumstances in London. These are the only points, so far as I know, that have been challenged; but if hon. Gentlemen opposite are prepared to take up that position, what useful—nay, what safe purpose, would be answered by endeavouring to postpone the consideration of this question? If you are not prepared to say that under no circumstances will you have arbitration—that under no circumstances will you have negotiation in London—why should you endeavour, by a dilatory proceeding, or by weakening the hands of the Government, to throw that negotiation into danger, and make yourselves responsible for its failure? I hope that these considerations will prevail with hon. Gentlemen opposite, and that at this very critical moment—at a moment when there is a fair and reasonable prospect of a peaceful solution of this dangerous question—no man, upon whatever side of the House he sits, will take upon himself the grave responsibility of doing anything which may make that negotiation fail.

MR. CHAPLIN: Sir, three Cabinet Ministers have addressed the House this evening, and each of them has referred more or less to the speech delivered at the commencement of this debate by my noble Friend the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill). In the first two of those speeches I do not know that there is anything of which any Member of this House can complain. The Prime Minister referred to the speech of my noble Friend; but it was answered by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) in terms which I think all Members of the House will admit were of a fair and legitimate character. But we have also been favoured with one of those remarkable orations which the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department sometimes springs upon the House at a moment's notice; and I ask the House to contrast the tone and character of that speech with the other two Ministerial comments on the statements of my noble Friend. Sir, I believe I am not guilty of an abuse of Parliamentary language when I say that a grosser series of imputations than those which the right hon. Gentleman addressed to my noble Friend has seldom been heard within these walls. The right hon. Gentleman said there has been a great change in the situation within the last few days, and that it is because of that change, and because that change points to the possibility of peace, that the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock is filled with vexation, chagrin, and disappointment; and that, to the best of his ability to-night, from first to last, he has laboured to prevent the conclusion of peace between England and Russia. I take upon myself to repudiate and deny the gross and unfounded charges of the right hon. Gentleman; and I think that, when he made those charges, he was bound at least to adduce to the House something in the nature of, or which carried with it, the shadow of

proof. What was it that my noble Friend said in the course of his speech? I heard the speech of my noble Friend from beginning to end—a speech which I think increases the estimation in which he is already held by hon. Members on both sides of the House—and I think the right hon. Gentleman must have felt, from the marked attention with which that speech was listened to, and the way in which it was received on all sides of the House, that the charges directed against him were totally unfounded. I have not been able to discover anything in the speech of my noble Friend to justify what has been said by the right hon. Gentleman. It is true that my noble Friend charged the Government with a base and cowardly surrender. I confess that that was also my impression. If I was wrong in my impression, whose fault is it but that of the Government, who refused absolutely to do that which the Prime Minister invited hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House to do—namely, to see in print the statement which he made to the House this evening. [Mr. GLADSTONE: I spoke of the Papers that would be presented.] I beg pardon; the right hon. Gentleman also invited us to see the statement in print. Of course, we are most anxious to see the Papers. I myself asked this evening that this statement might be read a second time, and it was so read; but, notwithstanding that, I am not sure that I was able to completely grasp its meaning and effect. And I can hardly conceive it possible that any other Government but this would have taken the course they have taken in refusing to accede to the moderate, reasonable, and temperate proposal of my right hon. Friend the Member for Lynn Regis (Mr. Bourke) that the Vote of Credit should be postponed until, at any rate, we had had an opportunity of seeing the exact terms and language of that statement. But the Government have refused. And why? The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department tells us that the delay of a single night would make the whole difference between peace and war. But, Sir, I thought we were engaged in negotiations. Are we, or are we not? I suppose that the right hon. Gentleman will not deny that we are engaged in negotiations; and in order to remove the alarm which the right hon. Gentleman feels I will quote a great authority—the Prime Minister. In 1878 the Prime Minister, in objecting to the Vote of Credit of that year, said—

> "It is really an attempt to associate arms with negotiation. Now, permit me to say that such an attempt, by whomsoever made, is radically bad."—(3 *Hansard*, [237] 947.)

I do not altogether accept the doctrine of the right hon. Gentleman, either upon that or upon a great many other subjects; but I suppose that the Secretary of State for the Home Department does. And, if so, what becomes of his contention that when we are, as at the present time, engaged in negotiations, the delay of a single moment may make the whole difference between peace and war? Sir, I only rose in order to repel the gross and unwarrantable attack made upon my noble Friend by the right hon. Gentleman. And I must express the opinion which is certainly entertained on these Benches, whatever it may be in other parts of the House, that nothing could be farther from the intention or desire of the noble Lord than the course which the right hon. Gentleman has imputed to him. But I should like to state, if I may do so with the permission of the House, what we on these Benches desire. In the first place, we want further information upon the whole of this question than we have yet received. It is all very well to appeal to us to have confidence in the Government; but how is it possible we should have confidence in a Government whose career, during the five years they have been in Office, we know only too well? I do not recollect any occasion, in connection with their foreign policy, on which we have not had to complain that that policy had lowered the character of the country, and had been humiliating to the people of England. Surrender after surrender has been made in all parts of the world; and I ask what guarantee have we that this Government is not ready again to purchase a patched-up peace on this occasion—it may be to save their own credit before the General Election—and to leave this question open and more aggravated than ever to be dealt with by their successors, upon whom they are certain to try to cast the whole blame for what has happened, or what may hereafter happen? Beyond the announcement on the part of the Government,

which I admit was twice read to the House, we have had no information, and certainly that announcement was accompanied with very small assurances. Under the circumstances, I do not think it would be unreasonable on the part of hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House to ask the Government to assent to the adjournment of the debate, in order that we may have the opportunity of seeing in black and white, and carefully considering, the statement made to the House at an earlier period of the evening, before we are compelled to come to a decision on the present Resolution. We do not, as I said on a former occasion, desire to do anything whatever to withhold from the Government Supplies. Whatever demands they make for the purposes of the country will receive our support. From the commencement of these proceedings, we have endeavoured to impress upon the Government the necessity of dividing this Vote under two heads. I have never wavered from that view of the case, and I am more than ever confirmed in it now; because if the prospects of peace, as we hope they are, and as the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department will not deny, are so much better than they were a few days ago, there is great reason for hoping that the Vote may not in the end be required. In that case, it only remains for us to consider the question as to the money which the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister told us was likely to be used in the Soudan. That is a question on which, on account of the many changes on the part of the Government, I have always maintained there is a great deal to be said. There are two questions which I should like to put to the Government to-night. The Government told us that the £4,500,000 asked for the Soudan might be available for other purposes; but that, in the first place, they asked for it as being likely to be spent in the Soudan. My first question then is, what are those objects in the Soudan for which the Government thought it likely that this money might be spent? And my second question is this—If it is to be available for other purposes, what is to become of those objects for which, in the first instance, it was thought that the money would probably be required? Now, upon that, up to the present moment, we have not had one single word of explanation from the Government. I may on another occasion go at length into that question; but I do not know that it would be of much use to do so now at this hour of the night, nor do I know that any Member of the Government would give the desired information, and therefore I ask the Government to assent to the Motion which I now beg to move, that the debate be now adjourned.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Chaplin.*)

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, it is quite unnecessary for me, after what has been stated by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department and myself, to say more than a single word. The hon. Member opposite (Mr. Chaplin) must have anticipated that it would be entirely impossible for us to accede to the Motion for Adjournment. After the Vote obtained last Monday, we have no power to spend the money legally and regularly, and we ask now for the Vote which is necessary, in order that we may be so empowered. I could understand a Motion to challenge the policy of the Government on this point; but as to this Motion for Adjournment, we look upon it as being calculated to produce the most injurious effects in this and other countries, as tending to show that Parliament is doubting and uncertain, and we must, therefore, having regard to the whole of the circumstances, resist it to the best of our ability.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, I should be very much surprised indeed if any person, either abroad or at home, on reading the proceedings of to-night, were disposed to think that a Motion for the adjournment of the debate on the question before the House showed uncertainty in the mind of Parliament as to supporting the Government in measures necessary to be taken for meeting a national emergency. But I must remind the right hon. Gentleman that this large Vote of £11,000,000 was brought forward last week with as little explanation as might have been expended on it had it been for the sum of £50,000 only. The right hon. Gentleman made hardly any allusion to that portion of the Vote which is intended for the Service in the Soudan, except to say that it was a large

part of his policy that the Expedition in the Soudan should be made available for any part of the Empire. With regard to other matters—the special preparations we were asked to make—the right hon. Gentleman rested his case almost entirely upon the single incident of Penjdeh; and on that he made a most impassioned and eloquent appeal to the House, on the strength of which the House, without a single word of objection, voted the money asked for. Well, Sir, has there been the slightest change in the disposition of the House since then? If there has been, it is only due to the uncertainty with which we have listened to the explanations that have been given to us this evening. We are told that there is a great and important change in the situation. We think we are bound, considering the gravity of the matter; considering that it is one not for the present moment, but for all time—at all events, for the future of this Empire and for great national interests—to ask for time fully to consider and examine the proposals made. Some of our Friends on this side have endeavoured, by putting Questions to Ministers, to obtain a clearer view of the situation; but I can only say honestly for myself, and many of us on these Benches, that we think we ought to have an opportunity of considering these matters calmly, as they will appear when we read them over, and when we can compare them with the statements made in "another place," and that we cannot go satisfactorily to a division until we have had that opportunity. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department said just now that my right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gibson) was putting questions like a special pleader in the Court of Chancery; but the right hon. Gentleman might remember that my right hon. and learned Friend was dilating upon an incident of great importance, upon which several constructions might be put at a critical moment; and it is of the greatest importance that we should see that this very leading document, or whatever it may be called, is so drawn up as to exclude doubts upon points on which it is very undesirable that there should exist any doubts, and to make clear what it is important should be made clear. On the question of the Soudan, which is a large integral part of the Vote, I observe that not one word has been said, and we think it is essential that we should have some information as to what the Government intend to do in this matter. They are asking for £4,500,000 for the Service in the Soudan, in a manner which their recent mode of proceeding may altogether alter, and it is only reasonable that we should have some explanation on that part of the business. But I say also in regard to the special preparations, the circumstances in which we stand, and the great importance of preventing mistakes hereafter, render it very desirable that we should have a fair opportunity given for consideration.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, the right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote) complains that he has not received from the Government sufficient explanation on the matters under discussion; and I scarcely think that we have received from the right hon. Baronet sufficient explanation of the position which he and Friends apparently intend to take on the Motion made by the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin). Are they taking up this position—that they refuse a Vote for Supplies which we have asked for the safety, the honour, and the protection of the interests of the Empire until they have had an opportunity of discussing the policy which has led to the necessity of those Supplies being asked for? Why, Sir, the right hon. Baronet and his Friends profess not to be satisfied with the statement which has been made with respect to the arbitration between the Government of Great Britain and the Government of Russia. But that arbitration is only an incident in the long course of negotiations led up to by others; and I feel it is absolutely impossible for the House to give a judgment on our conduct in proposing or assenting to that arbitration until it has before it not only an explanation as regards the agreement itself, but also as to the precise nature of the facts and negotiations which have led up to it. I do not suppose that the Party of the right hon. Baronet opposite are going to be satisfied with the discussion as far as it has proceeded, but that they reserve to themselves full power to discuss our conduct during the whole course of these negotiations: that they will reserve to themselves the power to discuss the arbi-

tration and the result that may be arrived at. But I do not suppose it will be to the advantage of the country to discuss our conduct in these respects until they have the Papers before them. Are we to understand that the attitude of hon. Gentlemen opposite is that they are going to withhold the Supplies necessary for the Public Service until they have had an opportunity of ascertaining all these points? Sir, in my opinion that would be a course most disastrous and most unfortunate to the Public Service. We have told you, this evening, that we believed an honourable settlement was possible, and, as we believe, the prospect of an honourable settlement of this question is now brighter than it was some time ago. But we have not told you, and we have not ventured to tell you, that all the questions at issue between the Government of this country and the Russian Government are settled, and the House knows very well that in the unfortunate event of such a settlement not being reached, the Forces of Russia are in a position in which they may menace, if they do not menace at the present moment, positions considered equally on both sides of the House to be of great importance to our Indian Empire. Well, are we going to be told that, because a portion of the House may feel some doubt as to our conduct in one part of our negotiations, they are going suddenly and immediately to give a vote the effect of which, if successful, would be to suspend the preparations which we have considered it necessary to make? I can say, as one of the Ministers charged with the measures which may be necessary to be taken under this Vote of Credit, that such a course as is proposed by the right hon. Gentleman opposite would be one of the gravest inconvenience to the Public Service. The House is perfectly well aware that preparations have been going on, and are going on at this moment, both under my direction and under the direction of my noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty. These preparations are being made in full confidence that Parliament will sanction the expenditure that is necessary for them. These expectations were justified by the conduct of the House on this day last week. But if we are to be told now that the House is going to suspend its judgment on this Vote, to postpone its consideration until it is satisfied on all the questions that have arisen as to the conduct of the Government of this country, then my noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty and myself will be placed in a most difficult and embarrassing position, and a position that will certainly not be conducive to the good of the public. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition has spoken of his opinion as to the policy of the Government in the Soudan. Well, Sir, if the difficulties in regard to our policy in the Soudan perplex the mind of the Opposition, I think it is to be regretted that attention was not called earlier in the debate to that part of the question, and that it was left to half-past 12 to put forward the statement that they want more information. My right hon. Friend has said that we shall not shrink from any examination which may be thought necessary, either in regard to the Soudan or the Russian negotiations. If the right hon. Gentleman likes to bring forward a Vote of Censure on the policy of the Government in the Soudan, or in regard to the Russian negotiations, we shall not shrink from meeting it; but the proposition which we have urged is this—that the Vote of Credit did not afford a convenient opportunity, in the interests of the country, to discuss the policy of the Government, but that that is a subject to be treated entirely and distinctly apart from the Vote of Credit. It is to the interest of the country, and not of the Government alone, that no backwardness should be shown in providing the Supplies that are considered necessary for the Public Service in certain eventualities.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: The noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) must have been quite certain, from the manner in which the preliminary stage of this Vote was given—namely, without the slightest discussion—that the proposals of the Government are not likely to be interfered with in the long run. [*Laughter.*] Well, if the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department prefers any other words, I am willing to use them; but it seems to me that the Government should gather, from the unanimity displayed the other night, that there is no desire to embarrass the Government in this matter, and that there is not likely to be any opposition to the

actual Vote itself. What we desire is that we should have an opportunity of fully discussing the question in its new aspect. The Prime Minister seems to have forgotten what took place on a similar occasion to this some years ago, when he and his Friends did not hesitate to delay the House four or five nights on the discussion of a Vote of Credit. The right hon. Gentleman has stated that not a farthing of this money will be expended until this Vote has been agreed to—until the Resolution has been passed; and upon that ground he presses the House to vote the money without delay. What we should like to ask the Government, however, is whether a great deal of this money has not been already spent? The speech of the noble Marquess who preceded me, who spoke for himself and for his noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty, must, I think, convince every person in the House that a very large sum of this money we are asked to vote has been already expended, and very properly expended, in making preparations. Therefore, the threat of the Prime Minister, that not a single farthing of this money could be spent until we had passed the Vote to-night, is utterly worthless and should not have been made. I say that after the statement of the Prime Minister as to this arrangement that has been entered into with Russia, we have a right to ask to be allowed to see the statement which the Prime Minister has made to-night in print, so that on future evenings we may be able to ask further Questions. The subject is one of the most vital importance to the country. The Prime Minister may rest assured that no one can feel that more than we do ourselves. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Gentlemen opposite may laugh at that statement; but it is only right that we should have a full opportunity for discussion. No unnecessary delay will be attempted on our part in order to delay the Vote. I repeat that we have a perfect right to see this statement in print, and to discuss it, because it may be quite necessary to ask further Questions when we have had time to consider what has been laid before us.

MR. O'DONNELL said, that the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Sir R. Assheton Cross) had said that he was quite sure there would be no very great opposition to the proposals of Her Majesty's Government in the long run; and he (Mr. O'Donnell) could not help thinking that "the long run" was a very happy description of the operations of Her Majesty's Government throughout this affair. However, he need not say that it was not to enter upon the Main Question that he had risen, nor as an opponent even to the policy which Her Majesty's Government had sketched this evening. He was, however, in favour of the adjournment of this debate; amongst other reasons, he could not but think that on a question of such importance there ought to be due consideration for the opinions of the Representatives of Ireland, and he was not aware that any opportunity had been given to those Representatives to speak upon this matter. He agreed that, from an English point of view, very considerable harm might be done by the appearance of dissension being evidenced by a division on the present occasion. Let Her Majesty's Government consider that this debate was perfectly certain to be adjourned. What was the good of provoking an appearance of dissension on this question? If this debate was adjourned in consequence of the strong expression of opinion from the Opposition side of the House—if it was adjourned without any formal and regular opposition on the part of the Ministerial Party—there would be no particular attention paid to the opposition which had taken place, and certainly no interpretation abroad would be given to it of a character calculated to weaken the hands of Her Majesty's Government still further. Then what was the good of pushing the opposition to an actual division? Of course, they knew that Her Majesty's Government would have a numerical majority. The Ministerial majority would support them, and only a small minority would vote in favour of adjournment; but it was clear that the adjournment would take place, because there was a sufficient number of Members in the House perfectly determined to have an opportunity of discussing the matter. He spoke upon this subject in no factious spirit—[*A laugh*]—even though his observation appeared to have the effect of restoring the Secretary of State for the Home Department to his wonted equanimity. He trusted that if there was any more Business to be done to-night they might be allowed

to go to it without being dragged through the useless and troublesome formality of a vote in the Lobby, which could have no effect upon foreign nations, except to expose the fact that Her Majesty's Government were opposed by a considerable section in the House. A more unnecessary act on the part of Her Majesty's Government he could not conceive. As he had said before, he did not speak on this question as an exponent of compromise or breathing time, or whatever else they might like to call it. He believed that there were strong grounds for the policy Her Majesty's Government had indicated; but whilst entertaining that belief, he was just as strongly opposed to any summary closing of this debate as any other hon. Member could be.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 114; Noes 181: Majority 67.—(Div. List, No. 152.)

Original Question again proposed.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: I beg to move that the House do now adjourn.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Baron Henry De Worms.*)

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I venture even now to make an appeal to Her Majesty's Government. I would really ask them to consider the position into which they are forcing us in this matter. We have no desire in any way to stop the Supplies that may be necessary to secure the honour and the interest of the country—we showed that to the fullest extent when this Vote was discussed in Committee. We understood at that time that Her Majesty's Government had, through the Prime Minister, deliberately announced a certain policy; we approved of that policy, and we granted Supplies without discussion. This evening we have had other statements. I do not say whether they are different or not; but to us they bear a very different complexion indeed. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir William Harcourt) has found great fault with, I think, my noble Friend the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), who spoke of what had been said to us to-night as a policy of surrender. Well, Sir, I do not know whether it is a policy of surrender or not; but this I do know that it looked to us to be very like it, and what we desire in asking for the postponement of this Vote is that we may have, at least, one more occasion of debating this question with fuller knowledge as to what the policy of the Government really is. I do not, of course, want to go into that question now; but it would appear from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department that the whole circumstances that occurred at Penjdeh are to be referred to arbitration. Well, Sir, what were those circumstances? They were an unprovoked aggression upon our protected Ally the Ameer of Afghanistan. Has the Ameer, on whom the aggression was made——

MR. SPEAKER: I must remind the right hon. Baronet that he is not entitled to go into the general question.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I merely desired to ask, Sir, whether the Ameer had consented to arbitration? But I will not pursue the subject. Hon. Members opposite appear very anxious to prevent any further discussion of the matter; and that, I think, is an additional reason why we should press on the Government our demand for a further opportunity of discussion, a demand which is very moderate indeed when compared with the five nights the Liberal Opposition exacted from us, under similar circumstances, in 1878. I do not want to trespass the limits which you, Mr. Speaker, have assigned to me; but I do protest against our being told that this debate cannot be adjourned, because it will interfere with the spending of the money which Her Majesty's Government have asked for. All that we ask is that the chance of further debate shall not be postponed until—probably weeks hence—the whole Correspondence is presented to Parliament. We wish a delay of a few days, that we may consider what has passed to-night, that the country may consider what has been said, that we may endeavour to elicit some further information upon the policy of Her Majesty's Government in Afghanistan, and that we may discuss and consider the bearings of their policy in the Soudan, which can now hardly be called a policy of action. We wish an opportunity of discussing the Vote of £4,500,000 for the Soudan, which we have not yet had, because we voluntarily

abstained, on the statement of the Prime Minister, from bringing the subject before the House. I must say that if Her Majesty's Government refuse us this opportunity, they will take upon themselves the responsibility of refusing that which is the undoubted right of an Opposition.

MR. GLADSTONE: We have not been slow to inform the House that we did not refuse the adjournment and ask the House to proceed at once to a decision, except under a deep sense of a solemn public duty, and of the injury which would probably result to the great interests committed to our charge were an adjournment granted, and were the appearance of hesitation on the part of Parliament, which it would carry with it, to be manifested. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) might have deemed us exceedingly wrong in taking up that position; but he surely must have seen that, having taken it up, it was impossible for us to recede from it. We cannot, Sir, and we will not, place upon ourselves the responsibility of incurring risks of that kind. Now, the right hon. Gentleman says—"On Monday last you presented to us your policy; we were satisfied, and we voted the money; but to-night you have presented a policy with regard to which we are not satisfied, and, therefore, must have time to consider it." Sir, we have never presented to the House our policy. We have never professed to be able to place in the hands of the House the materials upon which alone it can satisfactorily or honourably to itself judge the conduct of the Government. On Monday night last, I expressly stated that I should say nothing except to go over the facts which I believed were notorious to the public at large; and, therefore, do not let it be supposed that it is a question of the presentation, sufficient or insufficient, of our policy. We have never professed to do it; we cannot do it until the transactions are completed. In that we are acting on a principle universally recognized. The mischief of repeated divisions of this kind is a very grave and serious mischief. We, the Government of the Queen, under our responsibility, tell the House of Commons that the consequences of opposition to this Vote, even under the form of moving the adjournment, which implies hesitation to the Vote, will be to imperil Imperial interests. Under those circumstances, we have no choice but to persevere in submitting to the House the confirmation of that opinion which has already, I regret to say, been voted by a large majority.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister says that if there is any hesitation in this matter it will look like hesitation on the part of Parliament. I wish to say that that would be a wrong and false impression. All we ask for is that more time should be given to consider the new statements made to-day. The Government have waited for a week since the day on which they received the assent of the House to their original proposal. The feeling of the House then shown was that of desiring heartily to support the Government, and to give such Votes as were required of it. That feeling, I believe, has not changed; but we know that important measures have been taken lately; we have been informed, to a certain extent, by the Government of what those measures are, and we are anxious in consequence to know what their real character is, in order that we may take care to see that the House and the country are not committed to that which may be dangerous in the future. But what is the answer which the right hon. Gentleman gives? He says—"We have never declared our policy." If the right hon. Gentleman has not declared his policy, and claims not to be bound to tell us his policy, he should not have told us so much as he has done. Last week, he made a statement as to what his wants were and as to the ground on which he was proceeding; and now he comes forward to tell us of the negotiations which are proceeding and which he hopes to complete and so place the matter upon a somewhat different ground on which it stood last week. We have no wish to oppose the policy of the Government, if we can understand it; but we wish to have a clear understanding as to it, and for that purpose we ask for more time and further opportunity of discussion. I do not think it is reasonable that this request should be refused; but, whether they refuse it or not, they must not misrepresent us as opposing the grant of money which is asked for, because that is not the case.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I only want to make one remark before the House goes to a division. The Prime Minister intends to persevere, and I gather from the words which have just fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) that so do we. We shall see whether any majority is sufficient to override the legitimate wishes of 114 Members of the House of Commons. Now, I will give to the House a basis on which we can act, a basis which I defy any Member of the Government to say one word against. In 1878, the noble Marquess the present Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) was Leader of the Liberal Opposition, and he resisted the Vote of Credit, and he resisted it on the very ground on which the Prime Minister has just furnished to the House. The Prime Minister said the Government had declared no policy to the House. As a matter of fact, I think they have; but that is what he says. Now, the noble Marquess, speaking on the Vote of Credit in 1878, said—

"It was a great and important principle that whenever a Government has appealed to Parliament for a Vote of Credit or for Supplies beyond the ordinary Estimates of the year, it has been in order to support some policy which has been formed and declared."

Question put.

The House *divided:* — Ayes 111; Noes 169: Majority 58.—(Div. List, No. 153.)

MR. SIDNEY HERBERT said, he had hoped that some Member of the Government would have himself moved the adjournment, after the result of the last division. He felt it his duty, under the circumstances, to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Sidney Herbert.*)

MR. GLADSTONE: I think the hon. Gentlemen who have voted with the minority cannot understand the position in which we are placed. They hold that it is their duty to ascertain, test, and prove the policy of the Government before they can vote this money. It is impossible, as I have told them, for us to lay our case before them until we are able to bring the Correspondence itself to such a condition that Papers can be presented. Those Papers will be our case. There is nothing that can be said in answer to questions to-day that can possibly place the case properly before you. Our case is upon the whole transaction and the whole Correspondence, and our conduct is according to precedent. I, of course, except cases where a number of Gentlemen are opposed to the Government and its whole policy or principle, like the case of 1878. The rule is that these demands are met by the House and granted by the House. As I have shown by a reference to the case of 1870, the trial of the conduct of the Government is taken apart from these Votes, which are deemed to be necessary in order to show both to the country and to foreign nations what are the intentions of the Government.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I do not know what the right hon. Gentleman means when he speaks about opposing the Vote on principle. Whether you call the question now raised a question of principle or not, it is, at all events, a question of high policy, because it is a question of the steps to be taken to secure the safety of our Indian Empire. It is on that ground I want to know what the Government are pledging us to do by this matter of grant. It is because we recognize the very great importance of the question that we desire to have time to point out some of the difficulties and dangers we see or think we see in the course the Government are pursuing, and we hope to take this opportunity of doing so. We only ask an adjournment for a very short time—two days will be sufficient to give us the opportunity.

MR. GLADSTONE: I may explain that we cannot place our case before the House either to-night or in a couple of days.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I must respectfully point out two considerations to the Prime Minister. He says that if it were possible to present the Papers, the Government would consider the propriety of our request for time. [MR. GLADSTONE dissented.] Well, I will not insist on that. The Prime Minister said to-night that he thought he heard something fall from me; I thought I heard something fall from him; but, of course, if the right hon. Gentleman denies it, I will not press the matter further. Only two arguments have been

urged against delay. One was that the money ought to be spent, and could not be spent until the Vote was passed. But the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War has told the House that it has already been spent. Therefore that argument can no longer be used. The other argument was that the hands of the Government would be weakened in the negotiations with Russia by the want of unanimity shown by the House. I think I can show the House how weak and fallacious that argument is—that Russia will raise her demands because she thinks that we are disunited. In what are we disunited? We are disunited because it is thought that the Government are giving too much to Russia. If there were a large minority who were practically Russian in policy, as the Opposition were in the last Parliament, I could understand that the expression of that Russian policy would weaken the hands of the Government. But the Opposition are now strengthening the hands of the Government, because the Government could say to Russia—"We cannot concede this or that point for if we do the unanimity we command in the House of Commons will be destroyed." So far from weakening the hands of the Government in these negotiations, I maintain that it would absolutely strengthen them.

MR. HEALY: I wish very respectfully to take the liberty of pointing out to the Opposition that they are scarcely going the right way of winning their demand from the Government. What I would do, is not to take so many divisions. I consider it a great advantage to an Opposition when they are able to debate a Motion for the adjournment of the House, or of the debate, and then, in spite of the New Rules, to discuss the Main Question. That is an undoubted advantage to the Opposition, which my Friends on these Benches never have. I would suggest that the Opposition should follow the course which has been successfully pursued below the Gangway, and that they should debate this question until the Government supporters have dropped away; and then, at 4 or 5 o'clock in the morning, they should take a division, and not till then.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I must congratulate hon. Gentlemen opposite upon the advice they have received from a proficient in the art of adjournment, and from so faithful an ally in the campaign. But there was one remark made by the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) which was not elucidated by the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy). The hon. Member for Hertford said that the Opposition, in the course they were taking, were strengthening the hands of the Government in their negotiations with Russia, and that the Opposition were carrying on the campaign to-night because they objected to the Government yielding too much to Russia. [MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I said I feared it was so.] I should like to know whether the contingent led by the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan is actuated exactly by the same motive, and whether the two sections led by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) and the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan, acting in concert, are at one in their foreign policy, by which the hon. Member says they will be able to strengthen the hands of the Government in the negotiations? [*Cries of* "Order!"] I apologize to the House for leaving the question of adjournment; but I thought I was entitled to say what I have in reply to the hon. Member for Hertford, as I am anxious to know the exact views of hon. Members who are supporting this adjournment.

LORD JOHN MANNERS: I think the right hon. Gentleman is not seriously anxious to terminate this discussion, for by the remarks he has made he has done much to prolong it for the next few hours. His speech was a deliberate challenge to Irish Members below the Gangway to get up in their places and say whether they agree with the right hon. Gentleman upon this matter; and this is the way in which responsible Ministers of the Crown, at this hour of the morning, waste the precious hours and moments of the Session. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department has challenged the Irish Members, who are never—to use a common phrase—as a rule very backward in coming forward to attack Her Majesty's Ministers. We have heard no substantial reason whatever, why the reasonable proposal now made should not be accepted. The

Prime Minister went too far when he said we were challenging the whole of the Ministerial policy. We have done nothing of the kind. What we have said is that the statement of the Prime Minister was of so startling and so mysterious a character that it requires further elucidation than that which it has received during this debate. For that reason, and that reason alone, we ask for the adjournment, and I sincerely trust that the Government will consent to grant it.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, that references had been made to what took place in 1878 during the course of the discussion, and he had since examined the report of the debate in that year on the Vote of Credit. He found that the Liberal Party on the occasion referred to, led by the right hon. Gentleman then on the Treasury Bench, occupied in the first reading of the Vote of Credit five nights, that the Prime Minister made a speech which covered 14 pages of *Hansard*, and that there was a further debate on the second reading on the Vote of Credit which also took up a considerable length of time. The Prime Minister made use of one or two sentences in the course of the debate which, with the permission of the House, he would like to quote. The right hon. Gentleman was opposing the Vote of Credit, and he said—

"It is asked for purposes in the dark, for purposes in the air, for purposes which are still behind the screen."

Then there followed this remarkable addition, that—

"We have heard from Her Majesty's Government that probably the bulk of the Vote will not be wanted, and that the real object is to make us strong in the Council to be held."

He might go on *ad infinitum;* but he would simply remind Ministers that hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House—the present Opposition—had passed the Vote of Credit last Monday without a single criticism. Her Majesty's Government had waited a whole week before they brought forward the Report of the Vote, and that evening they confused the House with a statement so extraordinary and inexplicable that it would seem that they did not know their own meaning. Hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House now asked that the debate should be adjourned for two nights in order that they might be in a position to know the meaning and bearing of the momentous step to which Her Majesty's Government had committed the Empire. That was neither an extraordinary proposal nor an extravagant demand. They merely asked for an extension of time, and the plea that it was essential to the interests of the Empire that the Vote should be passed to-night was utterly absurd. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington), as his hon. Friend near him had pointed out, had demolished that argument. The money was being spent, and he challenged any hon. Member to get up and say that the adjournment of the debate would in any way affect that. He trusted the Opposition would stand firm, and would not be intimidated by the hectoring manner just now adopted by the Prime Minister.

MR. D. DAVIES said, he hoped the Government would persevere and take the Vote that night, and he trusted that the Opposition would think better of the matter and allow the Vote to pass. In his opinion, if Her Majesty's Government had erred at all, they had done so in giving too much information to the House. He was convinced that if the debate were adjourned some mischief would result from it, and therefore he hoped the Government would stand by what they said and carry the Vote if they kept the House all night.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said, to a certain extent he agreed with the hon. Member who had just spoken (Mr. D. Davies), that perhaps the Government had given too much information. The complaint of the Opposition was that the Government had a week ago given information of a certain character, and that to-night they had stated something altogether different. Under the circumstances hon. Gentlemen on those Benches wanted time to reconcile the two statements—that was to say, the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister when the Vote of Credit was introduced and taken, and the statement made that evening. The right hon. Gentleman had told them that it was the invariable practice for Votes of this nature to be passed without discussion; but he had not given the House any precedent for two entirely different statements being made by the Government on the same Vote. He believed

he was stating the views of almost every hon. Member on those Benches when he said they had no intention of opposing the Vote of Credit.

MR. P. A. MUNTZ said, there was one remark which had fallen from the Prime Minister with which he believed the majority of hon. Members on that side of the House would be satisfied—it was that hesitation on the part of the House might have a very injurious effect. He was quite sure that hon. Members would appreciate the force of those words, because the many failures on the part of Her Majesty's Government had been clearly due to hesitation and timidity. The policy submitted to the House on Monday last was altogether at variance with the Ministerial statement of to-day. The Vote had been taken for the purpose of compelling the Russian Government to carry out their engagements entered into in 1873, and also on the 17th of last March. But the House was now asked to enter upon negotiations.

MR. SPEAKER: I would remind the hon. Gentleman that the Question before the House is not the Main Question, but the Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned," and to that, according to the Rules of the House, the debate has to be confined.

MR. P. A. MUNTZ said, he, of course, bowed to the ruling of Mr. Speaker. He was giving reasons why the Opposition were entitled to consideration at the hands of Her Majesty's Government in respect of the Motion for the adjournment of the debate.

COLONEL NOLAN said, from an individual point of view he should describe the Prime Minister in this debate as having shown kimself to be very firm, and the Leader of the Opposition very obstinate. There was a large number of hon. Members on both Benches, and as the debate seemed likely to continue for some time, he had to make the practical suggestion that it was impossible for a long debate to be sustained in the absence of proper Commissariat arrangements in the Lobby. He wished, therefore, that Mr. Speaker would give directions that the Supper Room should be kept open, as was usual in similar cases.

MR. RITCHIE said, he would ask the Government whether they thought that wrangling over the question of the adjournment of the debate was likely to strengthen their hands? The right hon. Gentleman could not but feel that, to say the least of it, there was a strong argument in favour of the Opposition having some further time for discussing this question—namely, that so far from there being any idea of weakening the hands of the Government, the object they had in view was, if possible, to strengthen them. He suggested to the right hon. Gentleman to consider whether it would not be possible to end this wrangle, and make arrangements to renew the debate at 4 o'clock to-morrow. No doubt, the Government would not necessarily have precedence to-morrow; but he thought it could be hardly doubted that no one would intervene to prevent the discussion being continued at the time named and brought to a conclusion. He trusted the Government would remove the necessity for further discussion of the Motion for Adjournment, which could by no possibility strengthen their hands.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 106; Noes 164: Majority 58.—(Div. List, No. 154.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. BRODRICK said, that after the strong feeling shown by the Members of the Opposition in the three divisions in which the Government had had a decreasing majority, and the Opposition a corresponding increase in the number of those who supported the Motion for the adjournment of the debate, it was absolutely necessary for the convenience of the House that the Prime Minister should know that hon. Gentlemen on those Benches were prepared to pursue the course they had taken to the end. He sincerely hoped that the struggle would not be prolonged, seeing that it could have but one effect—namely, that of damaging the country still further in the estimation of foreign countries, and of still further discrediting the already damaged reputation of Her Majesty's Government in this matter. For his own part, he must say that the Members of the Opposition who had sat silent there and had heard the discussion had not heard one word from their side of the House indicative of a desire to act contrary to the wish of the Government in regard to the actual Vote in Supply. The contentions they had put forward had

met with no reply from the Government except that of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, to which he (Mr. Brodrick) ventured to suggest that a sufficient answer had been made by his hon. Friend the Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour). He hoped that no further division would be taken; and he would put before the Prime Minister the fact that at that hour of the morning this controversy could only end in the Government being obliged ultimately to give way, in addition to the fact that the late Sitting would be chronicled and commented upon in every paper in the country.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Brodrick.*)

MR. GLADSTONE: I do not think it is much to the credit of the House or of anyone else to follow the example of the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Brodrick) in expressing the great pain he feels on the present occasion. We also, and no doubt many others, feel great pain; but I do not know that it advances the case to allege it. The hon. Member says that the argument I used about giving a regular authority to the Government to spend money was entirely disposed of by the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour). It is true that, in anticipation of the judgment of Parliament, before the question has been put to Parliament, it is frequently the duty of the Government in urgent circumstances to give orders; but giving orders is not spending money. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!" *and laughter.*] I believe that I am right in saying that no payment has been made by the Government under the circumstances in regard to which this Vote is now asked for. I believe there is no doubt about that. It is quite a different thing to proceed in anticipation of the Vote of the House, and where no opportunity has occurred to the House to give the Vote, and to proceed with money already voted. ["Question!"] I am coming to my point. Well, then, my duty is not merely to express my pain on this occasion, for that would make no one very much wiser; but my duty is to see whether there is any mode by which the essential part of the views entertained by both sides of the House can be met. Now, I understand—I have heard it from many speakers—that there is no intention to oppose this Vote. [LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: There is no pledge.] But the general tone of the debate has shown a disposition on the part of hon. Gentlemen opposite to pass the Vote—they say they do not wish to oppose it. Well, what I propose is this. Let us have the Vote, as you do not wish to oppose it, and let us give you an early opportunity for discussion, which can be done in one of two ways. Which of these alternatives we should adopt I will not now discuss. One way will be to put the Order for Supply on the Paper for Thursday as the second Order. In that case, there will be an opportunity of raising a debate on this subject before going into Committee of Supply. That is one method by which the object desired could be attained. The other method—if there is no technical objection to it, and I should like to have a few hours to consider it—would be still more regular and appropriate—namely, that we should immediately obtain the Vote, which would enable us to bring in a Consolidated Fund Bill, and upon a stage of that Bill on Thursday the discussion could be had. I believe that, undoubtedly, in one of these two ways each side can attain its object. We shall get our Vote—a Vote which is essential to us, and which we require in the public interest—and you will have your discussion, which is the thing you want. We cannot produce our case until we are in a position to lay the Papers before the House, which we will do at the earliest possible moment. If you think the public interest demands further discussion, that can be had on the first day upon which it is possible for us to comply with the request.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister has quite accurately expressed, I think, the general feeling on this side of the House. We do not desire to obstruct the Vote. We only desire to have an early opportunity of taking notice of and of discussing the important communication made to us at the beginning of the evening. As matters formerly stood, it seemed to us that our only chance of discussing the matter was on this Vote. The proposal of the right hon. Gentleman, however, has materially altered the aspect of affairs, and I should think his offer is one that can well be accepted.

MR. GLADSTONE: If the discussion is to take place in Supply, it must not be the first Order.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that he will give an opportunity for this discussion on Thursday?

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes, if we can manage it. I am not positive. I do not know that we can.

MR. RAIKES: It seems to me that the matter can be easily arranged if the right hon. Gentleman will put down Committee of Ways and Means as the first Order for Thursday. I presume that a Consolidated Fund Bill cannot be brought in in relation to this Vote until the money has been obtained in Committee of Ways and Means. I would suggest that we should have an understanding before the debate concludes to-night that the Committee of Ways and Means should be the first Order on Thursday. There can be no difficulty in fixing it, and the discussion could then take place at once.

MR. GLADSTONE: We bind ourselves to find an opportunity on Thursday.

MR. RAIKES: What I want to say is that any proposition to bring this matter on as a second Order on Thursday would be extremely inconvenient to the House. What we have been contending for, and what I venture to repeat to the Prime Minister with all consideration, because I have no wish to embarrass him in this matter, is the importance of having this discussion upon the first Order on Thursday.

MR. GLADSTONE: It will be so substantially, as it will be easy to put down as first Order a subject which will not occupy any length of time.

MR. BRODRICK: I shall be happy to withdraw the Motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it your pleasure that this Motion be withdrawn?

MR. O'DONNELL said, he wished to speak on that subject. He had understood that there was a serious opposition on the part of Her Majesty's Opposition to the Vote being passed to-night. It seemed, however, that after all the solemn declarations they had heard to the effect that it was a matter of principle that the Vote of Credit should be discussed, and that the policy of the Government should be explained before this money was granted, the Opposition would be satisfied with a Motion for talk's sake on Thursday next. He confessed that it seemed to him that the Front Opposition Bench had been trifling with the House. He had listened with great attention to the general arguments which had been brought forward, and which seemed to have completely changed the minds of the Opposition; and he confessed that, beyond the valuable and novel financial maxim that giving orders was not spending money, he was utterly unable to discover a single new light thrown by the Premier upon the subject. As he (Mr. O'Donnell) was a man of limited income, he only wished that the trading classes in general would accept this financial maxim of the right hon. Gentleman. Of course, deserted as the Constitutional Opposition had been by Her Majesty's regular Opposition on the present occasion, the only course he could take would be to object to the withdrawal of the Motion. It was very possible that the Irish Parliamentary Party would have something to say on the subject; but once more he must protest most strongly against all this discussion taking place to-night, and this picture of British disunion being held up to Russia, merely for the purpose of bringing forward a "talkee-talkee" Motion on Thursday next.

Question put, and *negatived*.

Original Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 130; Noes 20: Majority 110.—(Div. List, No. 155.)

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND) [REMUNERATION OF OFFICERS].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of remuneration of the Officers employed in carrying into effect the provisions of any Act of the present Session for the Registration of Voters in Ireland.

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow*.

House adjourned at a quarter before Three o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 5th May, 1885.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEE — *Report*—Westminster Hall Restoration [No. 99].
PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Barristers Admission (Ireland) * (100); Metropolitan Streets Act (1867) Extension * (101); Sea Fisheries (Scotland) Amendment * (102).
Third Reading—Water Companies (Regulation of Powers) * (87), and *passed.*

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—THE NEGOTIATIONS.

QUESTION.

EARL DE LA WARR: I wish to ask the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a Question of which I have given him private Notice—Whether the proposal of Her Majesty's Government with regard to the Afghan Frontier question is to be understood as one of mediation or of arbitration—that is, whether it is one inviting the good offices of a friendly Power, or one placing the question at issue in the hands of an irresponsible umpire, whose decision would be final?

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, there are one or two Peers on the other side of the House who, I think, have not not such a strong conviction as I have that no one is capable of putting Questions with greater authority or clearness than the noble Marquess the Leader of the Opposition.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I entirely disagree with you.

EARL GRANVILLE: Therefore, I do not think it necessary, when the noble Marquess has put a Question one day, that some of his Friends should come to the rescue with another Question on the following day. To make it clear, at the same time I must say that I have nothing to add to what I stated yesterday; but as there is in the Question of the noble Earl something in the nature of censure upon what has been done, I should like to say that what has been done appears to me a very simple and honourable proceeding on the part of the States concerned. In private life I can conceive nothing better than that if two individuals have pressing matters of great practical importance to themselves, and supposing that a very disagreeable and regrettable incident has occurred which, to a certain degree, affects their honour, and on which they make counter statements and contentions—I think your Lordships will agree with me that it would be better to refer that question to the judgment of some friend in whom they may have perfect confidence to enable the matter to be closed with honour to both sides. That appears to me to be exactly what has been done in this case. The two nations were discussing a question of great importance—namely, the delimitations of the Frontier of Afghanistan—and a regrettable incident occurred which, rightly or wrongly, seems to affect the honour and interest of the parties concerned; and, instead of going to the *ultima ratio*, I think it is an honourable proceeding on our part to propose that reference should be made to the judgment of the Head of a friendly State, and I think it equally creditable and honourable to Russia that she should have concurred in that offer.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I must decline the office of universal Questioner which the noble Earl would confer on me; and after this competition between my noble Friend (Earl De La Warr) and myself, I confess that he has entirely carried off the palm. But I cannot for a moment attempt any competition with him, for he has got a longer speech out of the noble Earl than I ever succeeded in doing. He has not only done that, but he has obtained a revelation from the noble Earl of the fact which we have never heard before—that there are not only counter contentions but counter statements to be referred to the arbitrator. That throws new light on the matter. The only statements are those of General Komaroff on the one side, and Captain Yate on the other; and it appears that the truth or falsehood of those statements is to be referred to the arbitrator. I am exceedingly obliged to my noble Friend for having extracted that statement.

RAILWAY BRAKES—LEGISLATION.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

EARL DE LA WARR asked Her Majesty's Government, Whether it was their intention to take any steps this

Session to make it compulsory upon Railway Companies to adopt efficient brakes in accordance with the regulations of the Board of Trade? He should not, he said, enter into details on this matter, as it had already, on more than one occasion, been discussed in this House. Two years ago, in consequence of the President of the Board of Trade undertaking to introduce a Bill dealing with the matter of brakes, he withdrew a Bill he had brought in dealing with that matter. Since then no steps had been taken by Her Majesty's Government to enforce the recommendations of the Board of Trade, which were accordingly, at the present time, disregarded by some of the most important Railway Companies in the country.

LORD SUDELEY said, that the answer which he had to give the noble Earl was that the Board of Trade could not undertake to promote any legislation during this Session in regard to railways.

PUBLIC HEALTH—CREMATION.

OBSERVATIONS. QUESTION.

The EARL of ONSLOW, in rising to call attention to the erection of a public crematorium at Woking and the cremation of a body there on the 26th March last, and to inquire Whether Her Majesty's Government will carry out their expressed intention of using the powers which they possess in the matter for the discouragement of the practice; and what those powers are? said, that in 1874 the Cremation Society commenced to erect a crematorium at Woking. A Memorial, influentially and largely signed, was sent to the Home Secretary (Sir R. Assheton Cross) as a protest, and he intimated to the Cremation Society that any action on their part would be followed immediately by an attempt to test the legality of their proceedings. The Cremation Society then consented to defer any operations until the pleasure of the Home Secretary was signified. In the following year the present Home Secretary gave a very similar answer. But a case occurred in Wales some months ago, in which a Dr. Price cremated the body of a child, and legal proceedings being instituted against him, Mr. Justice Stephen expressed an opinion which was assumed to be in favour of the legality of cremation; but he laid it down that, even supposing cremation to be legal, it was only legal if so conducted as not to be a nuisance in the neighbourhood. In consequence of this decision a Question was again addressed to the Home Secretary, and he stated that it was still the intention of Her Majesty's Government to use the powers which they possessed in the matter for the discouragement of the practice. Since then the Cremation Society had so far completed their building at Woking that on the 26th of March they duly cremated the body of a lady. At present there were stringent regulations as to the burial of the dead; but inasmuch as the law never contemplated the burning of the dead, there were no laws whatever to regulate cremation. Their Lordships would feel that this was fraught with great danger, for cremation might annihilate all proof of foul play. The Cremation Society had, no doubt, certain regulations drawn up with a view to avoiding this, but these regulations had no binding force, and might be altered or abolished at any time. A Bill was brought in last year which proposed to make cremation a misdemeanour if done without the sanction of the Home Secretary; but it was not passed into law, and consequently there were no regulations whatever. There were 500 acres of ground at Woking devoted to the purposes of a cemetery, and not one-twentieth part of it had been so used, so that there was no necessity for cremation in that place. The inhabitants of Woking had been alarmed at the perfect immunity with which the cremation on March 26 last had been carried out, and still more so at a recent statement of Sir Spencer Wells, in which he intimated that the Society were now satisfied as to their legal position and were ready to receive bodies for cremation. This crematorium was one mile and a-half from any station and seven miles from any large town, and in a rather scattered portion of the parish of Woking, but it was surrounded by large public institutions. The unfortunate clergyman of the parish could see from his windows into the crematorium itself. There were other gentlemen in the neighbourhood to whom it was a great annoyance, and the feeling on

the subject in the locality was very strong indeed. If the Government were anxious to encourage cremation, they had, not far from this place, a large portion of moorland which they might devote to the experiments of the Society. In answer to the Question he put the other day, the noble Earl said that the practice of cremation was so uncommon as not to require any legislation. He believed, however, that the time had now come when the Government ought to make up their minds. The inhabitants of Woking looked with aversion and disgust upon the erection of this crematorium, and they called upon the Home Secretary and Parliament to deliver them from the annoyance. He trusted that the Government would say under what restrictions cremation should be carried on, or give the inhabitants of Woking an opportunity of stating their objections to this crematorium. He begged to ask the Question which stood in his name?

The EARL of DALHOUSIE said, that he did not take any exception to the noble Earl's interesting speech; but, in answer to his Question, should have to repeat, in very much the same language, what he stated the other day, that Her Majesty's Government did not consider it any part of their duty to encourage or discourage the practice of cremation. As to the power which the Government had for dealing with the matter, the noble Earl had himself answered that question when he referred to the judgment given the other day by Mr. Justice Stephen. The Government had no power to interfere, and until the practice became so common as to be obnoxious to the people of this country, and they showed a more general desire to have legislation on the subject, it was not the intention of the Government to deal with it.

SEA FISHERIES (SCOTLAND) AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the law relating to Scottish sea fisheries, and for other purposes relating thereto—Was *presented* by The Earl of DALHOUSIE; read 1ª. (No. 102.)

House adjourned at a quarter before Five o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 5th May, 1885.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEE — *Report* — Commons [No. 179].

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) (No. 8)* [158].

Committee — Registration (Occupation Voters) (*re-comm.*) [140]—R.P.; Friendly Societies Act (1875) Amendment * [139]—R.P.

Considered as amended—Third Reading—Submarine Telegraph Cables * [136], and *passed.*

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

CHANNEL TUNNEL (EXPERIMENTAL WORKS) BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Amendment proposed, "That the Order be postponed until Tuesday the 12th instant."—(*Mr. Webster.*)

SIR HUSSEY VIVIAN said, he should like to know upon what ground the second reading of this Bill was to be again postponed? It had been put down upon the Paper for second reading once before and postponed, and he wished to know what reason there was why the discussion should not be taken now?

MR. WEBSTER said, he had moved the postponement of the second reading in the absence of his hon. Friend the Member for Walsall (Sir Charles Forster), who was unable to be present. He understood that the postponement had the consent of the parties interested.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, it seemed to him to be an extraordinary proceeding that this Bill should be put off in this way from time to time. To a great many hon. Members, who might admire the engineering skill displayed by the promoters of the Bill, it was a matter of great inconvenience to be obliged to come down to the House time after time at that early hour and sacrifice other important engagements in order to oppose the Bill, and then to find that its consideration was suddenly

postponed. He understood that the President of the Board of Trade, who was absent at that moment, had decided upon giving a strong opposition to the Bill. If that was the case, why was not the right hon. Gentlemen now present, unless there were some strong reason to the contrary, in order to inform the House whether the Bill was to be discussed or not? This was not the first time that the second reading had been put off, and it would be a great convenience to those who had other matters to attend to if they could know when the discussion was really intended to come on, so that they should not be brought down to the House needlessly for the purpose of opposing the Bill.

MR. HICKS said, that as his name was down upon the Paper as objecting to the second reading of the Bill, he hoped he might be allowed to explain what he knew of this transaction. A fortnight ago he was told, at 20 minutes to 4 o'clock, that an arrangement had been come to with the President of the Board of Trade to postpone the Bill until that day; and two days ago he received an intimation from the promoters that they had again made arrangements with the President of the Board of Trade to put the discussion off until that day week. As an independent Member he could not himself refuse to accede to that arrangement; but he quite agreed with the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Hussey Vivian) that it was most inconvenient that a Bill of this character, in which a large number of Members took an interest, should be put off from time to time, and perhaps brought on in the end when hon. Members might not expect it. He must express a hope that it would now be clearly understood that under no circumstances would the second reading be put off again if it were now allowed to be fixed for that day week.

SIR HUSSEY VIVIAN remarked that as this was the second time the Bill had appeared upon the Paper, he did not think he would be doing wrong to move that the Order for the Second Reading be discharged.

MR. SPEAKER: That would be contrary to the usual practice.

SIR HUSSEY VIVIAN: Then I have no desire to press it.

COLONEL HARCOURT wished to say a few words upon the Bill if it would be in Order for him to do so.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman would not be in Order in discussing the merits of the Bill upon a proposal to defer the second reading until a future day.

Second Reading *deferred* till *Tuesday* next.

QUESTIONS.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—WORK OF THE COURT OF SESSION.

DR. CAMERON asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it is true that the work of the office of the Junior Lord Ordinary, which should be cleared from day to day, has fallen into arrear in consequence of certain Deputy Clerks of Session refusing to work during vacation; whether it is the case that, in consequence, the Junior Lord Ordinary, sitting in chambers, has been obliged to dispose of many cases without any clerical assistance; and, whether the Deputy Clerks of Session are, or are not, bound to discharge their ordinary official duties during vacation as well as during Session?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): I have not completed my inquiry into this matter; but so far as my information goes, it does not confirm the statements either that the work of the office of the Junior Lord Ordinary has fallen into arrear in consequence of certain Deputy Clerks of Session refusing to work during Vacation, or that the Lord Ordinary has been put to any inconvenience. The Deputy Clerks of Session have certain duties to perform during the vacation. They are necessarily not the same, nor are they so heavy, as their duties during Session; but I believe they are well defined by long established custom.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS, MANORHAMILTON UNION.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What is the decision of the Local Government Board upon the claim of Mr. James Harte, candidate in the recent election for the Lurganboy Division, Manorhamilton Union, to have eleven proxy votes given for Mr. Thomas Conboy disallowed on the ground that the profit rents in respect of which the votes

were given had been reduced under the Land Act since the proxy papers were lodged in 1881; also to have two other votes disallowed for incorrect filling up of paper; and to have allowed to the said James Harte two votes given for him by women occupiers who have paid the rates and been recognised as tenants for many years?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Local Government Board are in communication with Mr. Harte, and await his reply to a letter they have addressed to him on the subject.

COMMITTEE OF PRIVILEGES — THE LOVAT PEERAGE — REMOVAL OF COFFIN PLATES FROM VAULT AT KIRKHILL.

MR. MORGAN LLOYD asked the Lord Advocate, If his attention has been called to statements contained in *The Dundee Advertiser* and other Scottish newspapers concerning the alleged removal of coffin plates from the vault of the Fraser family in the parish kirkyard of Kirkhill, under the authority of Lord Lovat or his factor; whether, in view of the litigation now pending between Lord Lovat and a claimant to the Lovat peerage, and the fact that such coffin plates might be evidence of the pedigree of the claimant, such a proceeding is lawful; and, whether, having regard to the excitement caused by such proceedings in the North of Scotland, he will cause inquiries to be made as to the truth of such statements? The hon. Member added a further Question, as to whether the Lord Advocate was aware that Lord Lovat had taken this inopportune period to call a meeting of heritors, for the purpose of levelling the Kirkhill kirkyard in certain parts, and thereby disturbing graves and gravestones; and, whether he would take steps to induce Lord Lovat not to proceed further in the matter during the litigation now pending?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): My attention has been called to these statements, and I have caused inquiry to be made in regard to them. Briefly stated, the following appear to be the facts:—In the month of September last, Sir William Fraser, of Leadclune, asked Lord Lovat's permission to visit the vault in Kirkhill Churchyard, where a number of members of the Lovat family, including a grandaunt of Sir William Fraser, are buried. Lord Lovat granted the permission sought, and the fact that the permission had been granted was communicated to the minister of Kirkhill, who kept one of the keys of the vault, the other key, which was kept at the estate office, being at the same time forwarded to the minister. On 25th September, Sir William Fraser, accompanied by a gentleman, understood to be his secretary, met the minister by appointment at the churchyard, and, along with a blacksmith and a mason, went into the vault and examined the coffins. Sir William stated to the party that his chief desire was to ascertain whether Lord Simon, of the '45, was buried in the vault. In the course of examining the coffins, it was found that the plates on seven were lying loose upon the lids, the nails having become decayed, and the inscriptions on the plates were illegible, being covered with rust. I am informed that Sir William Fraser states that he did not direct the plates to be removed, but the persons in attendance understood that he did so direct, and it is certain that the plates were carried to the manse by the blacksmith and mason, and the minister, at Sir William's request, undertook to get them cleaned by a well-known jeweller in Inverness. A few days afterwards the minister took the plates to the jeweller, by whom they were cleaned, and also varnished to keep off the rust in future. They were afterwards returned by the jeweller to the minister, who, at the request of Sir William, had them fastened upon the coffins from which they had been respectively taken. Neither Lord Lovat nor anyone in his employment gave any authority for the plates or anything else in the vault being interfered with, nor had he or they any idea that any such thing was contemplated; and if Lord Lovat had been asked for permission to interfere with the plates, he would not have granted it. Lord Lovat only learned accidentally what had been done a considerable time afterwards. I have no information in regard to the last Question of the hon. Member, but I shall inquire into it.

PARLIAMENT—PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—WESTMINSTER HALL (RESTORATION).

MR. MITCHELL HENRY asked the honourable Member for Leeds, Whe-

ther the Board of Works will apply the solution, which has proved so efficacious in preserving the stone of Cleopatra's Needle, to the Norman stonework recently uncovered by the demolition of the Law Courts at Westminster Hall?

MR. HERBERT GLADSTONE: The solution applied to the stone of Cleopatra's Needle—the Indestructible Paint Company's stone solution—has not been tested for a sufficient length of time on that structure to enable a decision to be arrived at as to its efficacy. Moreover, the material of the Needle is of a totally different character from that of the stone work of Westminster Hall. Where the solution in question has been applied to defective pieces of the stone of the Houses of Parliament for test purposes it has not proved satisfactory. So far as can be judged, no solution will be necessary for the preservation of the Norman stone work of Westminster Hall if the proposed cloister building be erected to enclose it.

THE SCOTTISH ISLANDS—DEATHS IN THE ISLAND OF RONA.

DR. CAMERON asked the Lord Advocate, with regard to the two shepherds found dead in the Island of Rona, Whether the statement is true that they were placed in the island to prevent fishing crews from stealing sheep from thence, and that attempts at sheepstealing were made after they were stationed there; and, whether any steps were taken by the police or other authorities to verify, so far as practicable, the cause of death by examination of the bodies or otherwise?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): The two shepherds were stationed in the Island of Rona to watch the tacksmen's sheep. They went there in June, and were twice visited in August. In that month nine men landed on the Island and forcibly carried away five sheep and some tobacco belonging to the shepherds. The case was investigated at the time; but the men have not been identified. The Island, which is 40 miles from the Butt of Lewis, was inaccessible from the month of August till the 22nd of April. On that day the shepherds were found dead with their clothes on, one inside their house, and the other outside near the door. They had an ample supply of fuel and provisions. The bodies were buried without being stripped or examined. No marks of violence were observed. As soon as the case was reported a warrant to exhume the bodies was obtained by the Procurator Fiscal, and it will be executed as soon as possible.

DR. CAMERON asked when the order for exhumation was issued?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, he would ascertain the exact date.

PUBLIC HEALTH (METROPOLIS)—STATE OF THE RIVER LEA.

MR. JAMES STUART asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board, What steps are being taken to secure the immediate carrying out by the Tottenham Local Board of the sewage purification works in connection with the discharge of sewage into the River Lea, for which the Local Government Board have sanctioned the borrowing of the necessary money; what prospect there is of these works being completed before the summer; whether he is aware that Petitions to Parliament, setting forth the deplorable state of the River Lea from sewage pollution and the consequent danger to health, and praying for the speedy execution of the work, have been presented from 3,000 inhabitants of the neighbourhood, and from persons in the district using the river for purposes of recreation; and, whether, in the event of the purification works not being completed before the summer, he can say what steps the Local Government Board is prepared to adopt in case of the breaking out of an epidemic in the East of London consequent on the condition of the river?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: We have sanctioned a loan of £13,000 for works in connection with the sewage outfall of the Tottenham district with a view to the purification of the sewage before it is discharged into the Lea. We are assured by the Local Board that they will lose no opportunity of pressing forward the completion of the works, and that they will limit the time for their construction to the shortest practicable period. There is no probability, however, of the extensive works proposed being completed before the summer. In the meantime the Local Board will provide certain temporary pumping power. Two large new precipitating

tanks have been completed. We are aware of the complaints as to the condition of the river during the dry season of last year; and we learn that recently, while a new sewer was being constructed, on two occasions one of the sewers broke, and until it was repaired the sewage found its way into the river. If the Local Board proceed promptly in carrying out the works proposed the Board do not at present see that they have any authority to interfere.

AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT—INSECTS INJURIOUS TO CROPS.

MR. RANKIN asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether the Agricultural Department has any reports or treatises upon insects injurious to crops, and especially to hops; and, if so, whether they have been published in a form suitable to farmers and hop growers, and can be obtained by the public?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Agricultural Department receive from time to time Reports from the United States of America and elsewhere containing information on insects injurious to crops; but there are not any Reports prepared by the Department itself dealing especially with the subject. I have given instructions that the Reports I have mentioned should be looked carefully through; and if it appears that we can extract from them Papers likely to be useful to farmers which could be laid in a small volume before Parliament this shall be done.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—SURVEYORS' CLERKS.

MR. HEALY asked the Postmaster General, Whether there is at present employed in the Surveyor's Department of the Post Office in Ireland, as acting Surveyor's Clerk, an officer belonging to the London Office; is there no officer on the Irish establishment available or competent for the post; and, would the employment of an Irish officer effect a saving in the allowances paid by the Department to officers while travelling or absent from headquarters?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: An officer of the London Post Office is now employed as an acting surveyor's clerk in Ireland. At the time he was sent no officer on the Irish establishment could be spared and recommended for this duty. No appreciable saving would be effected by the employment of an Irish instead of an English officer, the allowances being the same. I may add that when recently I had occasion to appoint five surveyors' clerks in Ireland I selected five officers then serving on the Irish establishment.

POST OFFICE—ANNUITIES AND INSURANCE TABLES.

MR. RANKIN asked the Postmaster General, Whether he will cause some simple and easily understood tables of Post Office Annuities and Insurance to be printed and placed in all post offices, so that comparatively uneducated persons may be able to learn the benefits offered by the Post Office?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that on the commencement of the Government Annuities and Insurance Act last year, the principal rules relating thereto, with simple illustrations, were circulated throughout the entire Kingdom, and are obtainable at any Money Order Office. A notice is exhibited at every office in which insurance and annuity business is transacted.

LIGHTHOUSES—BURNERS—SIR JAMES DOUGLAS'S BURNERS.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN asked the President of the Board of Trade, with reference to his statement that Sir James Douglas, who had sold his patent rights in certain lighthouse burners for £5,000 in cash, and £25,000 worth of shares, had given the free use of the burners to lighthouse authorities, Whether it is true that he, or his Company, had restricted their manufacture to three English firms specially licensed for that purpose, and thus deprived the lighthouse authorities of the advantage of free competition, by public advertisement, in the purchase of these burners; and, will he say what sum each of the three licensees pays to the Company for this exclusive right to make these burners?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, that there appeared to be an error in the statement attributed to him, as the figures should be £500 instead of £5,000. He had made inquiries from the Elder Brethren of the Trinity House, and they had informed him that there were only

three firms who had any experience in the construction of these burners; but there were no such restrictions as those mentioned in the Question.

DISPENSARIES (IRELAND) ACT — DISPENSARY DOCTOR, SKULL DISTRICT.

MR. DEASY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the late Dispensary Medical Officer of the Skull District, County Cork, was also Medical Officer to the Constabulary of that district; whether, on his death, Dr. Shipsey, a man of long experience in his profession, was elected dispensary doctor; whether the County Inspector has appointed Dr. Sweetman, who has become qualified to practise medicine within the past few months, Constabulary Medical Attendant; whether this is contrary to custom; and, whether he will direct that Dr. Sweetman's appointment be cancelled, and that Dr. Shipsey be given the position?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Dr. Sweetman, who, I believe, was qualified at the time, was appointed Medical Officer to the Constabulary at Skull, on the occurrence of a vacancy in February last, and was then the only candidate. Dr. Shipsey, who has since been elected Dispensary Doctor, at that time resided at Dunmanway, over 27 miles away. It is not the invariable rule to appoint the Dispensary Doctors to these posts; but the Inspector General informs me that he understands Dr. Shipsey has recently taken up his residence near to some of the stations in Skull District, and he will consider whether it would not be advantageous to place these stations under his medical charge.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—THE CLERK OF THE SOUTH DUBLIN UNION.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has come to any decision respecting the conduct of the Clerk of the South Dublin Union, in reference to whom a sworn information has been made, and who is alleged to have withheld the rate books from officials of the National Registration Association, while he allowed those of the Constitutional Club to obtain free access to them?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have to thank the hon. and learned Member for papers on this subject. The Clerk of the South Dublin Union denies the charges of partiality and neglect of duty made against him. The proper course appears to be that the person or persons considering themselves aggrieved should take proceedings to enforce the penalty imposed by Act of Parliament in cases of refusal to produce these books to parties interested. The mode of procedure is, I understand, a summary one, and the action of the Local Government Board would necessarily be guided by the result.

MR. HEALY: Why does not the Local Government Board hold an inquiry, as is usually done in such cases? Is there not a sworn affidavit on one side in this matter, and only the Clerk's word on the other?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: If this was an ordinary case of some misconduct by an official, that might be the proper proceeding; but, in this case, Parliament has laid down a specific mode of remedy, and that remedy ought to be adopted in the first place; and if in the course of such proceedings anything is proved against the Clerk, then it will be for the Local Government Board to take action.

WOODS AND FORESTS—THE FOREST OF DEAN.

MR. ACKERS asked the junior Member for Leeds, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to drain the deep gales of the Forest of Dean, and so bring into active working the great mineral wealth of this Crown property, and by so doing afford employment to a large number of persons, so desirable in this time of depression and scarcity of work?

MR. HIBBERT (who replied) said: The deep gales are in the hands of private owners, whose interests therein are of the nature of real estate, and whose tenure of them is conditional on the observance of certain regulations, one of which requires the owners to open and work the gales within a limited time. In these circumstances, the Crown obviously cannot undertake to spend money on drainage. The Crown, however, desires to see these gales developed, and with this object a Bill was presented last Session dealing with the subject; but this Bill, though approved by the gale owners, received no actual support from them, and had to be withdrawn. The hon.

Member is probably aware that various conflicting local interests are involved in this matter, and that there is not yet an agreement of local opinion upon it.

INFIRMARIES (IRELAND) ACT—DONEGAL INFIRMARY, LIFFORD.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How the County Donegal Infirmary at Lifford is maintained and managed, and to what classes of patients it is open; also, if John M'Sweeney, of Gweedore, who obtained from the medical officer of the Gweedore district, on the 26th of March, an order for admission to the Lifford Infirmary, and who is unable to travel, has yet been conveyed to the Infirmary; and, whether the conveyance will be provided?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Local Government Board have not yet received replies to the specific inquiries they thought it necessary to make on this subject.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—PROTECTION AT KILMOON, CO. CLARE.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If an extra force of four constables, stationed at Kilmoon, county Clare, about fifteen months since, for the protection of a man named Gardner, who had taken a vacated farm, is still maintained at Kilmoon, although the farm in question has been unoccupied for months, and there is no one who can be said to be in need of protection; and, whether the extra force will be now removed?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The farm in question is not unoccupied, and protection is still considered necessary. The force is not an extra one.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — MR. HAMILTON, RESIDENT MAGISTRATE, ARMAGH — SALARY AND ALLOWANCES.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What is the annual amount of the salary and allowances of Mr. Hamilton, R.M. Armagh; and, by how much they exceed the ordinary annual amount of salary and allowances to resident magistrates in Ireland?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Mr. Hamilton is in receipt of a salary of £800 a-year, and the ordinary allowances of a first-class Resident Magistrate—namely, £100 a-year commuted forage allowance, and £8 a-year for postage and stationery. His salary exceeds the ordinary salary of a Resident Magistrate of the first class by £125 a-year.

MR. SEXTON: Why, why?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The hon. Member did not ask me that.

MR. SEXTON: Then I will ask you to-morrow.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE DEFICIT OF 1884-5.

MR. GORST asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether any provision is made in the Budget for the deficit of £1,050,000, caused by the excess of expenditure over revenue in 1884-5; whether this amount has been added to the National Debt in the shape of Exchequer Bills or Bonds; and, whether any provision has been, or will be, made to pay off the floating debt thus created?

MR. HIBBERT (who replied) said: My right hon. Friend, in his Financial Statement, said that the deficit of 1884-5 had been taken out of the Exchequer balances, and in giving the amount of debt reduced in that year he subtracted the reduction in the balances. He also said that it was proposed to take power to issue for the amount of this deficit Unfunded Debt if it should be found necessary. The whole operation will be explained in the Treasury Minute which my right hon. Friend promised to lay on the Table.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE asked when the Minute might be expected?

MR. HIBBERT said, that it was being prepared, and would very shortly be laid on the Table.

WAYS AND MEANS — INLAND REVENUE—THE NEW BEER DUTY.

SIR JOSEPH BAILEY asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, What amount of taxation falls upon hops per hundredweight at the present rate of Beer Duty; and, what will be the equivalent Tax under the proposed new Beer Duty?

MR. HIBBERT: Perhaps the hon. Member will allow me to answer the Question. The Inland Revenue Board

have had no knowledge of the quantity of hops used in the production of beer since the repeal of the Hop Duty in 1862; and there are, therefore, no means of calculating the amount of taxation that falls upon them.

MR. HICKS asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether, prior to the year 1880, the duty on malt was 21*s.* 8*d.*; whether, by the Act of 1880, a duty was imposed on beer equal to 25*s.* on a quarter of malt; and, whether it was now proposed to impose a duty on beer equal to 29*s.* on a quarter of malt, being an increase of about 16 per cent, in addition to the increase in 1880?

MR. HIBBERT: The actual duty on a quarter of malt before 1880 was 21*s.* 8½*d.*; but this was not the only tax on beer which had to be considered in fixing the rate of the Beer Duty, such as the brewers' licence. Malt was only taxed because it was a component part of beer, and occupied a similar position to sugar, which was and is taxed when used in brewing, though the general Sugar Duties have been repealed. In 1880 the Prime Minister estimated the total relief actually given by the repeal of the Malt Tax at 24*s.* 6½*d.* per quarter. The annual brewers' returns show that the Beer Duty at 6*s.* 3*d.* per barrel was almost exactly equal to this amount. The increase in the Beer Duty now proposed will make it equal to about 28*s.* 5½*d.* per quarter.

MR. ALLSOPP asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, What was the rate of the incidence of the Malt Tax on a quarter of barley before the abolition of that Tax; what is the equivalent Tax on a quarter of barley at the present rate of the Beer Duty; and, what will be the equivalent Tax under the proposed new Beer Duty?

MR. HIBBERT: I answered an absolutely identical Question yesterday put by the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon. The old brewers' licence was practically a Beer Tax. There is no necessity now to use malt.

MR. HICKS asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, How it is that the Duty on worts of a specific gravity of one thousand and fifty-seven is stated in the Resolution reported from the Committee of Ways and Means to be 7*s.* 6*d.* whilst in his Statement on Friday it was understood that he named 7*s.* 3*d.* as the proposed Duty?

MR. HIBBERT: If the hon. Member will look again at the Resolution he will see that he is under a misapprehension, the rate of duty on home-brewed beer having been fixed at 7*s.* 3*d.* per barrel. He has probably looked at the 10th Resolution, which relates to the Customs Duty on imported beer, instead of the ninth, which imposes the new duty on beer brewed in the United Kingdom.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—"THE DEATH DUTIES."

MR. W. H. SMITH (for Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If it has been the general practice of the Inland Revenue to levy any Death Duty on a tenant's interest in the occupation of agricultural land in Ireland when inherited or acquired by bequest; and, whether his alteration of the existing Death Duties will interfere with the present practice?

MR. HIBBERT: I presume that the right hon. Gentleman refers to tenants' interests under the Land Act of 1881. Such interests are regarded as portions of the personal estates of the tenants, and are now chargeable with Probate Duty, and also, like ordinary leaseholds, with Succession Duty. But inasmuch as personal estates under £100 in value are exempt from Death Duties, many such interests are not taxed at all; while, if the whole personal estate does not exceed £300 in value, as a general rule a single payment of 30*s.* covers all Death Duties. No charge at all will be made in these cases, which must be very numerous. The rate to be added to the Succession Duty will not apply to any property which is subject to Probate Duty; and, therefore, the tenants' interests in Ireland which pay Probate Duty will only be affected by the proposed legislation in two particulars—namely (1), if the owner of such an interest possesses it absolutely he will pay a Succession Duty based on the capital value of the interest itself instead of his own life interest in it; (2) he will pay the duty by four yearly instead of eight half-yearly instalments.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—THE HIGHLAND CROFTERS.

MR. MACFARLANE asked the Lord Advocate, If his attention has been

called to the statement that fifteen Crofters, who voluntarily surrendered themselves to the authorities at Portree, on a charge of deforcing a sheriff's officer at Waternish, were, while in prison at that place, served with notices of eviction; and, whether such a proceeding is regular or lawful?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): It is the case that the crofters here referred to came to Portree in obedience to citations which had been served upon them to appear on a charge of deforcing a Sheriff's officer at Waternish. I understand that summonses of removing were served upon two of them in prison, and upon another immediately after he came out. I cannot say that the service was illegal; but it is, I believe, generally regretted that the occasion of the men having surrendered themselves to justice was chosen for this proceeding.

TURKEY—THE BRITISH EMBASSY AT CONSTANTINOPLE.

MR. CARTWRIGHT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What arrangements have been made for the diplomatic representation of this Country at Constantinople pending the arrival of Sir E. Thornton?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir W. Hay White, Her Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the King of Roumania, is temporarily in charge of the Embassy at Constantinople, and has been specially accredited to the Sultan as Envoy Extraordinary *ad interim* pending the arrival of Sir Edward Thornton, who is unavoidably detained for the present at St. Petersburg. It was necessary to make this provisional arrangement, as Mr. Wyndham, the previous Secretary to the Embassy, who has discharged the duties of *Chargé d'Affaires* with great ability, and to the entire satisfaction of Her Majesty's Government, was required to proceed to Belgrade to take up his appointment as Minister there.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—POLICE DISTRICT OF JOHNSTOWN.

MR. MARUM asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been directed to, or any report received from the local constabulary, concerning extraordinary proceedings that have recently taken place in the police district of Johnstown, in the county of Kilkenny, that is to say, that Mr. Den. Keatinge, of Woodsgift, a deputy lieutenant and magistrate of the county, is in occupation of certain holdings surrounding his demesne from which the tenants have been evicted some two or three years ago; that the boundary fences of the same are in a very defective condition, rendering them liable to the trespass of stock; that Mr. Keatinge and his son, Mr. Maurice Keatinge, holding a Commission in one of Her Majesty's Regiments of the Line, together with a large posse of bailiffs, proceeded from their residence about midnight to those holdings, and distrained certain donkeys, goats, and sheep trespassing thereon; that they escorted those animals to the various residences of the owners, and knocked violently at their doors about one o'clock a.m., some of whom were thus coerced to pay the regulation trespass fines then and there to this local justice, and others, not having cash in their houses, remained indoors, whereupon a large and continued uproar ensued, and the doors of the dwelling-houses were battered and defaced, and, in some portions, smashed in; that especially the residence of the National school teacher of Grane, Mr. Maher, was similarly visited, and trespass for donkeys demanded; and that, owing to the difficulty of arousing the sleeping inmates, shouting and screeching and other noises were made use of, to the disturbance and terror of the inhabitants of the entire locality, extending over a considerable area, and finally the teacher himself was assailed in abusive language, and threatened with eviction; and, whether, even if such distresses are held legal, such unusual mode of proceeding, fraught with danger to the public peace, and adopted by a justice of the petty sessions district in which these dwelling-houses are situate, will be brought by the Executive under the notice of the Lord Chancellor or Lords Commissioners of the Great Seal?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am informed that the facts of this case are very much exaggerated in the Question. It appears that Mr. Den. Keatinge is in possession of some evicted farms on which cattle frequently trespass. On the night in

question he visited the farms, accompanied by his son and two herds, and seized some sheep and donkeys which were trespassing. They then, as the law requires, proceeded to deliver them to their owners, who, in most cases, paid the usual trespass. They knocked several times at the door of the schoolmaster, who owned one of the donkeys, and failed to get a reply; but there was no such battering or breaking of doors, nor any such disturbance or abusive language, as is alleged in the Question, and the proceedings do not call for any notice.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—THE FREE FORCE.

MR. MARUM asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, when the Royal Irish Constabulary Distribution Bill has received the Royal Assent, the Government is prepared to issue instructions to the proper authorities in relation thereto, that, wherever the "free" force is found insufficient (as is alleged by the local officials as to Kilkenny county) for the ordinary working of the several police stations, steps shall be taken to inquire into the propriety of some consolidation of the same, or otherwise, so as to have the extra force reduced altogether, or to a fair normal standard for each county; and, whether, in the event of an extra force being still deemed necessary for mere ordinary service, the Government will be prepared to provide that the expenses of the same shall be defrayed from the same source as the expenses of the "free" force, originally calculated upon the assumption that it was sufficient for the ordinary requirements of such county?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The effect of the new Distribution Bill will be that it will raise somewhat the number of the free force to be allocated to the counties. Where this number has to be exceeded, the cost of such excess will fall in equal proportions upon the county and the Imperial Exchequer. The Irish Government will continue to use every endeavour to secure that no extra force of Constabulary beyond the free quota is stationed in a county, and to keep such extra force, where necessary, at the lowest possible number. As the Government have to bear half the cost of any extra force, they are not likely to require a larger one than they consider absolutely necessary. It is, of course, within the power of the localities to give the Government very material assistance in their efforts in this direction.

EGYPT (THE MILITARY EXPEDITION)—THE NILE FORCE.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is true that the officers and men of the 1st Royal Sussex regiment, quartered at Abu Gees, have been compelled to do fatigue duty in the heat of the sun, and that many cases of sunstroke have occurred in consequence; and, whether such duty was absolutely necessary, or whether it would not have been easily performed in the mornings and evenings?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I have received no Report whatever from the Nile in any way confirmatory of the hon. and gallant Member's Question.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN asked if the noble Lord would make inquiry?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: If the hon. and gallant Member will communicate to me the information he has received, I will see whether it is desirable to make inquiry.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—SPAIN AND THE WINE DUTIES.

MR. MAC IVER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If the proposed arrangement with regard to a reduction in the Duties upon Spanish wines will have the practical effect of binding this Country to maintain reduced Duties in the particular case of Spain, while no similar obligation exists as regards our relations with any other Country; and to inquire whether it is proposed that we should receive any advantage from Spain in return for this concession, or if we are to obtain nothing beyond the removal of certain special disadvantages to which Great Britain alone has been subjected?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I do not think I can add anything to my answer of yesterday to the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Whitley), which the hon. Member will see fully answers the Question he has placed upon the Paper.

MR. MAC IVER said, he had referred to the answer, which simply

referred him to certain Papers. He wished to ask whether the facts were not as stated in his Question?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, the Papers to which he referred the hon. Member gave a full as well as a short answer.

MR. MAC IVER inquired if the noble Lord would have any objection to state whether the facts were not correctly set out in his Question?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I would refer the hon. Member to the words which I used yesterday. In these International questions I think it would be very objectionable, and, indeed, dangerous, to use different language on different days. I gave, in reply to the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Whitley), a statement which I had prepared with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, showing the general effect of the arrangement which we had entered into with Spain in regard to the Commercial Treaty; and I do not think it would be advisable that I should to-day give another version merely because the hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver) is dissatisfied with the words which I used yesterday. If the hon. Member will kindly refer to these words he will see that they fully cover the ground of his Question.

THE SUEZ CANAL COMMISSION.

MR. PULESTON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can conveniently give the House any information as to the progress of the Suez Canal Convention; and, whether it is true that it has been decided to allow each Power to have two ships of war to be stationed permanently at each end of the Canal?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Pending the deliberations of the Conference at Paris, it would not be convenient or customary to make any statement with regard to these proceedings.

CURRENCY—GOLD AND SILVER COINAGE—THE CONFERENCE.

MR. PULESTON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been called to the approaching Conference of the Cotin Union, and to the fact that Mr. Secretary Bayard has instructed the United States Representatives at the European Courts to state that—

"The United States Government are willing to agree upon a common rate of value of gold and silver for coinage purposes whenever the European Governments are prepared to unite, with a view of securing an unlimited coinage, and making both metals a legal tender upon a ratio to be agreed upon Internationally;"

and, whether such a representation has been made to Her Majesty's Government; and, if so, whether he can state what action is to be taken in the matter?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I am not aware that any representation has reached Her Majesty's Government. Any decision of Her Majesty's Government with regard to currency questions rests with the Treasury, and not with the Foreign Office.

POOR LAW GUARDIANS (IRELAND) BILL.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can state what is the present position of the Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill in another place?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have no information on this subject which is not accessible to the hon. and learned Member; but I believe the Bill in question is under the consideration of a Select Committee.

EGYPT—THE SOUDAN—POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT.

MR. GUY DAWNAY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether Her Majesty's Government, acting on the advice of Lord Wolseley, have reconsidered their determination to evacuate the Soudan, and intend to revert to their former policy of smashing the Mahdi?

MR. GLADSTONE: My answer to that Question would be simply to this effect—that instructions have been given to Lord Wolseley, in conformity with the declaration made in this House on the 22nd of April, in laying the Vote of Credit on the Table, and that we are in communication with Lord Wolseley and Sir Evelyn Baring as to the measures requisite for carrying into effect those instructions.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—THE LATE MR. F. POWER.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is the intention of Her Ma-

jesty's Government to make any recognition (as in the case of General Gordon's family) to the family of the late Mr. Frank Power, who performed important duties to the British Government at Khartoum, and who subsequently lost his life in attempting to leave that city at the request of General Gordon, and in company with Colonel Stewart?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: If the hon. Member will kindly allow me, I will answer this Question. The matter is under the consideration of the Government, and I have already been in communication with some hon. Members of the House on the subject. I shall be very glad also to communicate with the hon. Member.

BRITISH EMPIRE—THE NATIVE PRINCES OF INDIA.

MR. PULESTON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether Her Majesty's Government propose to give official recognition, as in the case of the Australian Colonies, to the conspicuous loyalty of the Native Princes and Chiefs in India who have offered men and money to the Indian Government for the protection of the Country against Foreign aggression?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have made inquiries of my noble Friend the Secretary of State, and I understand that he has, by command of the Queen, desired the Viceroy to convey to the Native Princes and Chiefs of India Her Majesty's warm impression of their friendly and loyal conduct.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN — THE AFGHAN BOUNDARY COMMISSION—RECALL OF SIR PETER LUMSDEN.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to recall Sir Peter Lumsden to London during the proposed arbitration and the discussion of the Afghan frontier; and, whether, if so, he will be commissioned later to complete the work of delimitation?

MR. GLADSTONE: In consequence of the decision that communications in reference to the main points of the Afghan Frontier should be carried on in London, there is a change in what will be required in the qualifications and character of the officer whose services will be required on the spot. Communications with Sir Peter Lumsden have taken place; and, I believe, in conformity with his own views, he has been informed that it is desirable that both he and Colonel Stewart should come home to London forthwith.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: In the course of the statements made yesterday, in this House and in the other, with respect to the negotiations with Russia, the right hon. Gentleman and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs stated that it was the intention of the Government to lay certain Papers on this subject without delay on the Table of the House.

MR. GLADSTONE: I did not say "without delay."

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I think those words were used; at all events, they appear in the newspapers this morning.

MR. GLADSTONE: They were not used by me.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I understood the statement, whatever it was, not to refer to the whole of the Correspondence—of course that would be very voluminous—but to Papers connected with the immediate subject of the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman. It would be extremely convenient if the House were put in possession of these particular Papers before resuming the debate, and I would ask whether they can be in our hands before Thursday; and, if not, whether the debate might not be postponed for a few days to enable the House to obtain them?

MR. GLADSTONE: Unless my memory grossly deceive me, I never made an engagement to lay the Papers on the Table without delay. I think I may have said that there would be no unnecessary delay, and, further, that I was in hopes that no very long time would elapse before they were in the hands of Members. I had no idea of separating one part of the Papers from the other, nor, so far as I could see, would it be possible to give an adequate impression of this important matter without producing the whole Papers. We certainly are not able, depending as we are upon communications and transactions with foreign Governments, to give the House adequate information upon the subject

until we have arrived substantially at a certain stage of the proceedings. We are not in a position to promise the Papers by any particular date. It would be deceiving the House were I to pretend that we could do so. With respect to the debate on Thursday, and its postponement, now that the Vote of Credit has been reported there is no matter of public importance that would issue on that; and we are quite willing to be governed by the convenience of the House at large and pay attention to what may be desired by hon. Gentlemen opposite as to the date of resuming the debate.

MR. ONSLOW: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if we are to understand that Sir Peter Lumsden himself desired to be recalled, or that the initiative step recalling him was taken by Her Majesty's Government? May I also ask, if Sir Peter Lumsden and the gallant Officer next to him are to be recalled, whether the troops with them are also to go back to India, and by what route?

MR. GLADSTONE: I need not tell the hon. Gentleman that these proceedings are not matters immediately under my notice, and that I have no record in my own possession of the order of details. I believe what I said was in strict conformity with the facts; but as to the order of priority of the arrival of Sir Peter Lumsden's communication and the decision here, while my impression certainly is that the communication was received from Sir Peter Lumsden to the effect I have described before the decision here, yet I will not bind myself on that subject, as I had no Notice that this Question was to be put. If the hon. Member will put the Question on the Paper I will be glad to give an answer.

MR. ONSLOW: With regard to the troops who are with the Mission as well?

MR. GLADSTONE: I will find that out; but it is a matter more for the Under Secretary for India.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Yesterday the right hon. Gentleman gave us to understand that there was an Agreement under process of arrangement between this country and Russia, and part of it was the transfer of the discussion of the Frontier from Afghanistan to London. That was a portion of the Agreement which we understood from the right hon. Gentleman was in process of negotiation, but which has not yet been completely settled. I wish to know whether this part of the Agreement—the settlement of the delimitation of the Frontier—is now considered to be settled, or whether it awaits the final settlement which will take place on the whole Agreement; and, if so, whether Sir Peter Lumsden is to be recalled before the whole of the matter is completed?

MR. GLADSTONE: I never intended to convey that the arrangement to carry on the communication in London was a formal document. It is part of the communication between the two Governments, and it is agreeable to the views of the two Governments. Of course, if it be desired, we can ascertain the dates of any formal proceeding in relation to that matter; but it is not included in any document, and consequently I do not think the Question of the right hon. Gentleman requires any specific answer.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I should like to ask, in the first place, with regard to the Papers, whether the right hon. Gentleman is aware that the last official document produced to this House is dated in July last, a telegram from Sir Edward Thornton announcing the occupation of Merv; whether, with regard to Papers which relate to events that are past and over, such as Papers relating to the original despatch of the Mission and the Papers relating to the demand addressed by the English Government to the Russian Government in November last, that the Russian troops should retire — whether those Papers cannot be without loss of time laid before Parliament? In the second place, I should like to be allowed to ask whether, if Sir Peter Lumsden and his Staff and escort are to be recalled, the Government will have any sources of knowledge whatever as to the movements of Russian troops on the Afghan Frontier; and, thirdly, whether it is not the case that in the delimitation of the Afghan Frontier the Ameer was directly represented on the Staff of Sir Peter Lumsden, and whether the Ameer will be directly represented if the delimitation is settled in London?

MR. GLADSTONE: With regard to the third Question, I am afraid I cannot answer it with the requisite accuracy unless I have an opportunity of making

inquiries; but there is no doubt we did think, at the early stage of the proceedings, that it was material that those connected with Afghanistan should have an opportunity on the spot of urging what they thought fit in regard to the Frontier; but the state of affairs has greatly changed in that respect, and since the interviews between the Ameer and Lord Dufferin the matter has assumed a different aspect. With regard to the noble Lord's second Question as to the withdrawal from the country of those persons connected with the Frontier Commission, the order sent has been strictly, I think, in the terms in which I stated it—namely, that it was desirable that Sir Peter Lumsden himself and Colonel Stewart should come home at once. I did not say that that order requires the withdrawal of all persons connected with it. With respect to the Papers, it is not for me to say, but for my noble Friend, whether it is possible to make any division of those Papers; but I must confidently state this opinion, that it is not possible to give to the House Papers out of which it could form an effective judgment unless these were brought down not only to the point at which we now stand, but to a further point which, I believe, will be rapidly reached, and which I trust and hope will enable us to place Papers on the Table within a short period, and give the House the opportunity of taking its own course.

LORD JOHN MANNERS: It was stated the other day that Mr. Stephen was on his way to England, and I understand that Sir Peter Lumsden and Colonel Stewart are also recalled. I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the negotiations that are to be carried on in London for the delimitation of the Afghan Frontier will be postponed until these gentlemen have arrived in England, and are able to take part in advising Her Majesty's Government on this important subject?

MR. GLADSTONE: I am not prepared to say that we are not sufficiently in possession at the present time of the advice of Sir Peter Lumsden, which is of the greatest importance in consequence of his accurate knowledge of that country. We are in possession of that advice as far as regards the work that has to be done in London. When I formerly spoke in the House, I stated that it was estimated that Mr. Stephen would require three weeks to reach London; but I find from recent information that the time will be shorter, and our anticipation is that he may reach London on Monday next.

LORD JOHN MANNERS: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will excuse me asking a further Question. Having understood from him that Mr. Stephen was in possession of very important information and a useful map, I should wish to ask whether those negotiations will be postponed until Mr. Stephen arrives with that information and that very useful map?

MR. GLADSTONE: The communications that we have about Mr. Stephen are very brief indeed. They are telegraphic communications, in one word. My own impression certainly is that Mr. Stephen is the bearer of important information; but that that information relates especially to all the facts and minute details connected with the engagement at Ak Tepe. I have no reason to suppose that it has been part of Sir Peter Lumsden's object to send to us any particular information as to the points of the Frontier.

MR. CHAPLIN: I wish to ask the Prime Minister whether General Komaroff is to be recalled as well as Sir Peter Lumsden from the Afghan Frontier; and, if Sir Peter Lumsden is recalled, by whom is the delimitation to be traced out on the Frontier, which, I think I am right in saying, the right hon. Gentleman informed us last night was an essential part of all these transactions?

MR. GLADSTONE: There is no relation whatever between the case of Sir Peter Lumsden and that of General Komaroff. General Komaroff is the Commander of the Russian Forces. Sir Peter Lumsden has been engaged in the discharge of a civil office, for which he had the qualifications of great knowledge and experience. It would be an entire mistake to say that Sir Peter Lumsden has been recalled, because the sense conveyed by that word would not be borne out by the facts. The desire that your Representative should repair to the Metropolis in given circumstances need not in any way bear the sense of what is commonly understood by a recall. As to the latter part of the Question, care will be taken to appoint fit persons to

delimit the Frontier. There will be no difficulty whatever in appointing fit persons. Of course, Sir Peter Lumsden has had other agents under him who are quite capable of discharging that important but, as I hope, not very difficult duty.

MR. ONSLOW: I should like to ask whether, considering that all the arrangements for Sir Peter Lumsden's Mission were made in this country, the Government will seriously consider the propriety of repaying to India the very heavy cost of this Expedition?

MR. GLADSTONE: That is hardly in the nature of a Question, and as to the preamble I am not prepared to answer it. The hon. Gentleman founds himself upon a statement that the body of certain arrangements have all been made in this country. I am not at all prepared to admit that that is the case, and I cannot consent to raise a subject of this kind in answer to a Question.

EGYPT—SUPPRESSION OF THE "BOSPHORE EGYPTIEN."

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I wish to ask the noble Lord the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the words of the expression of regret with which Her Majesty's Government have associated themselves with the Government of Egypt to the French Republic; and whether, for the purpose of comparative philology, he will print in the same Paper the apology of the Prime Minister to Austria and of Earl Granville to Germany?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member's Question does not come within the ordinary limits of Questions?

EGYPT (THE MILITARY EXPEDITION)—THE NILE FORCE—CONDITION OF THE TROOPS.

COLONEL NOLAN asked, Whether the attention of the Secretary of State for War had been called to a statement which had appeared in *The Standard* with regard to the condition of the troops at Debbeh?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I have seen the statement referred to as to the troops at Kurot near Debbeh. The statement must have been written from two or three weeks ago, and I trust the inconvenience then described has since been abated. On the 24th of April Lord Wolseley reported that nearly all the troops were in huts, and on the 1st of May Sir Redvers Buller telegraphed that the whole were under cover, meaning, I suppose, something better than tents. I do not understand the reference to unlined Bell tents. Indian tentage for 13,000 men is up the Nile, so that there should be a good reserve in hand.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL asked what was the percentage of sick? He understood that it amounted to 10 per cent of the troops.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, that it was impossible for him to calculate exactly what the percentage of sick was. It was probably higher than four; but he had no reason to think that it was as high as had been suggested.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE asked, in the event of the debate arising out of the Vote of Credit being postponed to Monday, What Business would be taken on Thursday?

MR. GLADSTONE said, that if to-day and Wednesday the House was able substantially to dispose of the Registration Bills he should propose to proceed with the Seats Bill on Friday. On Thursday the adjourned debate on the sum, not the Vote of Credit, would be taken; but if that were postponed until Monday the Army Estimates would be taken on Thursday. In the other case, the Army Estimates would be taken on Monday as the first Order.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

REGISTRATION (OCCUPATION VOTERS) (*re-committed*) BILL.—[BILL 140.]

(*Mr. Attorney General, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Hibbert, Mr. H. H. Fowler.*)

COMMITTEE. [FIRST NIGHT.]

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

SIR MASSEY LOPES, in rising to move—

"That this House, while desirous of facilitating in every way the Registration of Voters, is of opinion that, inasmuch as the preparation of the Register for Parliamentary Elections is a matter of National rather than local concern,

the expenses connected therewith should not be imposed on ratepayers in counties and boroughs, and levied in respect of the occupation of a single description of property,"

said, he had placed this Notice on the Paper, as he thought the subject was very important and would probably give rise to serious discussion. He had purposely given the Government some days to consider their response; but the response of the Attorney General the other day was eminently unsatisfactory. It amounted to this—that because some injustice was perpetrated on the boroughs in 1867 a much larger injustice should be imposed on the counties in 1885. This did not appear to him to be either legal or equitable. It was virtually saying that, in the view of the Government, injustice, frequently repeated, became justice, and that a wrongful act, if it was only repeated, established a right to do wrong. He did not think he could admit that principle. Circumstances had very much altered since 1867. In that year the local rates for England and Wales only amounted to £16,000,000, whereas in 1884 they amounted to £30,000,000. This was an increase of 87 per cent. The rates for the United Kingdom amounted in 1867 to £20,000,000, and in 1884 to £35,000,000. This was an increase again of 74 per cent. The debt was now becoming almost as formidable as the National Debt. In 1872 it amounted to £74,000,000, and now it was £170,000,000—an increase of 150 per cent. The Chancellor of the Exchequer the other day made an appeal to the House, and referred to the great difficulty he had in providing for increased National Expenditure. He would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether ratepayers were not also taxpayers, whether they did not pay their fair quota to Imperial taxation, and whether local burdens were not something beyond and beside what they had to pay for Imperial taxation? He would also like to ask the right hon. Gentleman what the justification was for imposing further burdens upon real property? There never was a time when there was so much difficulty for all who were connected with the land in paying ordinary rates and taxes. There were thousands of acres in this country at present uncultivated, and not likely to be cultivated again. There were thousands of acres to be had without the payment of any rent, but simply by the payment of rates and taxes. Liberal Governments had always been in the habit of relieving Imperial taxation by imposing additional local charges for national objects. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had imposed an Income Tax of 8*d.*, and he must be aware that an 8*d.* Income Tax on real property meant a 1*s.* Income Tax. The First Minister of the Crown told the House in 1853 that a 7*d.* Income Tax was a 9*d.* Income Tax to the owners of real property. The owners of real property—that was, of houses and lands—paid at least 25 per cent more than the owners of any other description of property, whether personal, or trade, or professional. This was a matter which ought to be taken into consideration. The owners of real property paid upon their gross rents and not upon their net receipts. He had no hesitation in saying that there was no owner of real property—certainly no owner of land—who ever received 75 per cent net; and sometimes it was far less than that. The First Minister of the Crown stated the other day that it was not the duty of the Government, in considering a Registration Bill, to take into account the incidence of the particular charges which such a measure involved, and he declined all responsibility. That was an extraordinary doctrine. It amounted to this—that the Government was to submit measures of reform, and, at the same time, to ignore the Ways and Means by which those measures were to be carried out. It was quite true that most of the social and moral reforms of the 19th century had been handed over to the local rates; and the Prime Minister did not think it necessary to provide for those things from Imperial taxation, but thought they should be charged on real property. The right hon. Gentleman also said, the other day, that the Consolidated Fund was supported, in a great measure, by the labour of the country. He maintained that that was a fallacy and a delusion. It might be a very specious and plausible argument; but it had no foundation. Was it not a fact that the labourer—namely, the poor man—necessarily paid no indirect taxes at all? If he chose not to drink beer or smoke tobacco, there was scarcely any tax that the poor man paid. He might evade and escape

almost all such taxes, but if he lived in a house or a hovel he could not escape local rates. That might not be right; but it was a fact that he could do it; and it was a great injustice that he should be called upon to maintain pauperism, to pay for roads he scarcely ever used except to walk upon, and to make provision for police, and so on. As to the Amendment, he would ask the House to consider whether the exercise of the franchise was a national or a local responsibility? If, as he contended, it was a matter of universal and national benefit, surely it was not just that the owners of real property should be called upon to pay the expenditure consequent upon it. The expense was a legitimate charge upon Imperial funds. With regard to the cost of Parliamentary registration, he found that the charge in England and Wales was first imposed upon the rates in 1843. That was previous to the abolition of the Corn Laws, and land then enjoyed exceptional privileges. In 1845 the expenses amounted to only £20,000. In 1868 it rose to £39,000, and the effect of the new registration under the Franchise Act of 1869 brought it up to £71,000 in that year, an increase of 82 per cent. This was a very good criterion of what would probably be the increased expenses under the Bill now before the House. At present the cost of the registration of voters was £102,000, besides a charge on the county rate of £13,000. It would be difficult to estimate what the cost would be under the present Bill. It must certainly be far greater than it was in 1869. He had no hesitation in saying that, what with the expense of the Clerks of the Peace and other charges, the cost on the English rates alone would be nearly £100,000, and in Scotland and Ireland a corresponding amount. The registration in boroughs was comparatively an insignificant matter, and simply involved journeys from house to house, as the population was concentrated within a small area. But it was a much more difficult task in the country, where long distances had to be travelled, and frequently on horseback. Nearly every Session of Parliament brought additional duties to the officers, and especially to Clerks of the Peace engaged in registration. He had been informed by a Clerk of the Peace in Devonshire that with his present staff it would take about three months of hard work, up to 10 or 11 at night, to complete the Register. There were now 29,000 on the Register, and his friend calculated that the number would be from 75,000 to 80,000 under the new Act. The work could not be done without extra assistance of a good and reliable character. He had no doubt that in many other counties the increase would be just as considerable. They had been told that the addition to our local charges would be infinitesimal; but it was not so much a question of amount as of principle. It should be borne in mind how the rates had increased. There was, for example, the education rate, which they were faithfully promised should never exceed 3*d.* in the pound. He believed that the average in England and Wales was 1*s.* in the pound, with a prospect of becoming greater and greater. That was why they opposed any addition to the rate, because they had had many promises, none of which had been fulfilled. He would recapitulate some of the promises which had been held out to them during the present Parliament. In 1881 the Government said—"We are about to consult Parliament on the whole subject of the incidence of local taxation in a comprehensive manner." In the Royal Speech of 1882 they were told that Parliament would be invited to consider the proper extent and most equitable form of contribution from Imperial taxes in relief of local charges. In 1882 the Government again pledged themselves in the most solemn manner, upon the Motion of the hon. Member for Mid Somerset (Mr. R. H. Paget), to deal with the whole question. On that occasion they only saved themselves on a division by five votes. In 1883 the hon. Member for South Leicestershire urged that no further delay should take place, and then the Government only had a majority of 12. The House would not forget that 31 Liberal Members, on the following morning, signed a Memorial to the Government to do precisely what they had voted against being done on the night before. Two of those Gentlemen were the present Under Secretary for the Home Department (Mr. H. H. Fowler), and the Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. George Russell). On that occasion the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert

Grey) moved an Amendment that relief should be given by the transfer to the Local Authorities of revenue proceeding from particular taxes. They all agreed in that. It was an excellent way of giving relief; but when were they going to get it? Nothing more had been done by the Government, who had merely trifled with the House. The hon. Member for South Northumberland said, on that occasion, that if the Government should not have solved the question before the termination of the present Parliament, Liberal candidates would not meet with a very cordial reception from their constituents at the next General Election. On a subsequent occasion the hon. Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell) moved a Resolution deprecating further delay, and obtained a majority. But, notwithstanding their defeat, the Government had ever since ignored and disregarded the whole question. It was trifling with the House of Commons to treat it as the Government had been doing, shunting the matter from one Session to another. They had given the most solemn promises and the most sacred pledges that the question would be taken in hand by them; but the ratepayers, instead of getting any alleviation of their burdens, had had fresh burdens imposed upon them. They were to have an increase in the Death Duties, which was the only indulgence they had had. In bringing this question forward, he wished to include Scotland and Ireland as well as England. The question was one which affected not land only, but house property also; indeed, the latter more than the former, inasmuch as houses were rated at £125,000,000, whereas the assessment on land was only £66,000,000. The question was all the more important, as those who lived on the land were never in a more depressed condition than at the present time. He felt it to be his duty, as strenuously as he possibly could, to urge that demand, and protest in the strongest manner against any addition to the local rates. He should most unhesitatingly take the sense of the House upon this subject, because he thought it was only right that ratepayers in counties and boroughs should know who were in favour not only of perpetuating, but of aggravating, a grievance which the House of Commons and the country had admitted to be unjustifiable, unreasonable, anomalous, and indefensible. The hon. Member concluded by moving the Resolution of which he had given Notice.

Mr. PELL said, he had great pleasure in seconding the Amendment, and was glad that his hon. Friend (Sir Massey Lopes) was going to take the sense of the House upon it. It had been said that these charges fell upon the occupier; but he (Mr. Pell) was prepared to prove that they could be shifted from the owner to the occupier. If the owner of a house, foreseeing the increase in local charges, should attempt to raise the rent in order to enable him to meet that increase, the answer might be that the tenant could not afford to pay the increased rent and would leave the house. When an owner of property contemplated the erection of houses he was forced to consider what rates might be levied on it; and when they were likely to be heavy he either built inferior houses or charged such a rent as would cover the rates. The result to the tenant was that he had either to pay a larger rent than would have been imposed but for the rates, or that he had to live in an inferior house. The poor man was thus affected injuriously by every charge added to the rates by that house. The Government appeared to be in a temporizing mood. They had not asserted that the charge was peculiar to real property, and that, therefore, it ought to be met by real property; but, frightened by the action taken by the House upon the proposal of the hon. and gallant Member for Galway, they proposed to aid the local rates in what they called the worst possible form—namely, by a subvention of 2*d.* a voter. Upon what principle were they acting? Was it only their intention to give a sop to Cerberus, or did they really wish to proclaim the opinion that the local ratepayers were not fairly treated, and that the Exchequer ought to bear some portion of the charge? Whichever might be the case, they must take the consequences of their act; and he trusted they would be such as the Government would remember. It was a curious thing that in dealing with this question the Legislature appeared never to have been guided by any principle. The 6 *Vict.*, one of the leading Registration Acts, gave effect to the notion existing at the time that a person who claimed the vote should pay for his claim—

in other words, that the vote was not, as the President of the Board of Trade might say, a natural right. One shilling was accordingly paid to the overseer by the claimant upon every claim. Afterwards, however, the Legislature got into the easy way of putting every charge upon the rates and relieving the individual, and this portion of the Act was repealed. The Government had stated that in connection with the Death Duties they intended to impose upon the successor to every owner of real property, who would necessarily be a ratepayer also, a very large and rather terrible charge. The present, therefore, was a very fitting opportunity for striving to obtain justice for the ratepayer in a diminution of the burdens now imposed upon him. He regretted that the question of local taxation, as compared with Imperial taxation, had not been settled calmly and coolly before then, and that it should be necessary to raise it when time was so valuable; but the subject had so often been postponed that it would not be right to let the present opportunity pass by. If this question was not settled now, Members below the Gangway opposite, who were so desirous of posing as philanthropists, would be encouraged in their demand that expenses of all kinds should be paid out of the rates. One of those hon. Gentlemen had, he believed, a Bill before the House which went beyond the proposition to put voters on the Register for nothing, while another was desirous of paying the candidate's expenses entirely out of the rates. He doubted, however, if hon. Gentlemen would stop even there; and he should not be surprised some day to see it proposed that the Members of the Cabinet should also be paid out of the rates. He hoped that those hon. Gentlemen who by their speeches in the House last year appeared to give some support to the views of his hon. Friend, and who, when they reached the country, went still further, and expressed such warm admiration for those who desired to relieve the ratepayers, would stand by the opinions they then expressed, and record their votes with his hon. Friend; thus rendering a great service to the ratepayers as well as obeying honestly the convictions within their breasts. He trusted that his hon. Friend would press his Amendment to a division, and that those upon the Register would notice how they were treated by their Representatives.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House, while desirous of facilitating in every way the Registration of Voters, is of opinion that, inasmuch as the preparation of the Register for Parliamentary Elections is a matter of National rather than local concern, the expenses connected therewith should not be imposed on ratepayers in counties and boroughs, and levied in respect of the occupation of a single description of property," — (*Sir Massey Lopes,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, that the hon. Baronet who moved the Resolution had raised three distinct questions, which were outside the question before the House. In the first place, he raised the question of the general incidence of local taxation; in the second place, the relationship of taxation as between capital and labour; and, lastly, the question as between taxation on real and on personal property. These questions might be brought to bear more or less, no doubt, upon the question immediately before the House; but they did not touch upon the Resolution of his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board, nor had they shown that that proposition was not a fair and adequate one to make under the special circumstances of the case. He did not feel disposed to accept the figures which the hon. Baronet had given to the House as being strictly correct. The incidence of local taxation between real and personal property, he quite agreed with the hon. Baronet, was most unjust and most unfair. There was no part of our local and social administration which was more radically unsound than the incidence of our local taxation. He did not mean to say that it did not press most unfairly upon occupiers of land; but what he contended was that it pressed more unfairly upon tradesmen in the towns. So far, he was perfectly agreed that it was the duty of the Government and of the House to take up this question at the earliest possible time, and to take it up broadly and boldly, and not in a nibbling sort of way, which would have the effect of

relieving one class and not touching the larger class of residents in the boroughs, who had just as much right to complain. The hon. Baronet stated that the local taxation of this country some few years ago amounted to £16,000,000, and that now it was about £30,000,000. He did not know from what statistics the hon. Baronet had cited; but he would give the House statistics from the latest published Returns of the Local Government Board. Those Returns showed that the local taxation of this country now stood, in round figures, at £28,000,000, and that 10 years ago it stood at £18,000,000, giving a clear increase of £10,000,000. The years to which he had referred were 1872-3 and 1882-3. How was that taxation apportioned? From the debate in that House it would seem that it was levied exclusively upon the occupiers of land. Of the taxation of last year, £5,500,000 was raised by the Metropolis; £10,500,000 in the municipalities, £10,000,000 in mixed urban and rural districts; and only £2,000,000 in purely rural districts. Of the increase of £10,000,000 which had taken place in the last 10 years, £6,500,000 had fallen upon the urban ratepayers; £1,250,000 upon the Metropolis; £1,250,000 upon the urban and rural ratepayers; and the only addition to the purely rural taxation of this country in the last 10 years had not been much more than £500,000. Under these circumstances, whatever grievance there might be in the rural districts, it was far stronger in the municipalities and towns of this country. With reference to this special grievance, which was always occupying the attention of hon. Gentlemen opposite, there was one rate which they regarded with peculiar disfavour—the School Board rate. But what were the facts? That rate last year produced £1,750,000, of which amount £700,000 was raised in London, £550,000 in the municipalities, and the balance of the entire amount was charged upon the rural districts. In dealing with this question of local and Imperial taxation, and of the unfair extent of local taxation, they must recollect that the large amount of the latter was levied upon towns, which were subjected at the present time to Imperial taxation, the amount of which hon. Gentlemen opposite were entirely and absolutely ignorant. The average county rate in England last year was not quite 3½*d.* in the pound, and the average poor rate was only 2*s.* in the pound. He should like to know whether hon. Gentlemen opposite were familiar in the rural districts with local rates of 7*s.*, 8*s.*, and 9*s.* in the pound, with which people in the town were familiar? Where was there a large rural district paying a rate of 7*s.* 6*d.* in the pound? Then the hon. Baronet also raised the question of the relative proportion of taxation as between property and labour, and he told the House that no labouring man in this country need pay any indirect taxation at all. Of course, if they reduced the labouring man to a mere machine, if he was to have no enjoyment in his monotonous life, and to be deprived of the enjoyment which others so lavishly partook of, he might escape the great bulk of taxation. But it was too late to say that a labouring man must not drink tea or beer, and must not smoke tobacco, and that he must live upon bread and water, and pass the day in one unvarying round of toil, and be content to live in that state of life to which it had pleased a wise Legislature to call him. Perhaps hon. Gentlemen were not aware of the fact that one of the most frequent purchases at the present time was the purchase of a pennyworth of tea. The largest business which some grocers did was the selling of pennyworths of tea to working men's wives; and for every penny a labouring man's wife put down upon the counter she put down a halfpenny for the Imperial Exchequer; for every shillingsworth of tobacco purchased by a labouring man 10½*d.* went to the Government. Of course, the labouring man ought not to smoke—[*laughter*]—he was quite aware of that. Then, again, 2*d.* out of every 1*s.* which he paid for his beer went to the Exchequer; and that was now to be increased. He was quite prepared, when the proper time came, to prove that the Imperial taxation of this country pressed unfairly upon the industrial population, that property did not pay its fair share of taxation, and that the reforms in our future fiscal system would have to be conducted on the principle of placing further burdens upon property and less taxation upon industry. Another question was raised by the hon. Baronet—namely, that of the taxation which should be levied upon real as contrasted with that

which should be placed upon personal property. That was a very broad and wide subject, and, as the hon. Baronet had intimated, it would be fully and fairly discussed when the whole question of the Death Duties came before the House. Some of them thought that real and personal property, as far as Imperial taxation was concerned, were not upon the same level, and that real property ought to be put upon the same level as personal property. So far as local taxation was concerned, personal property did not bear its full share. A calculation had been made upon this subject, which calculation he thought was too unfavourable so far as the working classes were concerned, and by giving it to the House he would be rather quoting against himself; but he would read the figures in order that the House might see the relief given to local taxation and the expenses of Imperial taxation as they affected the working man. It was calculated that of Imperial taxation two-fifths fell upon industry and three-fifths upon property, and that of local taxation five-sixths fell upon property and one-sixth only upon industry. If, therefore, they transferred payment from the local to the Imperial taxes, they would relieve the working man to the extent of 3*s.* 4*d.* in the pound and put upon him a burden of 8*s.* in the pound. How did these questions practically affect the question before the House? The hon. Baronet admitted that the legislation in 1867 did wrong in putting the expense upon the boroughs. That legislation was the legislation of the Conservatives, and there was no proposal at that time to charge the expense upon the Imperial fund. The action taken by the hon. Baronet implied that the Government were making a new proposal, and that they were for the first time imposing new burdens upon the local rates. The fact was that the cost of this legislation had never been borne by the Imperial Exchequer but by local rates, and the Government were simply proceeding upon a principle which they found in force. If hon. Gentlemen opposite had the courage of their convictions they should propose that all the cost of registration should be taken off local rates and put upon Imperial funds. Somebody, however, must pay the Imperial taxes; and the more they subsidized the local rates, the more they increased the Imperial taxation. The number of county voters was to be increased by something like 1,000,000, the numbers being raised from 1,000,000 to 2,000,000. At the present time the only item that appeared in the accounts locally published as representing the cost of registration was the item of £12,572. That, the only item which the counties paid for this purpose, was something like a rate of one-tenth of a farthing in the pound. That was not a great grievance to begin with. He should be told that he had forgotten the overseers, and that they and their expenses were paid out of the poor rate. But what was the work that was now to cost so much? The overseers had practically to make out but one new list. The ownership voters would remain as they were before. The £50 voters would remain precisely as before. The £10 voters were precisely as before. The list of householders would be the new list. The overseers made out that by simply copying the rate-book. There was no difficulty about it, if only the rate-book itself were properly made out to begin with. It was simply so much copying work and nothing else. If Local Authorities were lavish and extravagant in paying overseers, the Government could not be held responsible for that. The additional labour would be thrown upon Clerks of the Peace, who would have to arrange and classify the lists, to send them to the printers, and to correct them. He admitted there would be an increase of the work thrown upon the Clerks of the Peace. All the labour in respect of the existing registration of voters was paid out of the £12,500 a-year he had named. Assume the works to be doubled, and there would be a claim for £25,000. The Government had proposed to make a grant of £20,000. At present the expense was something like 3*d.* per name. At this rate the new list would cost £28,750. As the Government were proposing to give an extra £20,000, the cost would be instead of £12,500 only £8,750. Therefore, the Government grant would be equal to a contribution of £3,750 in aid of the rates. The Committee took some evidence as to the expenses incurred. A Clerk of the Peace in one of the largest counties said that the work was done, including the printing, at a cost of 6*s.* 6*d.* per 100 names. It was proposed to

allow 1*d.* per name, or 8*s.* 4*d.* per 100. It would be a strong measure to import this question of the incidence of local taxation into so small a matter as the registration of English county voters, and practically to throw out the English Registration Bill, and so produce a state of things in which the work could not be done within the limited time. Admitting that there was a strong claim for some relief of local taxation, it would be admitted that the boroughs were entitled to their share of the relief, and that there would have to be an investigation of their claims. This was a premature and unfair way of raising the question. It did not enable the House to come to a fair and just decision. They were fighting one issue, and talking about another. He did not believe the House would be prepared to interfere with the work of registration for the purpose of dealing with the question of local expenditure and taxation, and, therefore, he hoped they would decline to support this Motion.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he had listened attentively to the speech of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. H. H. Fowler) who had just sat down, and it was a fresh proof that everybody connected with the Government was always ready with all sorts of excuses for not dealing with the question of local taxation, as it affected local rates. The hon. Gentleman stated that it was a very inconvenient time for bringing on the question; but he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) thought that they should avail themselves of every opportunity to call attention to the vast importance of the whole subject. The Government had always put them off with evasive answers on the question of local taxation, and when the Conservatives had won a victory on the subject, the Government had treated them with sovereign contempt. The Under Secretary, who had just spoken, stated that the sum asked for registration was only a farthing, or a trifle in the pound.

MR. H. H. FOWLER: The tenth of a farthing.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT, continuing, said, a Friend near him had stated that the new registration would cost £200,000, and the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had estimated the cost at £102,000, and, if that was so, he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) had a right to complain of the aditional burden that was being placed upon local rates. He knew that the rural districts had suffered most severely, the small towns as much if not more severely than the rural districts, from local taxation; and they were always asking when the promised relief in local taxation would take place. The Prime Minister, in a speech to his tenants, had said that the question of the Death Duties would not be dealt with until that of local taxation had been settled, and put them as a set-off against relief to be given to local taxation when Local Boards were introduced.

MR. GLADSTONE: Will the hon. and gallant Gentleman give me the reference of that speech?

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he would try if he could not find it. The right hon. Gentleman always asked for a reference. He (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) recollected the speech very well. It was the speech in which the right hon. Gentleman recommended the growth and production of jam, that more dairies should be established, and that more milk should be produced. It was a speech the right hon. Gentleman made at Hawarden. The right hon. Gentleman also referred to the question of the Malt Tax. [*A laugh.*] The right hon. Gentleman laughed, and, therefore, he saw that he recollected it.

MR. GLADSTONE was understood to say that he had not made any reference to the Death Duties in the speech referred to.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, that the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman were always kept preserved, and it was, so far as he remembered, in a speech delivered to his tenants, and, if he chose, he could find the speech that he referred to; and if, after having made the search, it was proved that he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) was mistaken, he would apologize to the House and to the right hon. Gentleman. But accepting the statement of the right hon. Gentleman as he had given it, they were to have, in the dying days of this Parliament, the Death Duties put upon real property; while, with regard to this question, local taxation was only to receive temporary relief, and the permanent solution of the question was to be left to the new Parliament. If such a question was to be left for the new Parlia-

ment, how much more expedient would it be that the new Parliament should be left to deal with the graver questions of the Death Duties? That would be more rational than legislating upon them at the present time, simply because the Government were in pecuniary difficulties, and were compelled to increase taxation. The new list of voters would greatly increase the labours of the overseers, and they would not like to do it without special remuneration. A Parliamentary election was an Imperial question, and ought to be treated as such. The hon. Member might be returned for Wolverhampton, but he was a Member of the Imperial Parliament. To-day the hon. Member had spoken only for the Government, but on this question he would yet have to speak as a Member of the House of Commons. A great cry was now raised in the country in favour of encouraging the class of small proprietors of land. Only that day he had found that in Wales, through the inclosure of commons, there had been a large number of persons who had, out of their savings, purchased little properties, and every additional halfpenny of taxation put upon that class would be so much to their detriment. They were a class who were endeavouring to do their duty as responsible citizens honourably; and surely they ought to be relieved as much as possible from the extra local taxation placed upon them by right hon. Gentlemen opposite. He believed that the £20,000 proposed to be given for this year was wholly inadequate to the requirements of the case. When he remembered how many men there were rolling in money, and having investments in this and in foreign countries, who paid little or nothing to the taxation of the country, but who were fond of propounding nostrums as to the land, he said let them purchase a large quantity of land, and they would see what the burdens upon it were. Then those who were interested in land might feel that they had advocates of their cause, and it would be recognized that the burdens now pressing on land were very hard to bear.

MR. W. FOWLER said, he felt great sympathy, as the Under Secretary for the Home Department also said he did, with the Motion before the House, and agreed that it was certainly to a large extent an Imperial matter. But the hon. Baronet opposite had not the courage of his opinions; he ought to take that burden off the inhabitants of towns, about which he was so solicitous, if it was to be taken off those of the counties. They might by that Resolution stop that Bill, but they would not alter the law; and there was no clause in the Bill in regard to boroughs at all. If the proposal before them raised the whole question, he should have considerable sympathy with it; but he thought that the money which the Government offered would provide what was required for the present year, leaving the matter to stand over till another year, when the whole question of local taxation would be dealt with. Therefore, while thinking it was a great hardship that local burdens should be placed almost entirely on one class of property, he considered that the House ought to pass that Bill and to accept the offer of the Government.

MR. SAMPSON LLOYD said, it was because he believed that the present system of local taxation as injuriously affected the owners and occupiers of property in towns as it did those in the country that he felt a sympathy with the proposal of the hon. Baronet (Sir Massey Lopes). If anyone looked at the Doomsday Book they would find that a very large proportion of the owners of land consisted of men who owned less than one or two acres. Therefore the landed interest did not simply comprise the great proprietors, but a large struggling class, on whom they ought not to impose unjust burdens. It was urged that that was a very small point on which to raise the question of local taxation; but if they did not call out when a small additional piece of injustice was piled on their backs, they would never have an opportunity of raising the main question. They were told to wait till Ministers brought on the question of county government; but if they did that they might wait one, two, or three years before they received any redress for a crying grievance. In the United States of America he was informed that every citizen was assessed, an account was taken of his income from all sources, and local taxation was levied on that income just as they levied Income Tax for Imperial purposes. In passing the present Bill they might as

well have a measure of justice done; and he did not see why an injustice should be permitted to go on even in that particular instance.

MR. HENEAGE said, that if the Government had intended to throw the whole expense on the rates he should have gone entirely with his hon. Friends opposite; but he thought that the Government had now, by their proposition, met the question very fairly. That was not an expense which, to the same extent, was likely to rise again before the question of local government and local taxation was dealt with; and he did not think that any Government could stand even for one year in another Parliament if it did not seriously undertake to deal with that question. If he were returned to the next Parliament, he should himself, if necessary, press it upon their attention. But the point now to be considered was whether the proposition which the Government had made was a fair and adequate one. No one had tried to tackle the figures of the Under Secretary, and he thought that the proposition of 2*d.* per name was a very fair one. Of course, if Quarter Sessions increased the salaries of their clerks, there might be an additional sum to pay, and there was the danger of magistrates not taking the same trouble to keep down expenses if everything was paid by the State. It must also be remembered that the people of boroughs had to pay towards Imperial taxation as well as other people, and not having a subvention, they did not get anything towards their own registration. As a matter of fact, the boroughs were really paying towards the registration of the counties. Under all the circumstances he hoped that the House would accede to the proposition of the Government, which he would, for his own part, support as a fair and adequate one.

MR. R. H. PAGET said, that the idea of subventions leading to extravagance was an erroneous one. Such an assertion was, in his opinion, utterly destitute of truth. He thought that the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) in his speech had considerably underrated the extra amount of work that would be thrown upon the overseers. The hon. Gentleman had seemed to fancy that it would be a mere bagatelle, that they would merely have to write down the names. He would ask the hon. Member whether he had consulted the Attorney General upon the subject as to his view of the extra trouble given to the overseers by this Bill? It was serious and difficult work, and, in addition to that, in some ways, it would be new work, and the overseers would certainly be entitled to ask for additional remuneration which would represent a considerable sum. That was an amount which they could not leave out of their calculations. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton had in his figures called attention to what he had considered the smaller amount of additional taxation which had been laid upon land in comparison with that laid upon house property. But had the hon. Member considered that it was all a matter of assessment? From year to year the rentals of land were becoming reduced, while, on the other hand, those of house property were increasing. That circumstance ought clearly to be taken into consideration in connection with this comparison. The Under Secretary in giving them his figures as to the incidence of the education rate had entirely forgotten the voluntary schools subscriptions. Speaking from memory, he thought he would not be far wrong in putting this amount down as exceeding £600,000 a-year, which was really a burden on the land, because the moment these subscriptions ceased, down would come the Authorities and tell them that they must have a School Board. The money had to be found from one source or another, and these voluntary subscriptions must, therefore, not be left out of the account. With regard to dealing with the whole question, he thought that the Government had repeatedly neglected to carry out the wish of the House, disregarding the majorities which had been again and again given against them on this question. The difficulties of agriculture were greater than last year; and it was no exaggeration to say that at the present moment there was more inquietude among the farmers of England, despite of reduced rents and all that had been done, than there had been for years past.

MR. SPEAKER said, it was his duty to inform the House that the debate had shown a tendency to wander from the immediate question, which was the preparation of the registers with respect to Parliamentary elections. With this ob-

servation, he should leave the hon. Member to conclude his speech.

MR. R. H. PAGET said, there was a difficulty in confining the discussion to the narrow points raised by the Resolution. The remarks of the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. H. H. Fowler) had extended to the larger field of local taxation, and it had been his (Mr. R. H. Paget's) object to show that this was a proper moment for partially redeeming the promises of Parliament with regard to relief from the burdens of local taxation. They asked that no further expenses for registratibn should be imposed on the local rates. The Government had come down with £20,000; but he wished they had been a little braver, for it was necessary that this entire subject should be dealt with broadly and widely.

MR. CROPPER said, he thought that there was a material difference between the present demand and the previous occasion when the House had affirmed the principle of granting relief from local burdens. The general principle of relief was affirmed on former occasions; now the Government had met the demand by offering to provide a subvention as compensation for the extra amount of work required from county districts. The real grievance rested with the heavily-rated boroughs, which would not receive the subvention. However, he should vote against any further extension than was proposed by the Government.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he had not intended to take any part in this debate; but after what had fallen from hon. Members opposite, he felt compelled to say a few words. He more particularly referred to the speech of the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler). He hardly thought that the Resolution could have been read by hon. Members opposite, who said that it proposed to relieve counties and did not affect boroughs. The Resolution affected both equally. It sought to grant relief to boroughs by declaring that these burdens should not be imposed on ratepayers in counties and boroughs and levied on a single description of property. A rich or a poor man who held property in land and houses paid all the cost, while certain wealthy persons in the same neighbourhood whose means were drawn neither from land nor from houses paid nothing at all. That was what they were fighting against. This was a national and not a local concern, and it had already been recognized that where it was a national concern the ways and means should be found out of the national income. What did the Resolution propose? That the expense of this national concern should not be imposed on the ratepayers. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) seemed to say that the expense of the whole registration was so great that the Government could not listen to the proposal for a moment. But the hon. Member tried to show that the expenditure was only one-tenth of a farthing.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, that was the existing expenditure.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, it was the increase that was objected to. The injustice of the existing state of things was admitted, and the burden ought to be thrown on the national funds. It was the only way to make the burden fall equally on all. Where was the remedy to be found? Whenever this question was brought forward someone of more or less authority on the Government Bench was always ready to get up and urge that this was only a part of a larger question which the Government would deal with, and that the question must wait until the larger subject was dealt with; but the larger question had never been approached. The present Government had been in Office for five years, and the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War had made local government one of the great questions in his speeches when contesting North Lancashire, and yet matters seemed exactly where they were five years ago. But the ground taken by his hon. Friend was a very intelligible one; it was that if the Government could not find time to remove the grievance, at least no new national charges should be thrown on the local rates. Then it had been urged that the Resolution would stop the Bill; but he altogether denied that. Of course, there was no saying what the Prime Minister would do if it was passed; but there was nothing in the Rules of the House which would make the Resolution any impediment to further procedure with the Bill. In conclusion, he would implore the Government not to leave the question in its present state. In his

opinion, the £20,000 offered by the Government was a mere sop, and would leave the boroughs untouched.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said, the right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite had said that this was a question in which boroughs were as much interested as counties. He thought the Under Secretary for the Home Department had proved that boroughs were a great deal more interested than counties. The right hon. Gentleman opposite supposed that borough Members were not alive to the extraordinary charges made upon real property in the boroughs. They were alive to it. They could present a case to the House as strong as, if not stronger, than county Members could present for relief, because there had been a depreciation of property going on for many years in the boroughs as well as in the counties. But borough Members held that this was not the opportunity to raise or satisfactorily settle so large a question as that of local taxation. Hon. Gentlemen opposite had been discussing a sentimental grievance, because the burden upon the counties was not to be increased under this Bill; but, in consequence of the compromise proposed by the Government, it would be in all probability some thousands of pounds less. He was curious to understand how it was the Tory county Members took so much interest in the burdens on the boroughs after having been silent upon the subject since 1867. He believed, speaking as the Representative of a large constituency, and as knowing something of the feeling of a group of boroughs within a few miles of his own constituency, having jointly an assessment as large as that of the counties of Devon and Sussex, that they were opposed to its discussion on an occasion so altogether inadequate as the consideration of the Registration Bill. Let the counties bear the burden for 18 years, as the boroughs had done, before they cried out. He thanked the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) for the speech he had delivered, and he warned hon. Gentlemen connected with the landed interest of the inexpediency of raising questions in regard to local taxation. Hitherto the landed interest had had great authority, and almost a monopoly of power, in both Houses, and they had framed loans and imposed taxes as suited themselves, regardless of the interests and feelings of the ratepayers. A great change had come over the feelings of the people of this country. It was likely that in the next Session of Parliament a good many of these questions would arise, and it was a policy of great shortsightedness on the part of the right hon. Gentleman opposite to anticipate the coming day by raising these discussions.

MR. HOULDSWORTH said, that if any apology were needed for his addressing the House he thought he should find it in the expression of surprise by the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) that no Member representing a borough had spoken in support of the Motion. He was not concerned to deal with the Motion at large, and he would be ruled out of Order if he attempted to speak on the larger question of the incidence of local and Imperial taxation. He was not even concerned after the speeches already made to deal with the question of the counties. He desired to represent the condition and the claims which boroughs had upon the Government, especially in view of this Motion. They had before them the proposal of the Government. That proposal seemed to proceed on two assumptions. One was that there should only be relief where additional expense was incurred, and the other was that no additional or special expense was put upon the boroughs at the present time. He maintained that both of these propositions were unsound. It was not only in cases where additional expense and additional work were thrown upon the officers charged with the duty of registration that relief should be given from Imperial taxation, and additional expense was thrown by the present Reform Act upon the boroughs. He was very glad to hear the sympathetic remarks of the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for the Home Department, with regard to the incidence of taxation in boroughs; and he thought he might take his figures and his arguments to show that the incidence of taxation was quite as severe upon the inhabitants of boroughs as it was upon those in the counties. He was very glad that the principle, at any rate of relieving taxation for a purpose of this sort, was affirmed by Her Majesty's Government in the proposal which they had made. There was evidently nothing in principle

against assistance to taxation for the purpose of registration; and it would seem to him strange if any principle opposed to such relief could be stated, for this certainly was an Imperial question. He had heard some remarks made with regard to the importance of local expenditure being under local control, and he thoroughly subscribed to that principle; but this was not a question where much difference could be made in expenditure in differents places. He could understand that argument being used when the representation of localities was more unequal; but the ground was completely taken from that argument now, when the great mass of the people were voters, and when they had very nearly approached to equal electoral districts. He would put before the Government the fact that they in boroughs had under this Reform Act some additional work and expense as regarded registration. Hon. Gentlemen opposite might suppose it was not a very large increase, still it was very substantial. He would remind the House that most, if not all, boroughs had enlarged boundaries, which drew a number of county voters into the boroughs, thereby causing additional work and expense. If relief were to be given at all in this matter it ought to be given permanently and not temporarily. In every borough it would be found that a very large proportion—some 10 to 20 per cent—of those who appeared on the overseers' list had no business to be on the Register at all. It was, no doubt, very desirable that work of this sort should be done economically; but the first thing to be considered was that it should be done as perfectly as possible. He had heard it argued that if the expenses of registration were transferred from the locality to the Imperial Treasury there would be a great deal of extravagance. He did not quite see why this should be the case, and he did not think that extravagance would take place. It did not appear to him that, if the Local Authorities did their work properly, they would have very much control over the expenditure. They might, of course, give their officers a large amount of salary; but if the latter did their work perfectly there would be a certain sum which could be easily ascertained paid per voter, and this sum might be granted by the Treasury to the various boroughs. The Government had proposed 2*d.* per vote in counties; and he would undertake to say that it would be easy in boroughs of different sizes to form a scale of the sums necessary for registration from year to year, and that sum could be transferred from the Imperial Treasury. On these grounds he ventured to urge strongly upon the Government the case of the boroughs. The time had arrived when, both in counties and boroughs, the expenses connected with this important work of registration ought to be transferred to Imperial taxation, and thus the political Parties who were at present doing a great deal of that work for the country would be relieved of it, while there would be no longer an opportunity afforded of giving one-sided registration to a political Party.

MR. DUCKHAM, said, that he should support the Motion of the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Massey Lopes) on principle. He considered that there could be no object more completely national than that of electing Members of the House of Commons, whose duties were to deal with the whole interests of the Empire; that being so, he felt that the cost of registration of voters should be treated as a national question, and not be imposed upon the already overburdened ratepayers. It had been argued by the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) that, hitherto, the registration fees had been paid exclusively by the boroughs; and, since it was not objected to by the rateyayers in the boroughs, upon the passing of the Reform Bill of 1867, no alteration should now be made. He (Mr. Duckham) felt that it was not a question for the rural more than the urban ratepayer; both had hitherto borne their share of the burden; it had not fallen exclusively upon either. But about the year 1867 the poor rate appeared to be considered as the most elastic means of raising money, and almost every conceivable burden was placed upon it; but that did not justify its continuance. He considered that the time was come when real property should be relieved from burdens for national objects. Hon. Members had talked as though the lists of borough electors having been made out, no further expense was incurred; but that was not

so, there was an annual heavy expense incurred. He was glad to know that the Government admitted the principle for which he contended, by their offer of 2*d.* per head registration for the counties; but he failed to see how such an arrangement would satisfy the ratepayers in boroughs. He would instance that there were now many old boroughs disfranchised, and many new ones constituted. The disfranchised boroughs were added to the county electorate; their registers would not be altered, beyond corrections; yet they would be entitled to receive from the National Exchequer a registration fee of 2*d.*, whilst the fees for registration in other existing boroughs and the newly enfranchised boroughs would be borne by the ratepayers. He argued that such an anomalous state of things could not be considered to be a fair and equitable adjustment. It was not the case that subventions were extravagantly spent. He was himself Chairman of the Ross Highway Board, and could assure the House that the expenditure was now quite as economically conducted as before the main road grant of £250,000 was paid. He therefore earnestly appealed to the Government to treat the question on the broad principle, and make such an adjustment as would be acceptable, because equitable to all alike.

Mr. WHITLEY said, he could not have believed that any borough Member in the House, on whichever side of the House he sat, could vote against the Motion of the hon. Baronet the Member for South Devon, for if ever there was a case which interested those who were Members of boroughs, he ventured to think it was the Motion which had been brought forward so ably by his hon. Friend, and there had been no answer to the argument which his hon. Friend had brought forward. The only argument which had been advanced had been the old argument of delay. He would be very willing indeed to rest the case of the boroughs on the speech they had just now heard from the Under Secretary for the Home Department. On that speech he thought he proved the position that whatever might be the position of the counties the boroughs lay under a great disadvantage. Everyone who was acquainted with boroughs would know that local taxation had increased in every way, and must be of opinion that what followed in the great towns was closely connected with the increase of local taxation. At the present time, in his own city, which was divided into nine divisions, there was an immense amount of property that paid taxation. There was, undoubtedly, a lot of property occupied, so that people paid rent without rates. It was one of the most fertile subjects which could well occupy the attention of the statesmen and philanthropists of the future; but he wanted to know why the House should not avail themselves of the present Bill, in order to bring their grievances before the Government, and in order to impress upon the Government the great importance of forthwith giving whatever measures of relief they could in the position they were placed in? He thought they were very hardly placed indeed. The Government opposed the course suggested by the hon. Member for Dudley (Mr. Sheridan), because the country was not granted relief in 1869, and put that forward as a reason why they should not have relief now. He might point out that much had occurred since 1869. Local taxation had increased, and had increased very much, and what was a slight increase at that time had become an intolerable burden at present. How were they to deal with these things unless they took advantage of the present Bill? Government proposed to make some relief—small and quite inadequate. They proposed to give relief to Ireland, and at the same time acknowledged that the burden of taxation pressed most heavily on cities and boroughs, and yet they refused to boroughs the relief they proposed to give to counties. Let him refer to the speech made the other day by the President of the Poor Law Board, that they would meet the case by giving relief to Ireland, that they would give a certain measure of relief to towns, but not to boroughs. The only reason was this, that it was an old taxation, and that it was an old borough, and therefore upon that ground alone he justified the refusal to give to boroughs any relief at all. Would that bear investigation? If, upon the statement of one of the Ministers that night, the burden of taxation was heavy on boroughs—if they

had been long-suffering and patient, was that patience and long-suffering to be thrown in their teeth, and were they to be told on that account that they were to have no relief at all? "But," said the right hon. Gentleman, "I believe the boroughs will not unfairly have an increase of taxation." He (Mr. Whitley) was sure his right hon. Friend and those who sat opposite were entirely in error. There would be a very large amount of increase of taxation. Look at the divisions in Liverpool. There was one division almost entirely taken out of the county, and why should they not have some measure of relief in that division? It was a totally unfair position that they, as Members for boroughs, and their constituents were placed in if the Government would not give way, and grant them some measure of justice. They complained that they were unfairly treated by the measure now before the House by the relief the Government had proposed, and he could not conceive it possible that any Member for a borough could fail to agree with him that in the course the Government had taken they had taken an unfair course with regard to the boroughs. He believed this question of local taxation was a very important one. The Speaker had ruled—and properly ruled—that the House could not, on an occasion like this, go into another subject than that before the House. That was the old, old story—that in the far future some remedy might be applied; but why should they defer it to a future day? They had been promised long, long ago that liberty which they claimed at present, and they had a right to claim it at the hands of the Government. The Government were going to increase taxation. They professed to do all in their power to reduce their local taxation. They admitted that it was a great and a growing evil. In every speech they heard from hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side of the grievances of local taxation. Boroughs were growing in every direction; and yet, whenever the opportunity came, and whenever there was any hope given of obtaining some relief, they were always met by the old, old cry, "We are not able." That was the position they were in. They had heard of the large increase of taxation that had taken place, especially in the towns, and it was going on to an intolerable extent. The case which he brought under the notice of the Government was—"While you are endeavouring to offer some dole, some slight relief, to the counties and to Ireland, you deny to the boroughs of England, the cities of England, and the villages of England, that relief which they thought they have a right to demand at the hands of the Government." He had heard, from time to time, most touching speeches from the other side with regard to the increase in the number of peasant proprietorships. He represented a city where the working classes held by far the largest portion of the land in the city. Their holdings extended in every direction. Were the Government going to free these working men, and yet ruin the working classes by giving them proprietorships in name only, and by imposing upon them this oppressive amount of local taxation? He did hope and trust that when the right hon. Gentleman opposite rose he would be able to say that the Government had reconsidered their position, and that they were not prepared to sit still and hear their Colleagues admit the very facts he was endeavouring to press upon them, and yet to refuse that relief which they had a right to demand. If they did not do so he trusted that all the borough Members would have the courage of their convictions, and, no matter on which side of the House they sat, come forward and carry the Motion by a large majority.

MR. HARRIS said, he rose to support the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for South Devon. The speeches that had been made from the opposite side of the House contained no arguments, and were it at the power of the hon. Baronet to exercise a right to reply to them, he would have but little trouble in doing so. In the first place, he imagined that his hon. Friend would say that the proposals of the Government were totally inadequate; and, secondly, he would argue that as these registration charges were recurrent that a small grant for this year only was no proper attempt to meet the case. It was quite true that the hon. Member for Wolverhampton had endeavoured to persuade the House that the temporary subvention now proposed was, in fact, more than the extra cost of the registration would be;

but if that were so, how easy was it for the Government to grant all that the hon. Member who proposed this Amendment had asked for. Then we should know how we stood. At present it was all doubt and uncertainty, and the calculations of this side of the House were widely different to those of the Government; in fact, hon. Members on this side of the House regarded the offer as simply a sop preceding a General Election—a sop which would not give offence to the supporters of the Government, but at the same time would by no means meet the case. He admitted that this grant ought to be made to boroughs as well as to counties. Most of the previous speakers had laid stress on the heavy burdens incident to the agricultural interest, and he agreed to the full in all they had said. Agriculture in this country was undoubtedly burdened in a manner that no other business would for one moment allow. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton had given statistics which would go out to the country, by which he maintained that the amount of local taxation incident to purely rural property was only about £2,000,000 per annum; but this was totally illusory. The mixed urban and rural property was admitted by the hon. Member to bear a further burden of £10,000,000 per annum, and some land used for agricultural purposes likewise fell into the category of "urban," being within the limits of boroughs. Careful calculations had been made by agricultural experts as to the amount of local taxation borne by the agricultural land of England and Wales, and these resulted in an almost unanimous agreement that the proportion belonging exclusively to farms amounted to £7,000,000 sterling per annum; but this was not all, for in hundreds and thousands of parishes the school rate, instead of being included in the assessments, had been made a voluntary rate which did not enter into the published accounts of local rating. Then, again, the land had to bear the support of that most useful institution called the National Established Church—an institution which he trusted would long fulfil its useful functions, but whose benefits were certainly not confined to the farming interests. These charges, added to the Imperial charges, such as land tax and other Imperial burdens, brought up the taxation on the produce of land to such a point as no hon. Gentleman opposite, who was not directly concerned in the cultivation of land, would believe possible. The hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) said, in his speech, that landowners had much to learn and much to unlearn, and that it was dangerous for them to approach these subjects seeing that the feeling was to place much heavier burdens on agricultural land than it now bore. He was not at all afraid of the threats of the hon. Member for Bradford. He would be only too glad as a yeoman farmer, which he was, to compare his position as to taxation with that of the hon. Member for Bradford. The hon. Member for Bradford bought his raw material—wool—free from all duties or taxes of any sort. He (Mr. Harris) as a farmer got his raw material by the employment of labour and science upon the soil; but by the mode of rating adopted in this country this raw material was taxed up to the hilt. Again, he, as a yeoman farmer, had to compete with men in the United States, who had the advantage of the raw material extracted from rich virgin soil comparatively free from taxation or burdens of any sort. From statistics which he had most carefully collected in the United States he could assure hon. Members that the taxes on corn production in the United States did not amount to one fourth part of what the burdens other than rent in this country amounted to. Seeing, then, what a fierce competition was now going on between the farmers in the two countries, could it be wondered at that the Representatives of the British agriculturists should band themselves together as they were now doing to resist all increase in their burdens? Comparing, then, his position with that of the hon. Member for Bradford, he would first say that the manufacture of food should not be put in a worse position than that of cloth; in fact, if the two be considered, that the food was the more important of the two. Secondly, if the hon. Member for Bradford enjoyed legislation which gave him his raw material of manufacture free of taxation, the farmer ought to enjoy the same benefits. Thirdly, the raw material which the farmer used being English raw material, while the raw material of the Bradford manufacturer was almost all produced abroad, was an additional

reason why the home produce should be freed from taxation. He knew well that hon. Gentlemen opposite would reply that there would be a danger of such relief going to the landlord. He (Mr. Harris) had no landlord, and he failed to see why he should be unfairly taxed because other persons chose to have landlords, or because landlords chose to have tenants. The fact of the matter was that landlords, tenants, and labourers were all interested in this matter. What affected one affected all. The burdens had now advanced to that extent on the industry that land was being abandoned, and the poorer land of this country would rapidly go out of cultivation. The industry was, in fact, being strangled. He had read a most interesting speech a short time since, made by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain), where he compared the taxation of himself and that of the agricultural labourer. The right hon. Gentleman had discovered that he was only paying 3¾ per cent in taxation on his property, which evidently consisted mostly of personalty, whereas he tried to prove that the agricultural labourer was in an indirect manner paying 7 per cent. Other investigators had, however, conclusively shown that the agricultural labourer was only paying 4½ or 5 per cent. He (Mr. Harris), as a farmer, thought hon. Gentlemen would be rather surprised when they heard what he was paying. Taking his profits by agriculture for the last 10 years, and reckoning no rent for his land, he found that he had paid more than 30 per cent on the net income which he had received. What agriculturists asked for was that such wide anomalies should be promptly rectified. In France, although local taxation on land was less than in this country, the farmers had found that they could no longer succeed against foreign competition with such exceptional burdens, and they had induced the French Government to return to Protective duties on corn and meat. He did not suppose that many Members in that House would support the same policy in England; but if we were to be without Protection, it was all the greater reason for our being placed in such a position as to be able to hold our own against the foreigner. As far as the principle was concerned, the boroughs had an equal claim with the counties for relief; but the agricultural interest being far more necessary to the country than any other, the counties had really a superior claim.

MR. SPEAKER reminded the hon. Member that the House was not discussing an abstract Resolution, but an Amendment upon a specific point in the Registration Bill.

MR. HARRIS said, he was sorry if he had offended against the Rules of Debate. What he intended to show was that agriculture could not bear any additional burdens at the present time. The responsibilities of the owners of agricultural land in this country at the moment were unusually great. The system of agriculture was undergoing great changes, and the outlay required for new buildings and various other improvements was very large. Any proposal of an increased taxation was, therefore, most impolitic from a national point of view. Speeches such as they had heard from the hon. Member for Bradford were too common. They induced a want of confidence which prevented the outlay of money in our own country. Was it likely that men of property would chose to sink their money in improvements at home if they knew that these improvements when made were to have heavier taxation put upon them? Would they not naturally prefer to invest their capital in countries that had some regard to the maintenance of the industry of agriculture? In conclusion, he regarded this proposal of the Government as the last straw which break's the camel's back. It might not amount to a very large percentage of additional burden; but he set himself against all additions to the burdens falling on industry from a national as well as a farmer's point of view, and he heartily supported the Amendment of the hon. Baronet the Member for South Devon.

MR. ROUND said, that he desired not to give a silent vote upon the question under discussion, but to add his protest to those of other speakers on the Conservative Benches who resisted the proposal of the Government to throw even a portion of the expenses of registration upon local ratepayers. He knew the amount in question was not considered large; but he contended for the principle, that charges of a national character

should not be imposed upon one description of property only—namely, houses and land. He was glad to hear the hon. Member the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department say that the general incidence of local taxation was most unfair, as, indeed, many other hon. Members and right hon. Members on the Government side had frequently declared; but what he wanted was to see those hon. Members act up to their words and vote that the present system of local taxation was unfair. So long as new charges were imposed upon the rates, and such expenses as those of registration were continued to be charged, so long were they perpetuating a system which they admitted to be unfair. The whole community—and not one portion only—should bear the expense of such charges as registration. He represented an agricultural district which had suffered as much as any other county from the continued depression, and though other causes had mainly contributed to bring about the serious losses which occupiers of land had sustained, the incidence of local taxation had pressed most heavily upon them, and they felt it more keenly as it was an evil which the Legislature could have done much to remedy. Large landowners might be represented on the Government Benches; but he believed that small landowners and occupiers were specially interested in this question of local taxation, and it was on their behalf he appealed. The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department had admitted the large increase in local rates which had taken place in the last 10 years; and though he (Mr. Round) was well aware the large proportion of this was due to the towns, he reminded the House that the increased burden of the rates fell very heavily upon occupiers of land in agricultural boroughs; they often had to pay 3*s.* or 4*s.* or more per acre, and for matters from which they derived very little benefit. He well remembered the Resolution passed by the House of Commons in 1870, when a large number of Liberal Members assisted Sir Massey Lopes. He could not understand why such a different feeling should animate the Liberal Party now, when those who suffered from recent continued agricultural depression put in their just claims, and he hoped that some at least would, upon the present occasion, help by their votes to bring about the desired result.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he would call the attention of hon. Gentlemen opposite to the tendency of the proposal before the House. The Amendment had a tendency in the direction of manhood suffrage, for if the expenses of Parliamentary elections and registrations, and other similar expenses were to be charged upon the National Exchequer, it might well be argued that it was no longer fair that the possession of a vote should be dependent upon the possession of property or a connection with it. It was well known that the main part of the work to be done under the Bill would affect counties, and, therefore, he regarded the inclusion of boroughs in the proposal before the House as somewhat delusive. He feared that if such a proposal were agreed to, the cost of registration would be increased. That would be the probable result if the cost were for the future defrayed out of Imperial funds. The only way to insure economy in connection with the expenses of elections was to make the localities defray them. If the House were to proceed to impose charges connected with Parliamentary elections upon Imperial taxation, the day might not be far distant when there would come a demand for the payment of Members. Hon. Members opposite, by their action that evening, were paving the way for the making of such a demand. He hoped that the expenses of Parliamentary elections would in the future be paid by the localities themselves.

MR. ECROYD said, that there was no desire on the Conservative side of the House to obstruct any measure for the registration of voters; but if they had not raised this question they would have lost an opportunity of protesting against an injustice, and would have provided some excuse for the continuance of that injustice. The vote to be taken that evening was one which would greatly affect taxpayers, for it related to an important matter of principle. The growth of local burdens not only threatened the prosperity of owners of property, but also the success of our industries. If they found that in a matter of this kind, which was national in all its bearings, the charges were to be paid out of local taxation, Members would be neglecting their duty if they did not try

to prevent it. He regretted that so much of the debate had been spent in drawing a distinction between land and other kinds of property, and between dwellers in the towns and in the country. He thought that to-night they were fighting the battle of the ratepayers, not only in the agricultural districts, but equally in the boroughs. The county of Lancaster was cut up into 23 divisions, and all knew that 15 or 20 of these were urban and industrial in character. Yet they were as much concerned in the matter of the debate as the most purely rural districts in the Kingdom. The Under Secretary for the Home Department had told them that the incidence of local taxation on land and buildings was most unjust. He thanked the hon. Member for that admission; but it would be much more satisfactory if the Government, who were so slow to relieve them of this injustice, would abstain from increasing it. The tendency of all their legislation this Session was directed to its exaggeration, and not to its remedy. The pressure of charges of this kind was a most serious matter. So far from the agriculturists feeling it in the heaviest degree, he believed the Under Secretary for the Home Department was correct when he said that those engaged in the industries of urban and suburban districts felt the pressure still more heavily. This was one element in that system of handicapping our own industries for the benefit of foreigners, which had already been carried in this country to the verge of ruin. Unless those who made large fortunes in connection with foreign trade, such as bankers, merchants, and speculators, were made to pay their share of Imperial charges, it would be impossible for our industries to survive. He was sincerely thankful to his hon. Friend for having introduced this proposal, and was glad that it would be carried to a vote, so that the country might have an opportunity of seeing who were endeavouring to serve its industries, and who were throwing them over.

MR. STORER contended that this question of the cost of registration was more a matter of local than Imperial concern. Members living in counties and boroughs could see that this was an opportunity not to be missed of bringing before the Government the fact that a check must be placed upon the imposition of more burdens on the rates, and that those burdens should be placed not upon real property alone, but also upon personal property. It was all very well for the Government to dangle before the House, year after year, the promise that they should have a Local Government Bill shortly; but that Bill never came, for either they were engaged in a war, or there were rumours of war, or they were employed in evading war, or other things, that they had no time for passing such a Bill. He hoped the ratepayers would see that their interests were better attended to in future Parliaments than they had been in the past, and he thought they would probably desire to have a different Government to carry out their wishes. This was the last straw on the camel's back. The agricultural labourer was at present the victim of a new tax, the education tax, which ground many of them to the dust, and he had no doubt it produced a similar effect in the boroughs. And now the labourer was to have another new tax imposed on him, in the shape of an additional beer tax. He considered that the time had arrived when a protest should be made against such a proceeding.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, that he disputed the statement of the Under Secretary for the Home Department that this was an inopportune occasion for bringing this matter before the House. If the Government had acquainted themselves with the principle upon which those who represented the interests of the ratepayers invariably acted, they would have known that whenever local burdens were about to be increased by any Bill, they threw themselves into the battle. The Under Secretary had made what he might call an academical admission; he had said that the present system of local taxation was radically wrong. Well, they were tired of academical admissions and academical Resolutions of the House. Twice during the present Parliament the House had passed a general Resolution that relief should be given to the ratepayers; but they had obtained no relief at all. Now was an opportunity, not for making a profession of faith, which, without works, was vain, but for actually granting a means of relief. By that test the sincerity of the Government was to be proved; but the Under

Secretary declared that they should wait for a more convenient season, that the wrong they complained of was "but a little one," and, availing himself of the plea of the old sinner, he excused himself from applying a permanent and effectual remedy on the ground that it was an "old" wrong. The old and sound foundation of their argument was that the incidence of taxation on land and houses had for a length of years been disproportioned to the incidence of taxation on other classes of property. By the last Return of the Local Government Board placed on the Table of the House, the yearly expenditure derived from rates on land and houses was £50,000,000, and the debt secured on that property was £160,000,000. Such figures spoke for themselves, and needed no comment. How were they to deal with that tremendous sum total, which had grown to its present dimensions in the present generation? Why, by reducing it in the same way as it had been accumulated, by degrees. The householder and the freeholder had been overtaxed by burdens gradually imposed. Let them gradually reduce or remove them. The townsman, not less than the countryman; the shopkeeper and the artizan, not less than the farmer; the labourer and the freeholder were the parties interested in that reform. By the compromise they had offered, the Government admitted the principle of their contention. But was the compromise a fair one? Ireland was to receive £10,000, England only £20,000. The "capable citizen" of England was to be registered at 2*d.* a-head, the "capable citizen" of Ireland at 5*d.* a-head. Was that fair? Instead of £20,000, £200,000 was required for England alone. He would wish, however, to say a word not only against the paltriness of the amount, but against the manner in which partial relief was proposed to be granted. If a subvention was to be resorted, let the Government give a good round sum like £500,000. But he objected altogether to subventions. They caused extravagance, and they tended towards a dual control. If, as was admitted, the business of registration was an Imperial business, let the Government take the whole thing into their own hands, let them do it wholesale through the agency of the Local Government Board. He would say one word in conclusion, not on the relative incidence of rates and taxes on one class of property or another, but on the actual, visible, and notorious effect of the increase of the rates upon the social condition of the people. Heavy rates meant high rents, and high rents meant the overcrowding of the dwellings of the poorest, and heavy rates meant also diminished wages, or, in other words, a smaller loaf for a hungry family.

Mr. ACKERS supported the Amendment, and said he would not have done so had it not embraced boroughs as well as counties, a fact of which the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler) did not seem to be aware. He would read a resolution which had been passed that day by the representatives of 58 local Chambers of Agriculture at a meeting of the Central Council. That resolution declared that the offer of the Government to vote £20,000 was altogether inadequate, and therefore the Council supported the Amendment now before the House. Other resolutions bearing on local taxation were also passed, and would be laid before the House on the discussion of the Budget Resolutions. He rejoiced that Ireland had been treated more generously, he would not say with full justice; but that was no reason why England should not have fair play. It was not the original intention of the Government to give anything at all. The subvention having been offered, the question was whether it was adequate or fair, and he submitted that it was neither. There would not be the slightest difficulty in making payments to overseers through the Clerks to the Unions. To do that would not be giving the Local Government Board any more trouble than they had now. The excuse given for not attempting a permanent settlement of this question now was scarcely becoming in the mouth of a Government who could ask Parliament for £100,000,000; a Government that was equal to that might very well have dealt with this question of local taxation. It was not the power but the will that was wanting. The President of the Local Government Board had stated that it was impossible to say what the charges were; but the Under Secretary for the Home Department had no difficulty in stating that they would be £12,500 a-year.

That estimate, however, he believed to be very much under the mark. It comprised only one portion of the expenses. Did it not mean simply the expenses of the Clerks of the Peace? He believed that that was all the hon. Member meant. If that was all, it was a small proportion only of the expenses which had to be borne. The £20,000 promised might be better than nothing, but it would not stop agitation. It seemed to have always been an inconvenient time for the Government to deal with the question of local taxation, and the Parliament would expire while the ratepayers were starving. The Government would have to go to the country without one of their pledges on this subject being fulfilled. Let the question be treated, not as a question between town and country, not as a question between one class and another, but let it be put upon the broad principles of equity and justice, and then the time might come when, instead of speaking for the future, they might act for the present.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said, it had been assumed that the proposed subvention of £10,000 to Ireland was a liberal one which would be accepted gratefully. Of course, it was a large sum as compared with that proposed to be given to England; but it would not be accepted as a settlement of this question or as a sufficient relief to local taxation. They were told that it was inconvenient then to bring the question of local taxation before the House; but it seemed to him that every fair question which they on that side brought forward was inconvenient to the Government from some cause or other, and it was exceedingly difficult to find a subject with which to confront them affecting local rates or the welfare of the industrial classes which the Government did not attempt to shelve in favour of foreign policy, of which during the present Parliament they had had more than enough. The House was told that it was a very small sum of money that was involved in the present case; but, even if that were so, it was necessary that they should be wary and watchful to prevent any addition being made to the local imposts that were now crushing to the ground not only the rural population, but the working men of the towns.

SIR BALDWYN LEIGHTON observed that the hon. Baronet the Member for South Devon had laid down the principle involved in that Motion very simply and distinctly. He had shown that the registration of Parliamentary voters was an Imperial matter, and that it ought to be paid for out of Imperial funds. The charges connected with the elections of Boards of Guardians or of Town Councils, being local in their character, were defrayed out of the rates; but the charge which the House was now discussing was properly a national one, and it ought not to be thrown on the local rates. If any justification were needed, apart from the importance of the subject, for the Motion of the hon. Baronet, it would be found in the speech of the Under Secretary for the Home Department, who spoke for the Government. For the hon. Gentleman admitted frankly and generously the grievous injustice of this local taxation on real property, and he had heard very different language used from that side and from the Treasury Bench, where every sort of argument had been used to put aside the settlement of the question. But when the Under Home Secretary went into facts and figures—he hoped the hon. Gentleman would excuse him for saying that he seemed to get beyond his depth, for he told the House that in purely rural places the amount was only £2,000,000, and had increased by only £500,000 in 10 years. Well, that was 25 per cent. But did the hon. Gentleman know how many purely rural Unions there were in England that were unmixed with urban districts? Why, not more than about one quarter of the whole number, those being where the assessment was the lowest. Therefore, like many others, he had given these statistics without the practical knowledge, and naturally he had been misled. Then he said—"But in urban districts the rates are sometimes 7*s.* in the pound, whereas in rural places they are seldom half that." Why, they never contended that this was a rural question. They had uniformly insisted that the town ratepayer was equally taxed unjustly and grievously; but, whereas the town ratepayer was paying on one-sixth of his income, the farmer was assessed at double, and that was where it fell so heavily on him. Then the hon. Gentleman said if a poor man bought a pennyworth of tea he had to pay half that in taxation. That was a mistake. He

only paid a farthing, or one quarter, in taxes, as the tax on tea was 6*d.* in the 1lb. But the point immediately before the House was the injustice of charging an Imperial purpose on the local rate. If this were for local or municipal purposes it would be different. It was the principle they were contending for that night, not the amount, and just let the House consider the tendency of these things. For years, until the question was taken up in this House, it was the custom of Chancellors of the Exchequer to lighten their Budgets by throwing charges on the rates. He remembered, for instance, in his own county an attempt of the Government to charge Militia infirmaries on the rates, and when it was successfully resisted the answer was that they had induced other counties to do so. If they allowed this additional sum to be imposed upon them now, they would have the President of the Local Government Board some two or three years hence pointing to what they had sanctioned in that case, and making it a precedent for further action in the same direction. It was, moreover, very impolitic to leave the question of local taxation unsettled. He did not know if such a course as deliberately disregarding a vote of the House on this question, as the Government had done, was unconstitutional and unparalleled; but he was certain it was very inconvenient for any Government, and they would probably find it so, in getting the fag end of the Session turned into a local taxation debate. Such Bills as this would be disturbed and aggravated by the question. Such questions as the Budget would be disturbed, or perhaps upset by it; and such questions as police superannuation would probably be dropped altogether on this account, as the Rivers Conservancy Bill had been. Ministers told them they were going to give them a Local Government Bill, when matters of that kind would be settled; but the House might have to wait four or five years longer before such a promise was fulfilled, and meanwhile the oppressive burden of local taxation would be continued, and probably increased. Last year a Government of London Bill was brought in which was to be the basis for county government, and the whole question of relief to local taxation was sedulously and deliberately excluded from the provisions of that Bill. How could they believe in the sincerity of the Government after that? Then they were told by a Cabinet Minister of a plan for creating large Provincial Building Societies, and that was to take the place of giving the ratepayers representation on the County Board. And that was the way they were put off. The House and the Government must not be surprised if they found themselves now beset by this question, nor if the forecast of the hon. Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) came true, and they found this question settling for them some of the elections next autumn.

Mr. GREGORY said, he thought that in the discussion which had taken place upon this subject the real question had been lost sight of. This was not exactly a question of local taxation, but a question whether the cost of registration should be thrown upon local funds. It was a question of national, and not of local concern. In the great Reform Bill of 1832 provision was made for the revision of voters' list by Revising Barristers and their payment by the House; but no provision was made for the overseer, who in connection with electoral lists had very important work to do in connection with the Revising Barrister, and, in fact, had to act as his assistant. The overseers made the returns to the Revising Barristers upon which the electorate was founded, and surely the preparation of these returns was a matter of national concern. Many hon. Gentlemen had, no doubt, mounted to-night the hobby of local taxation, which was a very good one on the proper occasion. Local taxation was a fair topic for discussion and consideration indeed. It had been admitted by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) that local taxation was at present on a very unsatisfactory footing. He (Mr. Gregory), however, considered that the present question was one which should be treated upon the larger and broader ground; it was a matter involving Constitutional principles and election of Representatives to Parliament, and it was, therefore, a matter for Imperial consideration. On that ground he would venture to support the Motion of his hon. Friend. He thought that, in his able speech, the hon. Member for Wolverhampton had underrated the duties and responsibilities which were thrown upon the overseers by the

Registration Bill. It had been said that in making out the new lists all that the overseer would have to do would be to turn to his Registers. But that was by no means all that he would have to do, because he would in many cases have not only to see who was already registered, but who was the occupier in possession to be brought upon the Register. The questions of the lodger and service franchise, again, could not be settled by merely looking at the Register; the overseer would have to make inquiries as to who were entitled to vote. In rural districts there would be many houses rated to the farmer, but occupied by his servants, and all this would have to be found out by the overseer. It was, however, upon the larger Constitutional questions that he proposed to support this Motion.

MR. LYULPH STANLEY maintained that in the case of both the lodger and the service franchise claims must be made by the persons who wished to be put upon the Register; and, therefore, it was not the case that the overseer would have to ransack the whole of his parish. He thought that the political activity of the people themselves would be amply sufficient for this. Hon. Members opposite had always prided themselves upon being opposed to centralization in matters of local government. There was a serious danger involved in putting these expenses upon the Imperial Exchequer. Those who had to pay the money must finally have the appointment of those who were paid; and if they gave effect to this Resolution they must recognize that the appointment of these officers must come into the hands of the Central Authority. The appointment of the overseer, and, where necessary, of an assistant overseer, was now in the hands of the ratepayers in vestry, and in many parts of the counties the people clung to this right, and considered it a matter of the greatest importance. They made it a matter of local Party contests and Party interest. If they were now going to place the charge on the national taxes they were putting it in the hands of the central political government; and he thought that it was unwise that this matter should be put in the hands of officers who were to be appointed as well as dismissed by the Central Authority. That was not his idea of local self-government. In the case of prisons and police, where hon. Members on the other side of the House had clamoured for State aid, State control and State regulation had followed. With regard to the question of trying to shift the burdens from the ratepayer, he entirely sympathized with those who thought that the present area of taxable property was not wide enough for local purposes, and he would be glad to see it extended. There was a strong democratic movement in favour of increasing taxation on land. Those who were in favour of the Amendment had treated the question as an occupiers' question, and not as an owners' question. But they would lose a great deal of popularity with the farmers if they adopted that tone in the country, and would only tend to increase the feeling which was growing up in favour of reviving the old Land Tax of 4*s.* in the pound.

MR. GRANTHAM said, he must protest against the idea that land was not sufficiently taxed already. There was no class in the country which had felt the increase of local burdens more than the landowners. If some of the Gentlemen opposite were to invest their money in land they would soon change their tone. Burdens ought to be fairly distributed among owners of property of all kinds, and an undue proportion ought not to be laid on the shoulders of landowners, as would be the case if the Amendment were not carried.

MR. HICKS said, he failed to discover that any valid reasons had been adduced by the Government or their supporters for resisting the hon. Baronet's proposal, especially as no demand was made for the reduction of taxation. Had the proposal included such a demand there would be some force in the arguments of hon. Members opposite; but such was not the case—they were simply resisting an increase of local burdens. In 1883, 31 Members opposite who had voted with the Government afterwards petitioned in the same sense as the Amendment. If he was not mistaken, the hon. Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) was among them. From the first time he had attended meetings of the Central Chamber of Agriculture this question had been a subject which engaged their attention. He had contended that it had been not only a question for coun-

ties, but for boroughs also, and not for ratepayers in England only, but for the whole of the United Kingdom. He hoped that hon. Members would, regardless of Party, vote against the proposed increase to the local burdens not only of England, but of the United Kingdom at large.

MR. P. A. MUNTZ said, that hon. Members had heard many statements which were intended to lead the House to believe that the Opposition only recognized the agricultural interests of the country, and that the landed interests paid scarcely any taxes. He could but attribute those statements to an absence of knowledge on the part of Gentlemen who had used them. He contended that agriculture was more highly taxed than any other industry in the Kingdom. There were great quantities of land which were wholly unproductive, but upon which the taxation, amounting to 3 per cent, was levied. That was a hardship to which the manufacturing interest of the country would not be willing to submit. The question was whether they should permit any increase of burdens already too heavy. As for himself, he was glad to support the reduction of local taxation as far as possible. He had the greatest sympathy with all local taxpayers, whether they were in the boroughs or in the agricultural districts; and hon. Members might rely upon it that in the coming elections this question would have a very important bearing upon the results.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND said, he wished to call the attention of the House to a form which had been received by the inhabitants of St. George's Hanover Square, but which no one could understand. It was stated on the form that those failing to fill it up would be liable, under the Representation of the People Act, to a fine of 40*s*. In the House itself he had not been able to find a single Gentleman who knew how the form was to be filled up; and he, therefore, asked how were the people to whom it was addressed to know what to do?

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he thought it strange that they had had no expression of opinion on this subject from the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke). They had heard a very able speech from the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. H. H. Fowler), who, he was sure, every Member of the House would congratulate upon having a seat on the Ministerial Bench. But he did not think that the Office held by the hon. Member enabled him to speak with sufficient authority on behalf of the Government proposal. This question had been discussed in a very different frame of mind from that in which it was discussed upon the Irish Registration Bill the other night, when the Prime Minister appeared to elevate it to the highest regions of Constitutional importance, appealing to hon. Members, as guardians of the Constitution, to aid the Government in resisting the proposal of the hon. Member for Galway. The right hon. Gentleman said that proposal was one which would lead to the corruption of the House of Commons, and that it was illegitimate in principle; but this evening all that had been forgotten, and the Government had accepted the principle that some of the registration expenses should be defrayed by the Treasury. They had, therefore, to discuss, not a great question of Constitutional principle, but whether the proposal of the Government on this matter was, as it had been stated to be by the Under Secretary of State, a fair and adequate proposition for the settlement of this question. The hon. Gentleman told them that they were contending about a sum no larger than one-tenth of a farthing in the pound upon the assessment of the county ratepayers in England. Was that, he (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) asked, a fair and adequate proposition for the settlement of this matter as far as England was concerned? Upon the first blush of the case it was not, because, whereas the Government intended to grant £10,000 to Ireland, they only proposed to give £20,000 towards the same kind of expenditure in England, in spite of the enormous excess of work to be done owing to the larger population. He did not say that £10,000 was enough for Ireland; but he did say that if it was not more than enough, £20,000 could not be a fair and adequate proportion in England. His hon. Friend the Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory) had explained that under the provisions of this Registration Bill, coupled with those of the Franchise Act, a very

large amount of extra work must necessarily be thrown upon the overseers and assistant overseers, for which work it was only just and fair they should receive adequate compensation. The right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board suggested the other evening that it was impossible to give that compensation, because the remuneration of the officials for this work was mixed up with other kinds of payments for the preparation of jury lists and other matters, and one class of payment could not be separated from another. He (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) wished to point out that in every Local Government Board Report there was a heading setting out what the registration expenditure amounted to for the whole Kingdom during the year. That Return was composed of certain items, and it would be perfectly possible for those who sent the items in to state what would be a fair charge to make for this registration work. He did not think, with some hon. Members, that the payment out of national sources for registration work would interfere with the independence of the officials. He submitted that the proposal of the Government was neither fair nor adequate, and he was astonished that it merely applied to Clerks of the Peace in counties, and gave nothing whatever from national sources for boroughs in respect of similar work to that done in the counties. What he thought one of the best parts of the Motion of his hon. Friend was this—that he looked at this question fairly as regards both boroughs and counties. That raised the question whether the whole of the expenditure, or only the increased expenditure which was thrown on the rates by the registration of this year, was to be borne by the Treasury? He was not contented with the argument that this expense had always been on the rates, as he believed it had been thrown on the rates from the carelessness or idleness of the House of Commons of the day. It had been stated that the Government were following the principle adopted in 1867. He did not think it necessary to go back upon that time. He was not one of those who were responsible for the Act of 1867, as he had only then the responsibility of a private Member. But if an injustice were done in 1867, that was no reason why it should be repeated now. It seemed to him that the payments in respect of registration ought in justice to be made a national charge, and not a local one. He did not know whether they would be told that they ought not to raise so large a question on this Bill, which only professed to apply the existing Registration Law to those who were entitled to the franchise under the Act recently passed. It should be borne in mind, however, that Her Majesty's Government had not scrupled to deal in the Irish Registration Bill with a matter of at least as great importance. The point of difference was not a very large one as between Her Majesty's Government and those who sat on that side of the House. The principle was conceded to them, for the Government had agreed that a certain portion of these expenses should no longer be charged upon the rates. When that principle was conceded, the question of how much was merely a minor affair. Their contention was that the registration of voters who were to return Members to that House, being, as his hon. Friend the Member for East Sussex said, a national affair, the expenditure for it ought to be paid for from national sources. They asked Her Majesty's Government to deal justly and fairly with this question. They did not ask the Government to give them a shilling more in England in proportion to the work to be done than it was proposed to give in other parts of the United Kingdom. He hoped they would not hear from the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board a repetition of some words which fell from the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department, to the effect that if this Amendment were carried it would destroy the Registration Bill. Her Majesty's Government had not paid such attention to the votes of the House on questions of local taxation as to lead them to believe that they would take such an exaggerated view of the carrying of an Amendment of this kind. He trusted that if the Amendment were carried the Government would postpone further proceeding with the Bill until they had reconsidered the matter; and that, after having reconsidered it in a spirit of fairness, they would inform the House that they were prepared to accede to the Vote which had been given, and to pay from na-

tional sources that which was justly a national charge.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he would admit to the right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) that this Amendment was one which was to be expected, and that the debate which had taken place upon it was one which they might reasonably think hon. Gentlemen opposite, with their opinions upon this subject, would raise on a Bill of this kind. He would go further, and would thank right hon. Gentlemen opposite for having given them, in Committee on this Bill, Notice that they intended to raise the question. The Amendment, however much it might be regretted by those who did not agree with the views of hon. Gentlemen opposite, was, he admitted, one which it was quite fair for them to bring forward. He knew that there was no desire on the part of hon. Gentlemen opposite to obstruct the Bill; but if he excepted the speech of the hon. Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory), he must say that, in his opinion, a great deal of the debate had been of a thoroughly discursive kind. Indeed, much of it had been in the nature of a *reconnaissance* in force on the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill, just as if some hon. Members had been rehearsing in advance the speeches they intended to deliver in the course of a few weeks' time on the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The speech of the right hon. Baronet was, however, of a different kind, as he had dealt closely with the subject. The right hon. Baronet complained that the Government had treated Ireland on a different system and in a more liberal manner than they were treating England. But, as the right hon. Baromet was aware, Ireland possessed a wholly different system of registration to that which existed in England; and it was impossible to apply, in the case of Ireland, the same proposals that were applicable in the case of England and Scotland, though they greatly desired to do so. However, he might point out to the right hon. Gentleman that, in 1868, the Conservative Government made a proposal with regard to Ireland, and gave money for registration purposes in that country, while they made no proposal whatever in regard to England and Scotland. Therefore, he thought it hardly lay in the mouth of the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends to reproach the Government with treating Ireland more favourably than they had treated England and Scotland. At the same time, when that matter of greater favour being shown to Ireland was mentioned, he might observe that no speaker had reminded the House how very large the increase of voters in Ireland was. It was even greater in the Irish boroughs than it was in the Irish counties. To estimate the total increase of the voters in Ireland was rather difficult, but it would certainly be over 500,000; and that was a consideration which ought not to be lost sight of in the comparison which hon. Members opposite had instituted. The consideration of the Irish case from the Government point of view led them to the result which they had arrived at, and which hon. Gentlemen opposite failed somewhat to appreciate. They had to look to the fact, in the first place, that additional labour and the additional charge would be caused in the course of the present year by the Bills now before Parliament. In the case of Ireland, there was no doubt that additional labour would be caused, and additional charge occasioned. He thought that the language of the right hon. Baronet was a little strong in relation to his political Friends beside him, when he spoke of the apathy, and used similar epithets respecting the conduct of Parliament in 1867 and 1868. In those years an enormous increase was made to the cost of registration; and the right hon. Baronet's political Friends made no grant whatever for the increased charge occasioned in respect of registration in England or Scotland—the only thing they did was to give a grant of some £5,000 or £6,000 to meet the additional cost of registration in Ireland. That was a fact they were bound to comment upon and to remind the House of. The hon. Baronet the Member for South Devon (Sir Massey Lopes) was very wrath with the Government of that day for its neglect, although, to some extent, he was a sharer in that neglect, as he had a seat in the House. So great was the increase in 1868 as to double the charge for registration, yet no contribution was made except to Ireland, and that only of a temporary character. It was now said that Her Majesty's Government was repeating the

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injustice committed against the boroughs in 1868. But the proposals now made involved no increase in the expenditure in boroughs, the increased expenditure was only in counties; while, on the other hand, in 1868 there was a large increase in the expenses of registration in boroughs. The hon. Baronet the Member for South Devon, as well as the right hon. Baronet who had just sat down, had argued that registration was a national question and not a local question, and ought to be dealt with entirely out of national funds. For his part, he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had never been able to see how hon. Members opposite drew the line between what they called "national" and what they called "local" charges. He had heard nearly every charge called "national" which at the present time pressed upon the rates. That description applied to highways, to poor rates, and other charges of a like character; and he failed to see what were local charges in the opinion of hon. Members opposite. He agreed with the hon. Member for Oldham (Mr. Lyulph Stanley) that it was impossible for the State to take upon itself all these charges they called national, without entirely breaking down the fabric of local self-government of which they were so proud. He would not discuss this part of the question further, but would only ask hon. Members belonging to the Conservative and Constitutional Party whether it was not an old Constitutional doctrine that the return of Members was a local question, and whether the history of representation of communities in Parliament did not show that throughout the history of this country representation had been looked upon and treated as a local matter, so much so, indeed, that in former times Members were paid wages by their several constituencies? The hon. Baronet the Member for South Devon had proposed, and the hon. Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell), who spoke with so much knowledge and authority on this question, had seconded, the proposal, now made for the first time, that the whole charge of registration should be borne by the State, and the right hon. Baronet the Member for East Gloucestershire had now given his countenance to that proposal. He (Sir Charles W. Dilke) thought he was right in saying that was the first time that that proposal had been brought before the House in a formal shape. It had been contended that the proposal made by the Government to give a subvention conceded the principle for which hon. Members opposite contended; but that argument told both ways, and the hon. Baronet should be satisfied with the victory he had gained, and that, for the first time, Her Majesty's Government was proposing to make any contribution by the State towards the expenses of local registration in England and Scotland. Her Majesty's Government made the proposal, vainly thinking that it would meet the views of hon. Members opposite; but, unfortunately, it had been rejected with something like scorn. He should have thought that the hon. Baronet would have been satisfied that the principle for which he contended had been, to a certain extent, conceded, although in a temporary manner, and that he would have contented himself to treat it as a precedent on which to base similar proposals on a future occasion. Very wide questions had been raised by the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Ecroyd), who had argued with very great ability that the charges on local rates ought not to fall upon one description of property only. He (Sir Charles W. Dilke) could only say that, on that side of the House, they also agreed in that view. They had distinctly stated that they agreed that there should be a division of these charges, and that the tax ought not to fall upon one description of property alone; and there was not, therefore, any difference of opinion between the two sides of the House on that question. But hon. Members said that they had never been able to introduce Bills to give effect to these principles. He would only say that, in their opinion, if legislation were now allowed to progress at the same rate as legislation did in 1869, 1870, and 1872, those Bills would have passed into law a long time ago. The House was aware that the Government had actually framed, and put into shape, a Bill embodying their proposals on the subject; but it was a Bill of such magnitude that, in their opinion, at the present rate of progress it would take a whole Session to pass the Bill. How the last three Sessions had been consumed the House was aware, and it was

unnecessary for him to speak. The hon. Member for North Shropshire (Mr. Stanley Leighton) had told them that in lieu of a Bill the Government might grant a subvention of £500,000 until they were able to introduce the Bill. He (Sir Charles W. Dilke) was bound to say that the knowledge they hitherto gained of the effect of subventions in swelling and augmenting local charges did not make them regard subventions with any favour. He could not conceive any practice more calculated to swell the amount of local charges than the assumption of them all by the State. If that proposal were accepted, and if all these charges were assumed by the State, they would grow in a very short time to the large sum which had been mentioned by the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Massey Lopes). The right hon. Baronet (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) said that the proposal made did not meet the case of the overseers' expenses. In making that statement, the right hon. Baronet only followed the words of his statement. He said that the Government proposed to contribute something approaching to the whole county cost which was incurred by a small number of officers easily known and got at. These officers were accustomed to render accounts; and it was towards their expenses it was proposed to contribute a sum very considerably exceeding what those expenses had been hitherto, and falling not far short of what they would reach in the future. As he stated yesterday, the Returns of the expenditure lumped together the expenses of Parliamentary registration and municipal registration, and the printing of jury lists, and it was exceedingly difficult to separate these items. Up to that time he had found the difficulty insuperable. Passing that by, the main position of the Government was, that they could not be parties in the last year of this Parliament to propose to take the whole charge of registration on the State as a permanent charge. Therefore, they could not accept the proposal now made. If they were to make a temporary proposal now with regard to overseers, it was his belief that the acceptance of this proposal would plunge the State in a very large expenditure indeed, and that the proposal was one which was almost, if not entirely, unworkable. There were between 700 and 800 parishes in which there were hardly any voters at all, the numbers varying from one to five. There were between 1,100 and 1,200 parishes in which there were from 6 to 15 voters. There were between 2,000 and 3,000 parishes in which there were from 15 to 25 voters. There were between 4,000 and 5,000 sets of overseers who would have each of them to deal with fewer than 25 voters. There were 16,000 sets of overseers in all. In a vast number of parishes it would be necessary to deal with these sets of overseers in respect of a small number of names and absurdly trifling sums. Consider what would be the cost and trouble attending that proceeding. At present the expenses were certified by Revising Barristers who, in many cases, had insufficient *data* to go upon. There was uniform system of certifying that expenditure, and the methods varied in an extraordinary degree. Any attempt to make direct payment to the 15,000 or 16,000 sets of people would involve enormous labour. They would have to be paid by means of orders on the Postmaster General. Many of them kept no banking account, and they would have to get their orders paid through a banker or directly in London. It had been said that they might be paid by ordinary Post Office order; but the difficulty was that in many cases receipts would never be returned, and without receipts the accounts could not be audited. Therefore, the difficulty of dealing with 16,000 sets of people was one which the House could hardly realize, however simple it might appear to be. By the plan of the Government all these difficulties were avoided. Each parish contributing to the county rate would have to meet a precept for a less sum. In his belief, if the State met all the expenses, the result would be great extravagance; but in any case the Government objected to putting the charges upon the State in the last year of this Parliament, and they had made a temporary proposal which was workable, and which would afford a certain measure of relief. If the State assumed all these charges, they would fall upon Imperial funds, to which it had been shown the labouring classes contributed in an undue degree. They were not prepared to take that responsibility in the last year of this Parliament. They believed they had met

the Opposition half-way in making this temporary proposal. They had gone far beyond any proposal previously made to the House, and they could not go beyond it.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, that the conclusion he drew from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, and indeed from the proposals he had submitted to the House, was that until these later days of the present Session the Government had paid no attention whatever to the difficulties that lay before them and the country in regard to this Registration Bill. When he (Mr. Sclater-Booth) first saw the measure, it was his opinion that such was the case; and though the right hon. Gentleman now said that it was fair on the part of the Opposition, and was only to be expected on their part, that they should raise this question, it was clear that the Government had never faced the question, and had never expected that it would be raised, and that it was owing to indolence, carelessness, and forgetfulness that they had put aside the subject of the registration of the new voters, a subject, he ventured to say, of great difficulty, and which was as worthy of the attention of the Government as the admittance of the new voters to the franchise. The right hon. Gentleman had at the last moment, in consequence of what had recently occurred, made a proposal which very fairly met the expenses incurred by County Authorities through the agency of the Clerks of the Peace in making up the Poll Books, and he trusted that the precedent would be followed on future occasions. He was not prepared to say that the £20,000, or whatever the sum was that was to be repaid to the County Authorities for making up the Poll Books, would not be an adequate sum; but the registration of these new voters would involve very serious and difficult duties on the part of the officials, and he thought that the Local Government Board, if any Department of the State should have known that to impose duties on unpaid officers without providing statutory remuneration for their services was to run their heads against a stone wall, and to take a course which was certain to result in confusion and disappointment when it came to actual working. He was satisfied that it was too late now to do much, if anything; and he had no doubt that the registration of the new voters in the year now coming would be a chaotic mass of confusion, and that it would take many years to set right. It must be remembered that overseers, as a rule, were persons of very moderate business capacities, and that in all important places their duties were performed by assistant overseers — officers who were paid for their services. In the larger parishes, where the duties were performed by paid officials, some capacity might be reckoned on; but even as regarded this system of officers, he would point out that there were duties provided for under this Bill which ought never to have been placed upon such persons by Parliament without a statutable right to recover from the State a remuneration for the duties. It was not merely the preparing of a reprint or a copy of the Rate Book that was required of the officers; but they were required to ascertain the names and residences of all the voters, a most difficult and laborious subject of inquiry, and one which, he ventured to say, ought not to be left at the hazard of the more or less perfunctory discharge of duties by unpaid officers, but which should be entrusted to Clerks of Guardians or some officials appointed for the purpose. Then there were most elaborate Returns to be collected from owners of property and occupiers. He hoped that hon. Gentlemen would take the trouble to look at the Notice Paper on Thursday next. They would there see some questions propounded by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) which would show the absurdity of providing for the enfranchisement of a large number of new voters without taking timely and sufficient measures for their registration. The Registration Bill, as it came down from the Select Committee, was very much improved from the condition in which it was when it originally went before that body. It contained a power to call for Returns. If the Bill contained those absurd proposals, he contended that it was not a proper measure on which to base the initiation of this enormous mass of new voters into the electorate of the country.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: That is not in the Registration Bill, but in the Representation of the People Bill.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, there were very many provisions in the Registration Bill of equal perplexity and

difficulty. How were the electors to be got at in county districts, and how were the electors in the service franchise to be registered? Most of those matters had been dealt with in the Bill in a haphazard manner. They should all have been properly provided for by the establishment, not only of a system by which the overseers should do the work, but of means for remunerating them and providing solicitors and others to aid them. The duties of Revising Barristers would be as nothing compared with the duties which this Bill would impose upon the officers; and sufficient funds ought to have been provided to enable the overseers to obtain the assistance of solicitors to aid them in their work, and to get on the Electoral Roll the enormous mass of people admitted to the franchise by the County Franchise Bill. Nothing of the kind had been attempted. The Bill was an attempt to introduce into the framework of the law a new measure, by means of numerous references to obscure and antiquated Statutes, which probably no overseer had ever seen or heard of. The methods of reference observable in the Bill were resorted to by draftsmen when they had not the time or means of framing a new project applicable to the new circumstances under which they found themselves. He would do the Select Committee the justice to say that they had done their best to improve and elaborate the framework of the Bill which he said was so antiquated; but they had been unable to make it perfect. They had added to it a series of instructions to overseers which he was afraid would only result in making confusion a thousand times more confounded. How the overseers were to carry out the instructions given to them in the Bill he was really at a loss to conceive. He wished to discriminate between the charges thrown on the rates through the agency of the Clerks of the Peace, and those thrown on the localities by the agency of the overseers. As to the first, he was satisfied with the proposal of the Government, provided it was understood that it was to be a precedent to be followed till Parliament should devise some different manner of registration. As to the second, it touched an inherent blot in the registration of the people, and it was impossible to say so late in the day how it was to be remedied. Why had not a money clause been incorporated in the Bill, providing for the expenses of this new, and complicated, and difficult process of registration, which were certainly not in justice to be imposed upon the overseers? Why had not the Government provided for the expenses that would be incurred in respect of the overseers? It was quite evident that the Government had paid no attention to the Registration Bill until the last moment, and that they had not had time to frame a new provision of law which would be satisfactory and would meet the case. It was evident that now, at the last moment, having been unexpectedly defeated on this point when it suddenly arose in connection with the Irish Bill, they had awakened to the difficulties of the situation, and endeavoured at the last moment by a sop in the shape of £20,000 to throw dust in the eyes of the House, and make it appear that they had done all that was necessary to meet the justice of the case. He was not at all concerned with what had occurred in 1868. The question now raised had assumed a much more acute form since those days. It was not until the year 1872 that his hon. Friend the Member for South Devonshire (Sir Massey Lopes) obtained his well-known and famous majority; but since that time, and within the last three or four years, the question of rates had assumed a much more acute form. His hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. H. H. Fowler) had shown very clearly, in a way that he (Mr. Sclater-Booth) had very often shown himself, that the burdens on land in the aggregate were not increasing in a rapid ratio, but were, in fact, almost at a standstill. But a charge of an equal amount in actual money upon land, valued and rated as it now was, was five times as great as it was in 1868. If everyone would study the Returns in Schedule A of the Property Tax they would see that, whereas 20 years ago the value of land was half as much again as the value of house property, the reverse was the case now, and house property was worth 25 or 30 per cent more than land in England. That reduced the apparent injustice of the rate on landed property; but it did not at all follow from that that a similar rate on landed property was not very much heavier than it was in those days. At

all events, be that as it might, the question had now fairly come before them; and they had an opportunity of resisting, however small an increase, still an increase, upon the rates—of resisting the proposal to throw upon the rates a charge for public services. It might not be a serious charge in itself, but taken in the aggregate those charges came to a serious amount, and even this charge might prove to be a much greater one than the House thought. He thought the House was justified in taking the opportunity presented to it of putting its foot down upon those charges. The matter evidently had not been sufficiently thought out, and was one which ought to have received much greater attention from Her Majesty's Government.

COLONEL NOLAN said, that he must apologize to the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) for interfering in the debate, as this was an English Bill. But he should like to recall to the memory of the House—and he thought that word was permissible in debate at the present time—how Ireland had been mixed up in this Bill. They were told that the fate of the Irish Bill very largely depended upon that of the English Bill, and therefore Irish Members had a great interest in this English registration measure; and he thought he (Colonel Nolan) had put a question to the President of the Local Government Board after that announcement had been made, as to whether this money for Ireland would cover the cost, not of registration, but of the expenditure defrayed by the Poor Law Unions? The answer was that that was a question to be discussed on the Bill itself, and not at the present time. That being so, he did not see how an Irish Member could help recalling this matter, and putting a few facts before the House. The first fact he would put before the House was the extraordinary statement of the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department, who had opened the debate that night. He had said that they were only disputing about a 10th of $\frac{1}{4}d.$ in the pound upon burdens imposed upon the rates. He (Colonel Nolan) had distinctly heard the hon. Member say that, and he should like very shortly to put one or two figures before the hon. Member to test the accuracy of his statement. The Union to which he (Colonel Nolan) belonged had a valuation of £70,000, and 1-10th of $\frac{1}{4}d.$ on that valuation would only amount to £8. $\frac{1}{4}d.$ was only a 1,000th part of £1, so that 1-10th of $\frac{1}{4}d.$ would come to £8 on a valuation of £70,000. Did the hon. Gentleman mean to say that in a Union, with a population of 40,000 people, £8 was sufficient to do the whole work of the registration? It was impossible, and utterly absurd.

MR. H. H. FOWLER: What I said was that the present cost for registration expenses is £12,500, which is only 1-10th of $\frac{1}{4}d.$ in the pound on the county rates. I made no reference to Ireland at all.

COLONEL NOLAN said, he did not believe the hon. Member had been so particular in his statement in his speech. It was true, the hon. Member had been speaking upon the English Bill; but he had not specially confined himself to the English counties. There could be no doubt of what the hon. Member had in his mind; but, at any rate, he (Colonel Nolan) did not think that would affect his argument. He wanted to show that the hon. Member had based a large part of his argument on the fact that this rate would be so small that it would not amount to more than 1-10th of $\frac{1}{4}d.$ In Ireland it would amount to a good deal over $\frac{1}{4}d.$ in the pound, which was an appreciable amount. It was not a large sum in itself, but taken together with other rates $\frac{1}{4}d.$ became an appreciable sum. He could give further statistics to show that there was a stronger case even than that. Let them take the case of Clifden Union as an average case. There there was a valuation of nearly £14,000, and a population, he thought, of some 30,000. The rate would there, of course, be very much more than $\frac{1}{4}d.$ in the pound. Probably $\frac{3}{4}d.$ in the pound would be required, so that the question was really of much greater importance than the Under Secretary's statement would appear to make out. He would not say that the hon. Member had fallen into a mistake; but he had omitted to point out that his statement did not apply to Ireland. The fact was that in England five-sixths of local taxation was paid by property, while in Ireland it was just the reverse, five-sixths being paid by occupiers, or, if not five-sixths, at least considerably more than three-quarters. The hon. Member, he thought, had rather undervalued in his argument the relief which would be

afforded by the removal of these burdens of Imperial taxation to the ratepayers, because he had said that the poor people paid to the Imperial taxation, and the rich people paid to the poor rates. The very reverse was the case in Ireland. A great many people who contributed to the poor rates in Ireland were poor—as poor as they could be without being actually paupers. He had no hesitation in saying that if they called together 100 people paying £7 or £8 rent everyone would say that he would rather pay the Imperial taxation than local taxation, because they could avoid paying Imperial taxation. They could, for instance, avoid drinking the very dear whisky, and therefore avoid paying the old taxation and the new impost which it was proposed to put upon that article. He did not say that they would do it—he did not believe they would—but they were not bound to pay this taxation on whisky, because they were not bound to buy that commodity. They were bound to pay poor rates, however—they could be prosecuted if they did not. He had another objection to putting those charges upon the poor rates, and it was that they were converting an unpaid body of officials into tax-gatherers. Those officials ought to be paid. He had great respect for the Poor Law Guardians, and he did not think that those gentlemen, who took the trouble to attend the Poor Law Board for the benefit of the locality with which he was connected, and of the poor, should be turned into tax-gatherers. It was found necessary, from time to time, on Boards of Guardians to prosecute poor people for not paying the poor rate. He need not say that that was a most troublesome and disagreeable duty; but it was one which they undertook, because they knew that if they did not compel each person who was liable to pay, a much greater burden would be imposed on other poor people. But now the Government were taxing them not only for medical relief and relief of other kinds, but also for gathering the taxes. He did not think a volunteer body, as the bulk of the Poor Law Guardians were, should be called upon to perform this duty. If they were called upon to discharge it, it would make them dislike their work, and the result would be that it would not be possible to secure the best men on the Boards of Guardians. Those gentlemen did not wish to be tax-gatherers for Imperial purposes. As to calling this money a subvention, for his own part he would not use any such phrase. He looked upon it as an Imperial tax that they were forced to collect. The Government were forcing an Imperial burden upon them, and were not rating them for a local purpose. The purpose was strictly an Imperial one. He did not wish to delay the House very long; but before he sat down he wished to say this one thing to the Prime Minister—that he congratulated him on having refrained from taking up an inflexible attitude on the subject. He thought the right hon. Gentleman had shown the good sense of the great statesman in reconsidering the matter, and in showing that he could bend to the popular voice, and to an expression of an opinion on the part of the House. Whichever way hon. Members went, he thought they ought to be obliged to the right hon. Gentleman, and to thank him for having taken the first step towards helping them to throw off those local burdens, which were not for local, but for Imperial purposes.

MR. STAVELEY HILL said, he quite agreed with what had fallen from the hon. and gallant Baronet the Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) earlier in the evening, that this question might be kept within a small compass, and it was only in the way of endeavouring to bring it within a small compass that he ventured to address the House on this occasion. The point to which they should direct their attention in regard to the Motion of the hon. Baronet (Sir Massey Lopes) was, first of all, whether the registration of voters was of National or Imperial importance. On this they were told from the other side that they, on the Conservative Benches, ought to consider that their representation was local rather than national. He begged to say that he entirely differed from the hon. Baronet who said that; and he could not consider that the localization of the Member rendered the representation itself, and consequently the registration, other than a national matter. Taking it that registration was of national, rather than local importance, he would ask what it was that they had now to discuss? It was simply the *quantum* which was to be paid by the nation; it was

too late now to discuss the question of principle. They, on the other side of the House, had entirely conceded the principle. They had conceded it when they said—"We will give you £20,000." If they said they were going to give away only as much as 1*d.* for the registration of voters, the principle was conceded—the raising difficulties as to how overseers were to be paid, and how receipts were to be taken from them and given in as vouchers, was beside the mark, because the Government, by granting this sum, had said —"We consider the registration of voters of national rather than local importance; and we will, therefore, give you £20,000 towards the cost of it; and we believe you will be able so to distribute this money that we can take from you who receive it the proper vouchers." The whole argument as to the difficulty of fixing the amount which was to be paid by the State, therefore, fell to the ground. The Conservative Members were, consequently, right in their contention that the justice of the case demanded that the sum paid by the State should not be fixed at £20,000, but should be either more or less, as the case might be—should be absolutely the sum the registration of voters cost. Supposing in regard to any other matter a claim was made for an allowance of money, the Government examined closely into the claim to see whether a certain sum was required. If more was required it was given, if less the amount was reduced. Why not do the same in connection with this matter of registration? Why should a lump sum be paid—why should not an exact claim be made—why should they not ascertain the precise cost and pay it? The right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) said—"Oh, but we are only making this allowance for this occasion, and we do not want, in the last year of an expiring Parliament, to tell you what will be the sum you will have to pay in future." But that was precisely the time at which payment should be claimed from the Government, there being a great expense about to be incurred in respect of a great national requirement. The Government admitted the requirement to be a national one—this enormous extension of the franchise. The Conservatives agreed that this extension should take place, and as registration had to be provided for, and as the operation would be extraordinary and expensive, they said, fairly enough—"Pay the ratepayers not a limited sum, but the exact sum that this registration will cost." The principle being admitted, and the question being simply as to the amount of detail to be got over, the Conservative Party in all justice said—"Do not put in the way difficulties as to the amount of money to be allocated; but, on proper proof made to you of the amount expended, allow it, and do justice to the ratepayers."

MR. WARTON (who was received with loud cries for a division) said, it was not his fault, but his misfortune, that he rose at this period of the evening. For at least two hours he had endeavoured in vain to catch Mr. Speaker's eye. He had risen many times earlier on, knowing the subordinate position he held in the House as a mere back seat Member, and not wishing to obtrude himself amongst the mighty ones who generally wound up important debates. But even though he was only a back seat Member, he must say that observations had been made by hon. Members opposite which had reached his Bench, and one of the hon. Members to whose speech he particularly wished to refer was the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth). That hon. Member had committed—if he might say so with great respect—a contrary error to that he (Mr. Warton) had himself committed. He had risen too early in the debate. He had said that the Motion of the hon. Baronet (Sir Massey Lopes) was not supported by any borough Members. Now, if the hon. Member had waited a little longer he would not have been able to say that, because, after he spoke, they had had the hon. Members representing the very important boroughs of Manchester, Liverpool, and Preston all joining in the prayer uttered by the hon. Baronet. It was easy for an hon. Member to get up early in a debate and say that no borough Member had spoken; but no doubt the hon. Member for Bradford would now be prepared to withdraw what he had said when he heard such important Members as the Members for Manchester, Liverpool, and Preston urging the case as strongly from the borough point of view as county Members had urged it from the county point

of view. Another hon. Member who sat on the opposite side—the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold)—had used most extraordinary arguments until he was checked by Mr. Speaker—the arguments that the Motion before the House had a tendency towards manhood suffrage and the payment of Members. If Mr. Speaker had not checked the hon. Member, no doubt he would have gone through all the other points of the Charter. But one important argument the hon. Member used was that representation was only connected with one species of property. For his own part, he held, and he had always been of opinion, that if any kind of property made a man better than his fellows as being of more intelligence, that property should confer a vote; and that had been the opinion of the Liberal Party until, he was sorry to say, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright), by the adoption of the phrase "fancy franchise," destroyed that very sensible proposition. But he (Mr. Warton) would not take up further time by alluding to the speeches of those hon. Members. He would confine himself to the proposition before the House. Now, he thought the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke), in that pretentious style which was so often adopted by Ministers now—and against which he (Mr. Warton) begged leave most heartily to protest—said, "I think it right that you should bring this matter forward; I do not complain of the language you have used; I think you are very good little boys." He (Mr. Warton) must protest against the spirit which dictated such words as those. He held that it was not right, nor proper, nor decent in a Minister of the Crown to tell the Opposition that, forsooth, he did not complain of what they had done. It was not for the right hon. Baronet to criticize what they had done. As to the Motion before the House, it was a matter of the greatest importance—it was a matter of importance for the reason that it was laying down a broad general principle which was only just beginning to be acknowledged by the Government. The hon. and gallant Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) had said that this was a national question; and if they only looked at the first few lines of the Amendment they would see that that idea of a national question was the most prominent idea in it. But when they looked at the last line, which said that the rate was to be

"Levied in respect of the occupation of a single description of property,"

they saw that there was admitted into the debate the question what kind of property it was on which the rates were levied. What kind of property? ["Divide!"] When they considered that it had been held by all competent judges that real property had now far more burdens upon it than it ought to bear, and, moreover, when they considered that under the Budget which was put before them the other day real property was to have an additional burden never yet imposed upon it—and one which had been hitherto kept away from it because it was considered it ought not to bear it—added to its existing burdens, it was imperative that this new rate should be levied on personal property. They had had the usual excuse—if it was an excuse—which the Government put before them. They had had the scheme of County Government put before their eyes. With the tremendous majority the Government had had—a majority commencing with considerably over 100—they had not been able in the course of five years to bring in a County Government Bill. He believed that no such Bill had yet been drafted; he believed there was no scheme for County Government in the archives of the Government. But it suited the Government to make the excuse that a Bill would be brought forward, and that was the excuse with which hon. Members had been met. That was the argument of the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board. The argument as to the overseers—that it would be impossible to get receipts from them—was an unworthy argument. He would ask whether it was or was not the custom of those who received money by Post Office Order to signify the same by signing their names at the bottom of them? He should have thought that that fact would have been within the knowledge of the right hon. Baronet, and that that receipt would be held sufficient for all practical purposes. It seemed, however, that that was not enough to satisfy the right hon. Baronet. The right hon. Gentleman had argued very feebly; for,

after all, what did the right hon. Baronet's argument come to? They were told that the rate would be 2*d.* per head. Well, he had heard of a weak argument being described as "twopenny-halfpenny argument;" but here the argument was no more than a "twopenny" argument. As a matter of fact, he did not think the Government were right as to the 2*d.* per head, for the £20,000 was not to apply to the whole 2,400,000 new electors to be admitted to the franchise, but only to the new electors of Great Britain; therefore, the amount would be something more than 2*d.* per head. They were told by the hon. Member for Kendal (Mr. Cropper) that there was always a great deal of extravagance attendant upon what were called subventions. It was possible that there might be extravagance in connection with some subventions; but he would ask with confidence whether it was possible for there to be extravagance in this case? Was it possible for the overseers to increase their claims? It seemed to him impossible for them to do it. The Government knew very well what the charges ought to be. [*Cries of* "Divide, divide!" amidst which the hon. and learned Member resumed his seat.]

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 240; Noes 237: Majority 3.

AYES.

Acland, C. T. D.
Agnew, W.
Allen, H. G.
Allen, W. S.
Arnold, A.
Asher, A.
Ashley, hon. E. M.
Baldwin, E.
Balfour, rt. hon. J. B.
Barclay, J. W.
Baring, Viscount
Barnes, A.
Barran, J.
Bass, Sir A.
Biddulph, M.
Blennerhassett, R. P.
Bolton, J. C.
Brand, hon. H. R.
Brassey, Sir T.
Brassey, H. A.
Bright, J.
Brinton, J.
Broadhurst, H.
Brogden, A.
Brooks, M.
Bruce, rt. hon. Lord C.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Bryce, J.
Buchanan, T. R.
Burt, T.
Buxton, S. C.
Caine, W. S.
Cameron, C.
Campbell, Sir G.
Campbell, R. F. F.
Campbell-Bannerman, right hon. H.
Cartwright, W. C.
Causton, R. K.
Cavendish, Lord E.
Chamberlain, rt. hn. J.
Cheetham, J. F.
Clark, S.
Clarke, J. C.
Clifford, C. C.
Cohen, A.
Colebrooke, Sir T. E.
Collings, J.
Collins, E.
Colman, J. J.
Courtauld, G.
Courtney, L. H.
Cowen, J.
Cowper, hon. H. F.
Creyke, R.
Cropper, J.
Cross, J. K.
Crum, A.
Cunliffe, Sir R. A.
Currie, Sir D.
Davey, H.
Davies, D.
Davies, R.
Dickson, T. A.
Dilke, rt. hn. Sir C. W.
Dodds, J.
Duff, R. W.
Earp, T.
Ebrington, Viscount
Edwards, H.
Edwards, P.
Egerton, Admiral hon. F.
Elliot, hon. A. R. D.
Evans, T. W.
Fairbairn, Sir A.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Ferguson, R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro-Ffolkes, Sir W. H. B.
Findlater, W.
Firth, J. F. B.
Fitzmaurice, Lord E.
Fitzwilliam, hon. C. W.
Flower, C.
Foljambe, F. J. S.
Forster, Sir C.
Forster, rt. hn. W. E.
Fort, R.
Fowler, H. H.
Fowler, W.
Fry, L.
Fry, T.
Gladstone, rt. hn. W. E.
Gladstone, H. J.
Gladstone, W. H.
Gordon, Sir A.
Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
Gourley, E. T.
Gower, hon. E. F. L.
Grafton, F. W.
Grant, Sir G. M.
Grant, A.
Grant, D.
Grey, A. H. G.
Gurdon, R. T.
Harcourt, rt. hn. Sir W. G. V. V.
Hardcastle, J. A.
Hartington, Marq. of
Hastings, G. W.
Hayter, Sir A. D.
Henderson, F.
Heneage, E.
Henry, M.
Herschell, Sir F.
Hibbert, J. T.
Hill, T. R.
Holden, I.
Holland, S.
Hollond, J. R.
Holms, J.
Hopwood, C. H.
Howard, G. J.
Illingworth, A.
Ince, H. B.
Inderwick, F. A.
James, Sir H.
James, hon. W. H.
James, C. H.
Jardine, R.
Jenkins, Sir J. J.
Jenkins, D. J.
Jerningham, H. E. H.
Johnson, E.
Jones-Parry, L.
Kinnear, J.
Lambton, hon. F. W.
Lea, T.
Leake, R.
Leatham, E. A.
Leatham, W. H.
Lee, H.
Lefevre, rt. hn. G. J. S.
Lloyd, M.
Lubbock, Sir J.
Lyons, R. D.
Mackie, R. B.
Mackintosh, C. F.
Macliver, P. S.
M'Arthur, Sir W.
M'Arthur, A.
M'Coan, J. C.
M'Intyre, Æneas J.
M'Lagan, P.
M'Laren, C. B. B.
Maitland, W. F.
Mappin, F. T.
Marjoribanks, hon. E.
Martin, R. B.
Maskelyne, M. H. N. Story-
Mason, H.
Meldon, C. H.
Mellor, J. W.
Moreton, Lord
Morgan, rt. hon. G. O.
Morley, A.
Morley, J.
Morley, S.
Mundella, rt. hn. A. J.
Noel, E.
O'Beirne, Colonel F.
O'Shea, W. H.
Paget, T. T.
Palmer, G.
Parker, C. S.
Pease, A.
Peddie, J. D.
Pennington, F.
Philips, R. N.
Picton, J. A.
Playfair, rt. hn. Sir L.
Portman, hon. W. H. B.
Pulley, J.
Ramsden, Sir J.
Rathbone, W.
Rendel, S.
Richardson, T.
Roberts, J.
Robertson, H.
Roe, T.
Rogers, J. E. T.
Roundell, C. S.
Russell, Lord A.
Russell, C.
Russell, G. W. E.
Russell, T.
Ruston, J.
Rylands, P.
St. Aubyn, Sir J.
Samuelson, Sir B.

Seely, C. (Nottingham)
Sellar, A. C.
Shaw, T.
Sheridan, H. B.
Shield, H.
Sinclair, Sir J. G. T.
Slagg, J.
Smith, Lieut-Col. G.
Smith, E.
Smith, S.
Stafford, Marquess of
Stanley, hon. E. L.
Stanton, W. J.
Steble, Lieut-Col. R. F.
Stevenson, J. C.
Stuart, H. V.
Stuart, J.
Summers, W.
Sutherland, T.
Tavistock, Marquess of
Tennant, C.
Thomasson, J. P.
Thompson, T. C.
Tracy, hon. F. S. A. Hanbury-
Trevelyan, rt. hn. G.O.
Villiers, rt. hon. C. P.
Vivian, A. P.
Waddy, S. D.
Walker, S.
Walter, J.
Watkin, Sir E. W.
Waugh, E.
Webster, J.
West, H. W.
Whitbread, S.
Whitworth, B.
Willis, W.
Wills, W. H.
Wilson, Sir M.
Wilson, I.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Woodall, W.

TELLERS.

Grosvenor, right hon. Lord R.
Kensington, rt. hn. Lord

NOES.

Ackers, B. St. J.
Alexander, Maj.-Gen. C.
Allsopp, C.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Archdale, W. H.
Aylmer, J. E. F.
Bailey, Sir J. R.
Balfour, A. J.
Baring, T. C.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bateson, Sir T.
Beach, right hon. Sir M. E. Hicks-
Beach, W. W. B.
Bective, Earl of
Bellingham, A. H.
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C.
Biddell, W.
Biggar, J. G.
Birkbeck, E.
Blackburne, Col. J. I.
Boord, T. W.
Bourke, right hon. R.
Broadley, W. H. H.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brooks, W. C.
Bruce, Sir H. H.
Bruce, hon. T. C.
Bulwer, J. R.
Burghley, Lord
Burrell, Sir W. W.
Buxton, Sir R. J.
Callan P.
Cameron, D.
Campbell, J. A.
Carden, Sir R. W.
Cecil, Lord E. H. B. G.
Chaplin, H.
Christie, W. L.
Clarke, E.
Clive, Col. hon. G. W.
Close, M. C.
Coddington, W.
Commins, A.
Compton, F.
Coope, O. E.
Corbet, W. J.
Corbett, J.
Corry, J. P.
Cotton, W. J. R.
Crichton, Viscount
Cross, rt. hon. Sir R. A.
Cubitt, right hon. G.
Curzon, Major hon. M.
Dalrymple, C.
Davenport, H. T.
Dawnay, Col. hon. L. P.
Dawnay, hon. G. C.
Dawson, C.
Deasy, J.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dickson, Major A. G.
Digby, J. K. D. W.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
Douglas, A. Akers-
Duckham, T.
Dyke, rt. hn. Sir W. H.
Eaton, H. W.
Eckersley, N.
Ecroyd, W. F.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Egerton, hon. A. F.
Elcho, Lord
Elliot, Sir G.
Ellis, Sir J. W.
Elton, C. I.
Emlyn, Viscount
Estcourt, G. S.
Ewart, W.
Feilden, Lt.-Gen. R. J.
Fellowes, W. H.
Finch, G. H.
Fitz-Wygram, Sir F.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Floyer, J.
Folkestone, Viscount
Foster, W. H.
Fremantle, hon. T. F.
French-Brewster, R. A. B.
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. J. S.
Gibson, right hon. E.
Giffard, Sir H. S.
Giles, A.
Goldney, Sir G.
Gorst, J. E.
Grantham, W.
Gray, E. D.
Greer, T.
Gregory, G. B.
Gunter, Col. R.
Halsey, T. F.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G.
Hamilton, Lord C. J.
Hamilton, I. T.
Harris, W. J.
Harvey, Sir R. B.
Hay, rt. hon. Admiral Sir J. C. D.
Healy, T. M.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hicks, E.
Hill, Lord A. W.
Hill, A. S.
Holland, Sir H. T.
Home, Lt.-Col. D. M.
Hope, right hon. A. J. B. B.
Houldsworth, W. H.
Jackson, W. L.
Kennard, Col. E. H.
Kennard, C. J.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Kenny, M. J.
Ker, R. W. B.
King-Harman, Colonel E. R.
Lacon, Sir E. H. K.
Lalor, R.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawrence, Sir T.
Leahy, J.
Leamy, E.
Leclimere, Sir E. A. H.
Legh, W. J.
Leigh, R.
Leighton, Sir B.
Leighton, S.
Lever, J. O.
Levett, T. J.
Lewisham, Viscount
Lindsay, Sir R. L.
Lloyd, S. S.
Loder, R.
Long, W. H.
Lopes, Sir M.
Lowther, hon. W.
Lowther, J. W.
Macartney, J. W. E.
Mac Iver, D.
Macnaghten, E.
M'Carthy, J.
M'Garel-Hogg, Sir J.
M'Kenna, Sir J. N.
Makins, Colonel W. T.
Manners, rt. hon. Lord J. J. R.
Marriott, W. T.
Marum, E. M.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Miles, Sir P. J. W.
Mills, Sir C. H.
Milner, Sir F.
Monckton, F.
Moss, R.
Mulholland, J.
Muntz, P. A.
Newdegate, C. N.
Newport, Viscount
Nicholson, W. N.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Northcote, rt. hon. Sir S. H.
Northcote, H. S.
O'Brien, W.
O'Connor, A.
O'Connor, J.
O'Connor, T. P.
O'Donnell, F. H.
O'Gorman Mahon, Col. The
O'Kelly, J.
Onslow, D. R.
O'Sullivan, W. H.
Paget, R. H.
Parnell, C. S.
Patrick, R. W. Cochran-
Peel, rt. hon. Sir R.
Pell, A.
Pemberton, E. L.
Percy, rt. hon. Earl
Percy, Lord A. M.
Phipps, C. N. P.
Phipps, P.
Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
Power, P. J.
Power, R.
Puleston, J. H.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Rankin, J.
Read, C. S.
Redmond, J. E.
Redmond, W. H. K.
Ridley, Sir M. W.
Ritchie, C. T.
Rolls, J. A.
Ross, A. H.
Ross, C. C.
Round, J.
Salt, T.
Sclater-Booth, rt. hn. G.
Scott, M. D.
Selwin-Ibbetson, Sir H. J.
Severne, J. E.
Sexton, T.
Sheil, E.
Small, J. F.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Smith, A.
Stanhope, hon. E.
Stanley, rt. hon. Col. F.
Stanley, E. J.
Storer, G.
Strutt, hon. C. H.
Sullivan, T. D.
Sykes, C.
Synan, E. J.
Talbot, J. G.
Thomson, H.
Thornhill, A. J.

Tollemache, hon. W. F.	Warton, C. N.
Tollemache, H. J.	Whitley, E.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.	Wilmot, Sir H.
Tottenham, A. L.	Wilmot, Sir J. E.
Tremayne, J.	Wolff, Sir H. D.
Wallace, Sir R.	Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Walrond, Col. W. H.	Wyndham, hon. P.
Warburton, P. E.	Yorke, J. R.

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TELLERS.

Thornhill, T. Winn, R.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: After the division which has just been taken, I would venture to express a hope that Her Majesty's Government would reconsider this matter before proceeding with the Bill. We have no desire, as was very fairly admitted by the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board, to interfere with the progress of this measure; but I think that the vote which has just been taken is one of very considerable significance. It shows that there is a very inconsiderable majority against the proposition of the hon. Baronet the Member for South Devon; and surely it is a case in which, under all the circumstances, Her Majesty's Government might make some concession to what has been shown to be the opinion of so very large a minority of this House.

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, with respect to concession, I may say that there never was a case in which a Government went to a greater length, considering the views it entertained, in order to meet the views of those opposed to it. We have made our concession; we have failed to meet the views of hon. Gentlemen opposite, and we have failed also to obtain from them any concession in return. The Government having made its concession, the House has sanctioned the course they have taken.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, the position which the Government has taken up is one which, no doubt, they consider to be fair and reasonable; but, on the other hand, it has not satisfied—I will not say hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House—but those who take an interest in the question of local taxation and the burdens cast upon the localities. The right hon. Gentleman cannot conceal from himself the significance of the very narrow division which has just been taken; and it is only fair, I think, that the Government should reconsider the position in which that division places them, and that they should consider what course they will take in regard to further proceedings in relation to this Bill.

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, I have no further announcement to make upon this subject. What has fallen from the right hon. Baronet would be perfectly appropriate if the majority had been reversed.

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *considered* in Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 *agreed to.*

Clause 3 (Alteration of dates).

MR. H. G. ALLEN said, the object of the Amendment he was about to move was to prevent loss of time in the Revising Barristers' Courts, occasioned by wrangles over the sufficiency of claims and notices of objection in respect of the names of divisions of counties which were likely to take place if the Bill did not contain a provision of the kind which he proposed.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, after sub-section (1), to insert the following sub-section:—"Where, under 'The Redistribution of Seats Act, 1885,' any division of a Parliamentary county or borough shall have received any alternative name, it shall be sufficient, under sub-section (1) of this Clause, that any notice of claim or objection should refer to one only of such alternative names."—(*Mr. H. G. Allen.*)

Question proposed, "That the sub-section be there inserted."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, there were two objections to the hon. and learned Gentleman's proposal. In the first place, there was no such statute as the Redistribution of Seats Act, 1885, as that Bill had not yet become law, and they could not, therefore, legislate upon it. Secondly, if the hon. and learned Gentleman chose to treat that Bill as an Act, there was in it already a clause which would make the Amendment entirely unnecessary.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

On Motion of Mr. R. H. PAGET, the following Amendment made:—Page 3, line 5, leave out "sections nine and eleven," and insert "section nine."

On Motion of Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL, the following Amendments made:—Page 3, line 5, leave out "eleven," and insert "nineteen;" line 9, after "occur," add—

"And the first fourteen days after the said twenty-fifth day of August shall be substituted for the first fourteen days of September."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 4 (Amendment as to revision).

MR. R. H. PAGET proposed to leave out "and seven," in line 13, and insert—

"But in the case of a Parliamentary county not less than ten."

Seven days' notice would be quite insufficient in the case of counties, because all papers were not of daily circulation. Many of the chief county papers were only of weekly circulation; and, therefore, it would be impossible to give any adequate notice if it were confined to seven days. He had been strongly urged to move the Amendment, and he did so with the only view of insuring that there should be an opportunity for sufficient publicity.

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 13, to leave out the words "and seven," and insert the words "but in the case of a Parliamentary county not less than ten."—(*Mr. R. H. Paget.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'and seven' stand part of the Clause."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, this matter was mentioned in the Select Committee, and the conclusion arrived at was that seven days' notice was preferable to 10. The Revising Barristers only wished for seven days, and the Clerks of the Peace were satisfied with such a notice. Notice was given to the Clerks of the Peace in advance, and they, of course, would take care to give sufficient notice. It was wished to economize time as much as possible, and all those who had practical knowledge of the subject were content with seven days' notice.

MR. R. H. PAGET said, he would not put the Commiitee to the trouble of dividing if the Attorney General was satisfied that seven days' notice was sufficient.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. WARTON proposed to omit the word "each" in line 13, and insert "such." "Each" implied a choice between one or more; but here there was only one Court mentioned, and, therefore, what was the use of employing that word?

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 13, to leave out the word "each," and insert the word "such."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'each' stand part of the Clause."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) preferred the word "each," as it would cover every Court. "Such" would refer to nothing.

MR. WARTON remarked, that if the hon. and learned Gentleman would condescend to note the meaning of the word "each," he would find it implied that they had already a reference in the same sentence to more than one Court. "A" would do just as well as "such;" but "each" was not sufficient. If he withdrew the Amendment, would the Attorney General accept "a"? "A Court" appeared in line 12.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): No, Sir; I prefer "each."

Question put, and *agreed to.*

On Motion of Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL, the following Amendment made:—Page 4, lines 4 and 6, after "lists of," insert "voters for."

MR. R. H. PAGET proposed to leave out "consecutively," in page 4, line 26, and insert "continuously." His object in proposing that alteration was to make it clear that in the enumeration of the numbers in each polling district the numbers should be made "continuous" throughout. "Continuously" had been suggested as a more correct definition of a series of voters.

Amendment proposed,

In page 4, line 26, to leave out the word "consecutively," and insert the word "continuously."—(*Mr. R. H. Paget.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'consecutively' stand part of the Clause."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, this was really a matter of taste. He had always understood that "continuously" was applied to time rather than to material subjects. He thought that "consecutively" would be the better word to use, but he had very little feeling in the matter.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. R. H. PAGET proposed to leave out the words "to be entered," in line

34. The object of the Amendment was to make it obligatory upon Revising Barristers to erase duplicates.

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 34, to leave out the words "to be entered."—(*Mr. R. H. Paget.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) opposed the Amendment.

MR. R. H. PAGET wished to know whether the expression "Revising Barrister" included one or more Revising Barristers? The clause provided, he apprehended, that there might be several Revising Barristers working within a division; and he would point out that the name of a voter might in that way be placed on a Register three or four times.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that that question did not bear upon the matter under discussion, and he was not aware of any such cases as the hon. Gentleman referred to. When a case of double entry was brought before the notice of the Revising Barrister, he would take care that the name did not appear on the Register more than once.

Question put, and *negatived.*

MR. TOMLINSON said, that the Revising Barrister would be assumed to be carrying about with him all the lists revised at previous Courts, and that would cause a considerable amount of delay. He thought that the Revising Barrister should send a list from each place he visited as soon as possible to the printers, so that it could be printed. If he did not, and if he did not refer to printed lists, it would involve his carrying a large number of papers about with him. If the Bill remained as it was, he was afraid confusion was very likely to arise. He had had communications on this subject with gentlemen of practical experience, and he was informed that what was proposed in the Bill would cause great confusion and delay.

Amendment proposed,

In page 4, line 36, after the word "same," to insert the words "polling district in a."—(*Mr. Tomlinson.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he must remind the hon. Gentleman that they were endeavouring to assimilate county registration and borough registration, and that the law which it was proposed in the Bill to apply to counties was simply the law now in operation in connection with the boroughs. The object was to prevent a man from being on the Register more than once. At a revision, when the attention of the Revising Barrister was called to the fact that a man's name was on the Register in one polling district, he ought not to be allowed to remain on in another polling district. The Revising Barrister, according to the Bill, would not have to do more than he had to do now. He would only have to strike names off, if it appeared that they were on twice. He would not have to make a thorough inquiry, and to take round the lists from all the other revisions, and to compare one list with another, in order to see that a name was not twice on.

MR. TOMLINSON said, it was obvious that there was a great difference between revising in counties and revising in boroughs. The revision of boroughs would take place in one place, subject to certain Amendments it was proposed to make in the Bill requiring the Revising Barrister to hold at least one Court in each division of a borough. At present the Revising Barristers usually held the revision in one place in the borough; but in counties he necessarily had to go about from place to place, and he (Mr. Tomlinson) could not see any escape from the necessity of his having to carry about the lists from place to place, and being unable to send them to be printed until the revisions of a division were completed. If they could obviate that, it would be advisable.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that the Revising Barrister would not carry his lists about with him from place to place; and if they left the clause as it was, he would not be in any worse position than he had been in before. In fact, he might be in a better position, because persons would come to him and say that they were already registered in another district, and could show him their names on the list. It would not by any means be necessary to go exhaustively

through all the lists in the case of each name.

MR. TOMLINSON said, that that altered the matter.

MR. WARTON said, they had already provided for the question being put to the voters as to whether or not they had votes in more than one division, so that there was not much danger of a person voting twice over; and he should think there would be agents representing both Parties at each revision sharp enough to see that voters' names did not appear in more places than one. If they read this by the light of the next sub-section (*b*), they would see that it was throwing on the voter an amount of trouble which ought not to be thrown upon him.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. Member for Preston withdraw his Amendment?

MR. TOMLINSON: Yes.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. WARTON said, he wished to move, in page 4, line 36, to omit the words "Parliamentary county," in order to insert "county division." He wished to point out that they had counties at large and divisions of counties, and both were Parliamentary counties. There was no limitation in their description, although the word "Parliamentary" was to apply only to county divisions, keeping up that difference between counties at large and Parliamentary counties. He apprehended that what was meant in the clause was county divisions.

Amendment proposed,

In page 4, line 36, to leave out the words "Parliamentary county," and insert the words "county division."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'Parliamentary county' stand part of the Clause."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that the hon. and learned Member was somewhat late in bringing forward this Amendment, because the form and description to which he took exception had already been adopted 12 times. It had hitherto escaped the vigilance of the hon. and learned Member; and it was, therefore, now too late. He would point out to the hon. and learned Member that these phrases were mentioned in the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill.

MR. WARTON: In what section? He had read the Bill as carefully as the hon. and learned Attorney General, and he did not remember the expression "Parliamentary county" at all in it. As to his not having noticed this expression in any previous part of the Bill, it was not his fault that it escaped his vigilance. It was not his duty to amend the form of the Bill. The Attorney General himself should have noticed the matter before. It was not his (Mr. Warton's) duty to correct the Bill.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): It may not be the hon. and learned Member's duty to correct the Bill; but it is my duty to see that we use consistent language in it. We have used this phrase to which the hon. and learned Member objects over and over again.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, that he would draw attention to the fact that there was a definition of these terms. "Parliamentary county" was a term clearly defined in page 11 of the Bill to mean—

"A county returning a Member or Members to serve in Parliament, and where the county is divided for the purpose of such return means a division of such county."

It was a term of art, and he did not at present see any better phrase.

MR. WARTON said, he must only confess that he had not seen the definition the hon. Gentleman referred to; but at the same time he did not think it made the expression any more convenient. He thought they should put in the Bill exactly what they meant. There were no Members to be returned for counties except those who represented county divisions.

An hon. MEMBER: Yes; in the case of Rutland.

MR. WARTON: That is a county in itself; therefore, I suppose this will not apply to it.

An hon. MEMBER: Yes, it does.

MR. WARTON: Then I withdraw.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he thought that this would be a convenient time for reporting Progress. They were in the House until 3 o'clock that morning, or rather yesterday morning, and he and others had been at work on

Committees; and had commenced at 12 o'clock; and he thought it would be working them a little too hard to attempt to make further progress with this Bill at 25 minutes to 2 o'clock.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again.—(*Sir Walter B. Barttelot.*)

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that he thought it had been understood that they should finish the clause they were on and Clause 5 before reporting Progress; but as the hon. and gallant Baronet had made the Motion he would not propose to go any further.

MR. BIGGAR: May I ask what is the Business for to-morrow?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): The intention at present is to proceed with this Bill first, and after that with the Report of the Irish Bill.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be deferred till to-morrow."

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Upon that I would take the opportunity of asking the noble Lord opposite (Lord Richard Grosvenor) if he can tell us what arrangements will be made as to Business for the next two or three days? I understood the Prime Minister to say that the discussion on the Vote of Credit might either be taken on Thursday, in which case the Army Estimates will be taken on Monday, or on Monday, when the Army Estimates will be taken on Thursday. We think it would be more convenient to take it on Monday. In the event of that arrangement being made, I think, as the Prime Minister said, the second reading of the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill would be taken first on Monday. That would afford an opportunity for the discussion mentioned the other day.

LORD RICHARD GROSVENOR: The Orders of the Day to-morrow will be very much in the same position as they were on the Paper to-day; and on Thursday, in accordance with the arrangement made, and with the right hon. Gentleman's wish, we propose to take the Army Estimates. The Business of Friday must depend upon the way we get on with Business in the meantime.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: The second reading, then, will be taken on Monday?

LORD RICHARD GROSVENOR: Yes.

MR. HEALY: In case the Irish Bill is not finished to-morrow, when will it come on? The English Bill will take a great deal of time.

LORD RICHARD GROSVENOR: That will be a matter for consideration.

MR. HEALY: Will it be taken on Thursday?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: No; not as first Order. If it should be convenient to finish it on Thursday night we should be very glad to go on with it then.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: When do you expect the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill to come on?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: On Friday or Tuesday. It will depend, to some extent, on the progress made to-morrow.

Motion *agreed to.*

Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDER (POOR LAW) (NO. 8) BILL.

On Motion of MR. GEORGE RUSSELL, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board, under the provisions of "The Poor Law Amendment Act, 1867," as amended by "The Poor Law Amendment Act, 1868," and extended by "The Poor Law Act, 1879," relating to the Township of Kendal, *ordered* to be brought in by MR. GEORGE RUSSELL and SIR CHARLES DILKE.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 158.]

WAYS AND MEANS.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at half after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 6th May, 1885.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills — *Ordered—First Reading*—Representation of the People (Consolidation) * [160].
First Reading — Criminal Law Amendment * [159].
Committee — Registration (Occupation Voters) (*re-comm.*) [140] [*Second Night.*]—R.P.
Third Reading—Burial Boards (Contested Elections) * [106], and *passed.*

ORDER OF THE DAY.

REGISTRATION (OCCUPATION VOTERS) (*re-committed*) BILL.—[Bill 140.]

(*Mr. Attorney General, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Hibbert, Mr. H. H. Fowler.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 5th May.*]

[SECOND NIGHT.]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 4 (Amendment as to revision).

Mr. A. M'ARTHUR said, he had given Notice of his intention to move, in page 4, line 36, after "county," to insert "or borough," the object being to provide that when the name of a person appeared to be entered more than once as a Parliamentary voter on the list of voters for the same Parliamentary county "or borough," the Revising Barrister should inquire whether such entries related to the same person; and, on proof that such entries did relate to the same person, should retain one, and erase the others. He failed to see why any distinction should be drawn between the cases of the counties and of the boroughs in this respect. Duplicate voters in boroughs entailed considerable expense and difficulty, and, in some cases, led to endless confusion in perfecting the Register. Although he hoped his Amendment would be accepted, he had no wish to waste the time of the Committee, especially as his hon. Colleague (Mr. Picton) had an Amendment upon the Schedules, which would come on later, and which, if adopted, would answer the same purpose, and probably involve less trouble in altering the clauses of the Bill. He trusted that the matter would be fully discussed, and it was in order to afford an opportunity for such a discussion that he had placed his Amendment upon the Paper. If, however, it was the desire of the Committee, he would withdraw that Amendment now, so that the discussion might be taken upon the proposition of his hon. Colleague.

Mr. PICTON said, that, before the Amendment was withdrawn, he would like to add a word to the statement of his hon. Colleague. He thought there ought to be some explanation from Her Majesty's Government as to the reason why this difference had been introduced between the counties and boroughs.

The CHAIRMAN: I must remind the hon. Gentleman that there is no Question before the House. If the hon. Member desires to move the Amendment *pro formâ*, he can do so.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD, in moving an Amendment, in page 4, Sub-section 9, to leave out paragraph (*b*), which was as follows:—

"The said person may select the entry to be retained by notice in writing delivered or sent by post to the revising barrister at or before the opening of the first court at which he revises any of the lists in which any of such entries appear, or by application made by such person or on his behalf at the time of the revision of the first of such lists,"

said, the question raised here was one of selection; and his object in moving the Amendment was to provide that, in the case of counties as well as of boroughs, the Revising Barrister should have no option but to select, in the first instance, the place of abode in connection with which the name of the voter was to appear on the Register. In cases where the voter possessed a plural qualification, the name would be restricted to the first place of abode mentioned in the Register.

Amendment proposed, in page 4, Sub-section 9, line 40, to leave out paragraph (*b*).—(*Mr. Arthur Arnold.*)

Question proposed, "That paragraph (*b*) stand part of the Clause."

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, he was sorry that he could not accept the Amendment of his hon. Friend. He did not see why a county voter should not be allowed to continue to do what was invariably done

now in reference to the counties—namely, to select the place for which he would be registered.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, that that was only done in the case of municipal elections.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, it was done in Parliamentary elections also. He did not see why, if a person had a freehold in one part of a county and a dwelling-house in another, he should not select the place at which he desired to vote. For instance, it might be more convenient to vote at his place of business than at his place of residence; and he saw no reason why the county voter should be deprived of the privilege of selection.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he would not press the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES), in moving in paragraph (*c*) of the same clause to insert the word "only" after the word "one," in order to provide that "one only" of the entries first on the list of ownership voters, if unobjected to, should be retained. In one sense, the Amendment was a verbal one. It dealt with plural entries where no selection was made by the voter, and he proposed to insert the word "only" in order to avoid any future difficulty.

Amendment proposed, in page 5, line 6, after "one," insert "only."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Question, "That that word be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the next Amendment he should propose was in order to carry out the view of the House, when the Bill was in Committee, in relation to the boroughs. He proposed to omit, after the words "ownership voters," the words "and unobjected to;" and he intended to move a similar Amendment in the next paragraph of the clause. He also proposed to add, at the end of the clause, an affirmative paragraph to provide that if any such entry to be retained was objected to the Revising Barrister should not finally erase such entry until the objection to the entry to be retained had been determined by him in favour of the voter.

Amendment proposed, in page 5, line 7, leave out "and unobjected to."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause," put, and *negatived;* words *left out* accordingly.

Amendment proposed,

In page 5, line 8, leave out the words "neither of the entries is," in order to insert the words "all or none of the entries are,"—(*Mr. Attorney General,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

MR. WARTON said, he did not rise to make any captious observation, because he approved of the Amendment; but he thought his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General ought to express a little more clearly what his meaning was. The explanation already given by the hon. and learned Gentleman appeared to be satisfactory to his own mind, and to several hon. Members opposite; but it did not sufficiently explain the exact object of these Amendments.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he had desired to deal with the Bill in a practical way, as a matter of business; and he thought he had explained that the object of these Amendments was to get rid of a difficulty which was now experienced in dealing with double entries. His object, in this particular instance, was to alter the dual into the plural.

Question put, and *negatived;* words *left out* accordingly.

Question, "That the words 'all or none of the entries are' be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in page 5, line 10, leave out "and unobjected to."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Question, "That those words be there omitted," put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed,

In page 5, line 13, at end, add "and if any such entry to be retained is objected to, the revising barrister shall not finally erase any other entry until the objection to the entry to

be retained has been determined by him in favour of the voter."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. WARTON said, he objected to the extreme haste with which the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General was rattling through the Bill. He wanted to know, before a final erasure took place, how many times the process of erasure was to be gone through? Was it intended, first of all, to strike out the name, then to hear objections, and after that was there to be a final erasure? Who was to determine whether the erasure was final or not? He wanted the hon. and learned Attorney General to explain what the meaning of the Amendment was. Did the hon. and learned Gentleman take this ground—that a Committee had been sitting somewhere else to settle the clauses of the Bill, and that, although they had done the best they could, they had placed a very unsatisfactory Bill before the Committee? ["Oh, oh!"] If hon. Members were not to be at liberty to raise a question or object to the wording of the Bill, of course this proceeding was altogether a farce; and it would be better for the hon. and learned Gentleman to say so than for his supporters, whenever an hon. Member rose, to endeavour to groan him down.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he could assure his hon. and learned Friend opposite (Mr. Warton) that he had no wish to withhold any explanation, or to abstain from answering any question that might be put to him. The object of his Amendment was this—Provision was contained in Clause 5 by which the Revising Barrister received power, in the case of duplicate entries, to retain one entry for voting purposes, and to place against the others a note to the effect that such person was not entitled to vote in respect of that particular qualification. But it was considered desirable that the Revising Barrister should not erase the qualification finally, because when the ownership vote was reached it might be found that it was objected to, and the consequence might be that the name of the voter might be struck off from the ownership vote after it had been previously struck off for another qualification, the result being that the voter would have no vote at all. Therefore, what was proposed to be done by these Amendments was to reserve to the Revising Barrister, on reaching the first entry, the power of withholding his signature to the entry, so that his final judgment would not be conclusive until he had heard any objection which might be raised to the ownership vote. The simple object was to preserve the name of the voter upon the Register.

MR. TOMLINSON asked how a provision of this kind would work in conjunction with Sub-section 6 of Clause 4, which provided that—

> The revising barrister should, if practicable, complete the revision of the lists of the parishes in one polling district in a Parliamentary county, and transmit the same to the clerk of the peace of the county, before proceeding to revise the lists of any parish in another polling district."

The Revising Barrister was to transmit the list to the Clerk of the Peace before the revision was finally completed and the entries finally settled; but if he complied with that provision, how was he to reserve any final judgment as to erasing the name from the list?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that if the hon. Gentleman would look at the wording of the sub-section he would see that the Revising Barrister was, "if practicable," to complete the revision of the lists. These cases would not occur very often, and it was only right, when they did occur, that the Revising Barrister should make a note, and not finally sign the Register until it had been completely determined how the voter's name was to appear upon the list.

MR. E. STANHOPE hoped that his hon. Friend (Mr. Tomlinson) would be satisfied with the explanation of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General. It seemed to him (Mr. E. Stanhope) that these Amendments would afford great protection to the voter, whose name might otherwise be struck off, although he was fully entitled to be on the Register.

MR. R. H. PAGET said, he had no objection to the Amendment; but he would like to know how the Revising Barrister would follow out his instructions for dealing with the polling districts? It seemed to him that the two things were inconsistent, and that it would be necessary to keep the polling

district Register by itself, and to keep the names of all the voters upon it, until the revision was completed.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, that if the hon. Member opposite (Mr. R. H. Paget) would look at the Amendment of his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General he would see that the point he had raised did not occur. There was to be an actual objection which the Revising Barrister proposed to entertain; and in that case any other qualification was not to be struck out until it was rendered positively certain that the name of the voter would appear upon the Register in connection with one qualification or the other. This was altogether a provision for the protection of the voter.

MR. TOMLINSON said, the proposal was made, no doubt, for the protection of the voter; but he wanted to know how it would work practically, when the question came to be dealt with by the Revising Barrister? Was the Revising Barrister to keep a list of names, and to make up the Register from that list? He thought it would be impossible for the Revising Barrister to retain all the names in his mind.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, the provision dealt with voters who were objected to, and the Revising Barrister would have a list of objections before him.

Question put, and *agreed to;* words *added* accordingly.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD, in moving as an Amendment, at end of clause, to add—

"When it appears to the local authority having power to assign polling places in a Parliamentary borough divided into divisions that for the convenience of the voters it is expedient to direct the holding of a revision court in all or any of such divisions, the said authority may direct the revising barrister to hold a revision court in all or any of such divisions,"

said, that he intended to press this Amendment upon the acceptance of the Committee by every means in his power. Its object was to enable the Local Authority, in the case of divided boroughs, to direct that the Revising Barrister, whenever it appeared to be for the public convenience, should hold his Court in all or any of the divisions. The Committee would see that by Sub-section 4 of the clause a somewhat similar power was given to the Local Authorities in counties. The matter was simply one of public convenience. The only difficulty which could possibly occur was in the position of the voter who had more than one qualification. But that was a much smaller objection than might be supposed. He had carefully looked through the list of voters in his own borough of Salford, and he was surprised to find that fewer than 100 voters out of a total of 24,000 had duplicate qualifications. Therefore, that question did not assume anything like the same proportions as the question of the general public convenience. He had consulted the Conservative Members for Manchester and Liverpool, who sat on the opposite side of the House, and hon. Gentlemen sitting on that side for Bradford and other places, and they quite concurred with him that the adoption of this Amendment would be for the public advantage.

Amendment proposed,

In page 5, line 13, at the end of the Clause, to add the words "(10.) When it appears to the local authority having power to assign polling places in a Parliamentary borough divided into divisions, that for the convenience of the voters it is expedient to direct the holding of a revision court in all or any of such divisions, the said authority may direct the revising barrister to hold a revision court in all or any of such divisions."—(*Mr. Arthur Arnold.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he thought that was the wrong place to insert the Amendment. If inserted at all, it ought to come after Clause 5. Clause 4 dealt with the counties; but this Amendment did not refer to the counties at all, but only to the boroughs. His only desire was to see the Amendment inserted in the right place.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he would be quite ready, if his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General would make the suggestion, to propose the Amendment later on; but the clause they were now discussing was entitled "Amendment as to revision."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that, apart from the question of place, he would ask the Committee to consider whether this provision ought to be accepted at all. In the first place, the Bill was simply intended to assimilate the registration of

householders in counties with the registration of householders in boroughs, and it was not intended to effect reforms in the Registration Law. There were a great many Amendments which would occur to most hon. Members of the House as capable of being introduced into the Registration Law; but the present Bill had not been brought in for the purpose of making it a means of effecting such reforms, which reforms must be dealt with at a future period, and very likely upon a more comprehensive scale. Therefore, the Government did not propose to deal with the question of improving the registration system, except so far as it was involved in the proposals contained in the Bill. The Amendment, if adopted, would give a wide expansion to the power of the Local Authority. At present, the Revising Barrister in any of these boroughs—take the borough of Salford, for instance—held his Court in the Town Hall, or some other public place provided by the Local Authority, and no complaint had hitherto been made that the voters were required to travel too far.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he believed that great objection was felt on the part of the voters to the position in which they were now placed in that respect.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the voter would not be placed under any further disadvantage by the Redistribution Bill than he had now to contend with. He would only be required to go to the same place. It had been thought a great advantage to have the revision concentrated in one place, so that they could have all the officers in attendance who were able to give the information that was necessary for the guidance of the Revising Barristers. Surely that advantage would become still more important when they were establishing separate Parliamentary divisions in the same borough. For instance, an officer from Division A would not know whether a particular voter was also going to vote in Division B; but if the officers of both divisions were brought together, the officer of Division A would be able to say—"We have got the voter's name down already, and, therefore, he must not be placed in Division B." In that way the Revising Barrister obtained valuable information. But if they were going to hold each revision of a division separately, and to require the officer for Parliamentary Division A to appear in one Court, and for Parliamentary Division B to appear in another, it would be impossible to obtain any community of information. What was required was some central place, where all the officers could meet in order to advise the Revising Barrister. The Revising Barrister himself, of his own knowledge, would not know whether a man occupied a particular house or shop or not; but the parish overseer would know, and if the parish overseers were brought together they would be able to see that the same man was not placed on the Register in regard to separate qualifications. He believed that that was the practical view which the Revising Barristers took of this subject. Their feeling was that, if the Amendment were adopted, it would take away from them the opportunity of obtaining the information they wanted; and, as a matter of fact, they would be called upon to carry on their inquiry in each division without having in their possession the special information they required. There were one or two other practical questions which would also have to be considered. Of course, there was nothing more important than to give as little extra work as possible to the Revising Barristers. The adoption of the Amendment would certainly involve a waste of time. The Revising Barristers would have to make appointments at each of the Revision Courts; but they would not be in a position to know how long the sitting at each would last. For instance, they might go to one Court and find the work over, at the end of a morning sitting, or in half-an-hour, and for the rest of the day they would have no work to do. On the other hand, the sitting at a particular Court might be much more protracted than they had anticipated, and all the arrangements for completing the work, or for attending elsewhere, would be disorganized. A great waste of time would be involved in the one case, and in the other the Revising Barrister would not be in a position to discharge his duty properly on the following day. These, of course, were practical matters which must be dealt with. The Revising Barristers felt very strongly upon them, and had earnestly pressed that no arrangement should be made which would cut their time to

waste, especially this year, when it would be most desirable, owing to the exceptional circumstances of the case, that they should hold their Courts and complete the revision on the best information they could obtain in the shortest possible time. There was one other practical question which was worth consideration. The Revising Barristers had to provide the Revision Courts themselves. They had not only to find them, but to pay for them. It would, therefore, be not only more advantageous, but less expensive, to go to a central hall in Salford; but if, as it might be in the case of Salford, the Revising Barrister were required to hold seven Revision Courts, instead of one, he might be required to sit at some hotel, or some building, which was not a public institution. His hon. Friend made no provision for such a state of things, nor did he suggest where the Courts should be held. As had already been pointed out, Sub-section 4 gave to the Local Authority in counties power to hold a Revision Court in a town near the division, which might be just over the borders of the district, the object being to study the convenience of the voters. There was another reason why he was unwilling to accept the Amendment. He was afraid there might be Local Authorities who would be governed by political feeling; and they might have a Local Authority in one borough saying to the Revising Barrister "You shall do this," and another saying "You shall not do it." Upon the Select Committee they had the assistance of hon. and learned Gentlemen who had been Revising Barristers. The matter was carefelly considered, and, after full discussion, it was decided not to introduce a clause in the direction of the Amendment of his hon. Friend. It was necessary to concentrate in one place the information from all divisions required for the guidance of Revising Barristers; and it would involve needless delay, inconvenience, and extra cost to multiply the Revision Courts.

MR. HOULDSWORTH said, the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (the Attorney General) had very properly placed before the Committee the objections from a Revising Barrister's point of view; but what the Committee had to consider was rather the convenience of the voters in connection with the registration work, so that the Register might be ultimately rendered as perfect as possible, and the work done with the least possible inconvenience to the voters. He thought the hon. and learned Gentleman must know that the great difficulty in revising the Register was to induce those who had to appear to come up to the Court at all; and he presumed that the object the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) had in view, in making this proposal, was that the voters should be placed in a position in which they could attend and make their claims before the Court of Revision, or appear in order to substantiate their claims when their names were objected to. He (Mr. Houldsworth) thought the hon. and learned Attorney General had not quite understood the object of this provision. The hon. and learned Gentleman seemed to suppose that it was intended to deal with the revision list for one division in one particular neighbourhood, and that nobody else should appear from any other district; and it was imagined that if more than one Court was held the Revising Barrister would be deprived of the general information which he would receive if the Court sat in a central position. But there was no reason why the officers who were required to supply information could not as easily attend each Divisional Court as the Central Court. It appeared to him that it was a question between the Revising Barristers and the officers on the one hand, and the great mass of the electors on the other; and as the number of those who would have to attend in order to substantiate their claims was much greater than the number of officials who would be required to give information, the balance of advantage was certainly in favour of providing for the convenience of the voter rather than of the officer. If he thought there was any practical difficulty in the way he would not press the Amendment. But he could corroborate what the hon. Member for Salford had stated—that it was felt to be a great grievance to be required to travel for a considerable distance—perhaps from two to four miles—to the Revision Court, thus wasting a great deal of time; whereas, if the revision took place in the immediate district, the loss of time would be considerably less, and the general convenience much greater. It

was only a permissive clause, and he trusted that the hon. and learned Attorney General would consider it favourably. If any difficulty arose, it might be provided for upon another occasion; but his own impression was that if the Amendment were once adopted the difficulties which had been suggested by the hon. and learned Attorney General would disappear.

MR. MELLOR said, he wished to call the attention of the Committee to one objection which, to his mind, was a serious practical difficulty. It was this—that the Revising Barrister had to settle his Courts, and to announce them beforehand, so that all the sittings of the Court were fixed when he went down to hold the inquiry. When a Revising Barrister began to hold his first Court in a large borough, he might find that he had a great deal more to do than he had anticipated, and that he had allowed only one or two days for the completion of work which would last three or four days. It was altogether impossible for a Revising Barrister, holding his Court in a large borough, to tell beforehand how long he would be required to sit. Therefore, if the Amendment moved by the hon. Member were adopted this difficulty would arise. The Revising Barrister would have to fix his first Court at a particular place—say, a Town Hall—and he would have to make appointments for that day. He would also have fixed a Court in another part of the borough for the next day; and the effect would be that, if the first inquiry was protracted, he would find that it was not possible to finish the first list on the first day, and a long interval would have to elapse before he would find himself able to return and take up the list again. The consequence would be that he would have to adjourn the Court until some indefinite period, and a number of people who had been summoned to attend would be put to the greatest possible inconvenience, and the time, not only of the voters, but of the officers, would have been wasted. The next day the same difficulty would occur again, and the Revising Barrister would then find himself, from day to day, in a position never to be able to finish anything. In addition to the public officers, a considerable number of voters would have been brought to the Court at great personal inconvenience and expense. He trusted that his hon. Friend would withdraw the Amendment, and he hoped his hon. Friend would not refuse to listen to his (Mr. Mellor's) suggestions, simply because he happened to have been a Revising Barrister. He had endeavoured to deal with the matter only from a practical point of view.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he sympathized with the views which had been put forward by the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) and the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Houldsworth). He thought that, in this matter, they ought to consult, not only the convenience of the Revising Barrister, but also that of the voter; and he believed that, in some cases, the convenience of the voter would be best consulted if an inquiry were held in each separate division. But, at the same time, he felt the force of what had been urged by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General as to the convenience of central sittings, and also the difficulty of entertaining in the present Bill proposals that were in the nature of reforms, rather than the mere assimilation of law, which it was the object of the Bill to secure. He was afraid that the only way of preventing duplicate entries upon the Register was to have all the officers together in one place. The Amendment certainly went beyond the province of the Bill; and he was afraid, if they were going to set to work to amend all the defects of the Registration Law which now existed, the scope of the Bill would have to be materially extended. He thought it would be better to try and limit the measure to the exact purposes for which it had been introduced.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, it was somewhat unfortunate for Her Majesty's Government that every hon. Member who had spoken against his proposal was, or had been, a Revising Barrister. As far as the evidence of Revising Barristers was concerned, he had no hesitation in admitting that the Revising Barristers, as a body, would be against his proposal. They would not like to be under the direction of the Local Authority, even in the case of a great borough like Manchester; but his contention was that they ought to be. In Manchester and Salford there were seven Town Halls, so that there would be

no difficulty in finding public buildings suitable for the purposes of the Revising Barrister. The hon. and learned Attorney General objected to the proposal on the ground that it was somewhat beyond the scope of the present Bill. He (Mr. Arthur Arnold) maintained that it was exactly within the scope of the Bill; because it was consequent on the passing of the Redistribution Bill and the division of great boroughs into separate constituencies. The Attorney General had pointed out that the voters would be in no worse position if the Amendment were not passed; but what he (Mr. Arthur Arnold) wanted was to place them in a better position. He agreed with the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Houldsworth) that the voters generally would derive great benefit from the adoption of this provision, and that they would be prevented from being required to walk, as was constantly the case at present, from two to four miles in order to support their qualification. A further argument in favour of the Amendment was that it was permissive and not compulsory, and there was no possibility of its being put in force where it would not be for the convenience of the voters. Where it was for the convenience of the voters, it would undoubtedly be put in force; and he thought it was a matter of the highest importance that the Local Authority should possess this power.

MR. TOMLINSON said, there was one point in the remarks of the hon. and learned Attorney General which had not been alluded to by previous speakers, and he did not think that it had been properly met by those who supported the Amendment. The hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) had spoken of that borough having three Town Halls. [MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD: Manchester has four.] There might be a borough divided under the Redistribution Bill which had no public institution whatever in the second division, which would answer the purpose of a Revision Court. If, therefore, the Revising Barrister was required to hold a Court in a division of that kind, there ought to be some provision to secure that the Local Authority should provide a place in which to hold the extra sitting. It ought to be the duty of the Local Authority to provide a place of meeting, and not of the Revising Barrister.

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, that as yet no answer had been given to a most important objection to the Amendment which had been made by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attnrney General—namely, that in the absence of information at the Divisional Courts electors might get placed on the list for two or three divisions. Before the Committee went into the Lobby, he would be glad if his hon. Friend the Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold), or somebody who took the same view, would answer that objection, which was certainly a most formidable one.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, the objections advanced by the hon. and learned Attorney General and his right hon. Friend (Mr. W. E. Forster) upon that matter would be as apparent to the Local Authority as the Revising Barrister. The Amendment had been opposed chiefly from the Revising Barrister's point of view. Surely the practical considerations which had been put forward would be appreciated quite as much by the Local Authorities as by the Revising Barristers. His (Mr. Arthur Arnold's) contention was that the chief matter of importance was the convenience of the public officers and the voter; and he was sure that his right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) would have full confidence in the Local Authorities that they would only pay regard to the public convenience. He had already stated to the House that, on looking through the list of voters for the borough of Salford, he found that the duplicate entries were very few indeed; and he had no doubt that, if his right hon. Friend would examine the list for the borough of Bradford, he would find that it was in a similar position.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, that he was not a Revising Barrister, he had never been one, and never expected to be; but he was the Representative of a large borough, which was to be divided under the Redistribution Bill, and he thought the arguments which were put forward by his hon. and learned Friend and the Attorney General were sound and practicable. He thought that, so far as the balance of convenience was concerned, there might be some advantage if they could bring the Revising Barrister to the voter's own door. But they had to deal with a limited amount

of time, and there was another provision which the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) had overlooked—namely, the possible protraction of the business of the Divisional Courts, which might, if the Amendment were adopted, much delay the completion of the Register for the borough of Salford and Manchester.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD remarked, that the course he had suggested was adopted in Salford the year before last.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, that it was done by the Revising Barrister for the convenience of the voter, and the Revising Barrister was a local gentleman who understood the working of his own Court. The main question for the consideration of Parliament was to prevent duplicate entries. They were introducing a new system now, and what might have been of trivial importance before, when the voter could only vote for two Members, became of much greater importance now that the borough was divided into a large number of divisions. It now became of the utmost importance to prevent a man from finding his way upon the Register for more than one division, in which case he might possibly be tempted to vote for each. He thought the balance of convenience was against the Amendment of his hon. Friend.

MR. HOULDSWORTH thought that the difficulty raised by the Government in regard to duplicate votes was fictitious, and that the district Revision Courts might be so arranged as to have the agents and the officers of each part of the borough in attendance at the same time. All of them could go to each of the districts in turn, and the same information would, in that case, be before the Revising Barristers in each district division as in the central division. He did not see, therefore, that the adoption of the Amendment would create further difficulties in the case of duplicate entries.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said, the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) and the hon. and learned Attorney General thought that the Revising Barrister's inquiry should be held in one Court for two or more divisions. His (Mr. Illingworth's) opinion was, that if a borough were divided into three divisions and three distinct Courts were held, the officers would be in precisely the same position as if they had to wait in a Central Court until the lists for the second or third division were taken. In his judgment no inconvenience whatever would arise. If the Revision Courts were held in different parts of the borough, what would happen? Simply what happened now. When the Revision Court was held, the voter had to support his claim when his turn came; and the uncertainty as to when the name would be called would be greater in a Central Court than if the Court were held in different districts. The convenience of the voter would certainly be better consulted by adopting the Amendment; and it was quite possible for the Revising Barrister to make arrangements with the overseers to be present at the Court held in each division. It would be just as necessary for the overseers to attend in the one case as in the other; and, therefore, he saw nothing in the objections which had been raised to the Amendment.

MR. MELLOR said, that having been a Revising Barrister, and being one no longer, he was able to take the position of an impartial witness. The Revising Barristers had to consult and did consult the convenience of the voters; but, notwithstanding what had been said by hon. Members who supported the Amendment, he believed that its adoption would create serious practical difficulties. The point referred to by the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) was a very serious one indeed. When he was a Revising Barrister, one of the most difficult things he had to do was to ascertain, in cases of alleged duplicates, whether the name objected to was really a duplicate entry or not—that was to say, whether it was the same man whose name appeared on the Register more than once. This was a very difficult matter to decide, because it sometimes happened that there were a dozen or twenty persons who had the same name. Of course the Revising Barrister was told at once that these were duplicate entries, and that it was the same man who had three or four separate qualifications. The Revising Barrister had to examine the evidence most carefully, and to satisfy himself whether the entries related to the same man or not; and it was really a very difficult thing to do. His hon. Friend the Member for

Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) said there was no difficulty about it; but he (Mr. Mellor) was convinced that unless the Revising Barristers took the utmost care in this matter a good many persons would run the lisk of losing their votes. He was glad that the matter had been pointed out by the hon. and learned Attorney General, and that the right hon. Member for Bradford had added his objection.

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, he had only asked for information on the point.

MR. MELLOR maintained that in order to make certain, and to prevent an act of injustice being done, it was necessary to bring into Court all the officers who were connected with the parish. They were all summoned to attend the first Court held by the Revising Barrister; but if the sitting of the Court was broken off, as it was liable to be if the proposed Amendment were adopted, the Revising Barrister would find it impossible to give notice beforehand where he was going to hold his Court next. The result would be that there would be in Court on the first day a great number of persons who would necessarily waste their time, including, in some cases, the officers of different parishes; and then the Revising Barrister would have to adjourn the Court to some uncertain day, because he would not be able to tell when he might be able to get back again. He would then have to go to another Court and to get these important parish officers to go about with him; and, perhaps, through carelessness or some other cause, many of those who had wasted their time on the first day would not be in attendance on the next, and complaints would consequently be made. By that means the Register would get into confusion. His hon. Friend the Member for Salford had suggested that the Revising Barristers did not understand the matter, and that it was only the Local Authority who did. He thought it might sometimes be assumed that those who had had personal experience knew best; and he was sure that the Revising Barristers, as a rule, made it their first consideration to consult the convenience of the voters. He believed that if the Committee adopted this Amendment, a large amount of confusion and uncertainty would be occasioned by the Revising Barrister never being able to see how much of the business could be got through in a particular day. In these days of railways, tramways, and omnibuses, it would not be much to ask a working man to travel two or three miles in order to substantiate his claim to the vote. Voters in the counties had to travel much greater distances, and they did not complain. It was even in the power of the Revising Barrister to give costs if he thought that persons had been improperly objected to, and in such a case as this they were fairly entitled to costs. He hoped the Committee would not accept the Amendment. This year the Revising Barristers would have to do three or four times the amount of work they had ever been called upon to perform before, and they had already expressed their willingness to do it.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD: That will not be the case in the boroughs.

MR. MELLOR said, that in regard to those boroughs which had been divided it would be found that the work had been largely increased. He was very sorry, for his own part, that his hon. Friend the Member for Salford had not been a Revising Barrister, so that he might have sat in one of these Courts and have become acquainted with the difficulties which had to be contended with. He hoped that when his hon. Friend went back to Salford at the time of the next revision, he would go down to the Court and see how the work was managed.

MR. TOMLINSON hoped that if the claim was agreed to the Committee would agree to insert in it a Proviso making it the duty of the Local Authority in the case of divided boroughs to provide proper places for the holding of Revision Courts.

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, the objection which had been raised to the proposal was fairly met by the answer that the overseers would attend at each Revision Court. After all, the Amendment was merely permissive. It would not be adopted in many boroughs, and he should be glad if the Government would see their way to make it possible to carry out the proposal of his hon. Friend.

MR. TOMLINSON asked if he would be in Order in moving the Amendment he had suggested after the division which was about to take place?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 44; Noes 77: Majority 33.—(Div. List, No. 157.)

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 5 (Provision as to double entries in boroughs).

MR. HOULDSWORTH moved, as an Amendment, after "voter," in line 33, to insert—

"Any person who is entered more than once as a Parliamentary voter may, in pursuance of sub-section fourteen of section twenty-eight of 'The Parliamentary and Municipal Registration Act, 1878,' select the entry to be retained for voting by notice in writing in the form given in the Schedule to this Act, and such notice shall be delivered to the revising barrister at the opening of the revision court for the borough."

"Any person on the list of voters may object to the name of any person being retained for voting purposes on any list of voters in respect of more than one qualification, and the revising barrister shall hear and determine such objection; and, if the person objected to does not appear, or has not selected the entry to be retained for voting in manner prescribed by this Act, the revising barrister shall deal with such entry as directed by sub-section one of this present section."

The hon. Member said, the simple object of his Amendment was to provide definite forms in two cases, one being the case of objection to a duplicate vote, and the other the case of selection of qualification. He drew the argument for the necessity of this from some remarks which had been made by an hon. Member opposite upon the last clause; and the provision was rendered necessary owing to the difficulty the Revising Barrister now experienced in getting proper proof of duplicate qualifications, and of the identity of individuals. In some cases the names of persons appeared on the list who were relations, while in others they were not relations at all; and the consequence was that very great care was required in deciding whether the name was that of a really valid voter or not. It was well known to those who had to work the registration system that there was great difficulty in getting voters to attend to the application made to them, requiring them to bring proof of their identity or to substantiate their claim. His object was to provide a definite form of objection, which might be sent to the man who was objected to, on the ground that he had more than one qualification. If this were not done, he did not see any provision whatever in the Bill, as it stood, which would protect a man who was on the Register from being taken off, on the ground that he had a duplicate vote. He failed to see that there would be any protection at all unless some provision were made that the objection should in every case be sent to the voter. He noticed, in the Bill in regard to counties, that there was a provision for selection; but he was not quite sure that there was one in regard to objection, and his object in providing this form of objection was to secure that every man whose name was more than once on the Register should have an objection sent to him, in order that he might be able to take the proper steps, by appearance or otherwise, to prove whether he had been really duplicated or not. Now that there was to be a system of selection, it appeared to him that great confusion would be created unless some definite form were provided which the Revising Barrister could have presented to him, and which, when duly signed, he would accept as evidence of the selection of the voter. Perhaps the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General would be good enough to tell him how, under the Bill, the principle of selection would be exercised? There was nothing in the Bill, so far as he understood it, which enabled him to see exactly how it would work. He could understand that if the voter appeared personally before the Revising Barrister and said that he preferred to have his name upon the Register as being qualified for such-and-such a place, that that would be sufficient, or that it might be sufficient if the agent produced a letter from the voter. All that he would get by establishing a distinct form of selection would be to enable the Revising Barrister to get through his work much more easily, and to provide a form which would have a little more authority about it. The strong point was to protect the voter against being taken off, when it might not be really a duplicate entry at all.

Amendment proposed,

In page 5, line 33, after "voter," insert—"Any person who is entered more than once as a Parliamentary voter may, in pursuance of sub-section fourteen of section twenty-eight of

'The Parliamentary and Municipal Registration Act, 1878,' select the entry to be retained for voting by notice in writing in the form given in the Schedule to this Act, and such notice shall be delivered to the revising barrister at the opening of the revision court for the borough.

"Any person on the list of voters may object to the name of any person being retained for voting purposes on any list of voters in respect of more than one qualification, and the revising barrister shall hear and determine such objection; and, if the person objected to does not appear, or has not selected the entry to be retained for voting in manner prescribed by this Act, the revising barrister shall deal with such entry as directed by sub-section one of this present section."—(*Mr. Houldsworth.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said there was, under the Act already in force, the power which the hon. Member suggested; and under the present Bill Sub-section 9 of Clause 3 made this provision for counties by notice being given in writing. As proposed by the hon. Member, he thought the provision would be very awkward, because the voter would lose the advantage given him by the present Act of Parliament. The voter now could write a note to the Revising Barrister and select the occupation vote; and if the Revising Barrister was satisfied with the genuineness of the handwriting it would be sufficient. In counties that was so. The Revising Barrister would communicate with the voter, the voter having written to him—"I give you notice that I wish to remain on the list for that qualification." The hon. Gentleman wished to go further, and proposed a form which he (the Attorney General) could not accept, and which he thought the Committee would see was unadvisable. The hon. Gentleman proposed, however, two forms, one of which was a form of objection. A person might go before the Revising Barrister and say—"This person must not have this qualification because he is on the Register for another." Her Majesty's Government had considered this, and he (the Attorney General) had framed a clause dealing with the notices of objection; but they found it was so complex, casting the burden upon the voter, that he had abandoned it. But by Clause 16 the Committee would see, if they inserted this form in the Schedule, they would render the proceedings taken invalid if that form had not been used; whereas it was provided that disregard of a formal instruction should not invalidate. He should have no objection to meet the hon. Member's views in the proper place by inserting his form of objection. He could not, however, insert it in the clause under notice.

MR. HOULDSWORTH said, his object, as he had stated, was to protect persons from having objections made against them which did not properly apply to them. Under the Bill any person could object to any other person on the list for what seemed to be a double qualification; the name of John Jones, for instance, might appear twice, but the individual in one case might be another person altogether from the individual in the other. His proposal was that a form of objection should be sent to every person whose name was more than once on the Register in order that he might take steps, by appearance or otherwise, to prove, if necessary, that he was not a duplicate voter.

MR. W. E. FORSTER asked if he was correct in understanding that the law would be that if a man had two qualifications—say, one for his residence in one division, and the other for his warehouse in another division—he would be registered for his house, unless he claimed to vote in respect of his warehouse; but that it would not be obligatory upon him to attend in person to make that claim—that it would be sufficient for him to write a letter which would satisfy the Revising Barrister?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the right hon. Gentleman had correctly stated the effect of the clause.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 6 (Saving as to registration of burgesses and voters in parishes in municipal boroughs) *agreed to.*

Clause 7 (Clerks of the peace and town clerks).

MR. R. H. PAGET said, he wished to state very briefly his reasons for proposing the alteration embodied in the Amendment he was about to move to this clause. He was aware that there was great need for speed in the matter of this Bill, and, therefore, he did not

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wish to cause a moment's unnecessary delay. He would point out that Bills were rarely delivered by the Queen's printer's earlier than three days after the Royal Assent had been given to them; and, therefore, according to the clause, Clerks of the Peace would only have, at the outside, four days in which to issue the precepts to overseers. Those precepts were very lengthy, as the Committee might observe by reference to the Schedules of the Bill; they were not yet settled; but it would be obligatory on every Clerk of the Peace to issue, within seven days after the passing of the Bill, the whole of those lengthy precepts to every overseer in their respective counties. In the case of large counties, with 500 parishes, it would be impossible to comply with the provision of the clause in its present form. The mere printing of the precepts would take a considerable time. He repeated that he had no desire to delay the Bill, but wished to make it a practicable measure. He readily acknowledged that the work of the overseers was full of difficulty, and that they wanted plenty of time; and he was glad to find that the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), who the other night regarded this as a mere matter of simple copying, had been thoroughly converted on this point; but, in order to afford time to Clerks of the Peace to perform their statutable duty, he would move the Amendment standing in his name.

Amendment proposed, in page 7, line 10, leave out the word "seven," in order to insert the word "ten,"—(*Mr. R. H. Paget,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the word 'seven' stand part of the Clause."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that, so far as he was concerned, he should be perfectly willing that the Clerks of the Peace should have 10 days instead of seven in which to issue the precepts; but the Government had very carefully considered the point, and seeing that the additional time proposed to be allowed to them must come out of the time in which the overseers had to perform their duty he could not accept the Amendment of the hon. Member.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, that although he agreed with his hon. Friend (Mr. R. H. Paget) that an extension of the time allowed to Clerks of the Peace under the clause was desirable, he felt, at the same time, that it would not be advisable to hurry the overseers in the performance of their duties.

MR. R. H. PAGET said, he was glad to hear that both the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General and the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope), while opposing the Amendment, had recognized the fact that further time was necessary for the Clerks of the Peace. He was aware that the duties of the overseers were difficult, and he did not wish to deprive them of a single day, nor did he wish to detain or divide the Committee on his Amendment. But if it were correct, as he asserted it to be, that in certain cases as many as 500 precepts would have to be issued, then he said that Clerks of the Peace would be unable to comply with the words of the Statute.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): I suggest that we should give the Clerks of the Peace a clear week of seven working days, and I am prepared to substitute "eight" for "seven," in order to secure that.

MR. R. H. PAGET said, he was glad to secure for the Clerks of the Peace another day, and would ask leave to withdraw the Amendment, in order to move an Amendment in conformity with the suggestion of the hon. and learned Gentleman.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, in page 7, line 10, to leave out the word "seven," in order to insert the word "eight,"—(*Mr. R. H. Paget,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the word 'seven' stand part of the Clause."

MR. WARTON asked whether it was a fact that the overseers had already acted under the provisions of Section 9 of the "Representation of the People Act, 1884," by sending occupiers the form of notice contained in the 3rd Schedule to that Act? The Committee would observe that Form A, in page 59 of the Bill, had been copied with minute correctness from the 9th section of the Act of 1884. The two forms were identical. If the overseers had already acted under the 9th section of the Act of 1884, then there would be more time

left for the Clerks of the Peace to issue their precepts to the overseers, and the Amendment of the hon. Member for Mid Somerset ought to be accepted; if they had not, then, as the said form of notice gave occupiers 21 days to answer, there would be little time left for the Clerks of the Peace, and he contended that the Amendment should not be accepted.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the overseers had had instructions.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That the word 'eight' be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

MR. H. J. TOLLEMACHE asked for information as to the procedure of Clerks of the Peace in respect of persons scheduled in 1881, as guilty of corrupt practices. He had been written to by a Clerk of the Peace, saying that it would be absolutely impossible for him to find out how many of the persons so scheduled had the county qualification. The Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act provided that the registration officer should make out a list containing the names and descriptions of all persons who were incapacitated for voting by reason of their having been scheduled. The question he had to ask the hon. and learned Attorney General was this—"How is the Clerk of the Peace to make out a list of those persons who had been scheduled and who possessed the county qualification?"

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he had not received any Notice of this question; but he might point out that in one respect the hon. Gentleman had not quite correctly stated the position.

MR. H. J. TOLLEMACHE said, he referred to the case of Macclesfield.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) pointed out that Macclesfield would be, under the Redistribution Act, a county division.

MR. H. J. TOLLEMACHE said, he was also speaking with regard to the city of Chester, which was still a Parliamentary borough.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the electors there were borough voters. As he had no Notice of this question, he admitted that he was not quite certain whether they were affected. He was not sure, but he did not think the disqualification would affect county voters at all.

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 8 (Application of s. 31 of 30 & 31 Vict. c. 102, as to remuneration of clerks of the peace).

MR. R. H. PAGET said, he wished to know whether, in any case where a Clerk of the Peace was paid by a fixed salary which included remuneration for the work of registration, it would be competent for the Court of Quarter Sessions to consider his claim in regard to any increase of work involved by this Bill, and meet it with an increase of salary? There was a Statute existing which would make it very difficult for the Local Authorities to increase the salaries of the Clerks of the Peace; and he desired to know whether the right of taking into consideration this additional work was secured to the Authorities in those cases where it might be necessary?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the clause was framed so as to give the Local Authorities a discretion in the matter. They could remunerate the Clerks of the Peace if they liked to bear the expense. Whether the remuneration should be given by an increase of salary or otherwise was not decided.

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 9 (Divided parishes).

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) moved, as an Amendment, in page 8, line 13, after "municipal borough," insert—

"The burgesses of which are enrolled in accordance with 'The Parliamentary and Municipal Registration Act, 1878.'"

He explained that it was necessary to insert these words owing to an arrangement which had been effected in the Bill in Committee.

Amendment *agreed to.*

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) moved, as an Amendment, in page 8, line 19, after "Act," to insert "1884."

Amendment *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clauses 10 to 12, inclusive, *agreed to.*

Clause 13 (As to constitution of polling districts).

MR. HENEAGE said, he wished to point out that the enactments referred to in this clause provided that voters should have polling places provided for them within "four miles of their residences," and he desired now to insert words to define this provision by making it plain that the distance was to be measured along the nearest road, because it was obvious that if they took the distance as the crow flies, the actual distance by road might be much further. Although the distance from one point to another as the crow flies might only be six or seven miles, a person to get from one place to the other might be compelled to travel over eight or 10 miles of road. It might be said that if they had more polling places it would add to the expense; but it was generally laid down in the 5th section of the Ballot Act that no polling place should be provided for less than 100 voters. He, therefore, begged to propose the Amendment which stood in his name; and he hoped the Committee would agree with him, that having given the vote to a large number of labourers it was desirable that they should not be disfranchised by having too great a distance to walk after their day's labour was over to the polling place in order to exercise their right to vote. It was desirable that the four-mile provision should be carried out in the spirit as well as in the letter.

Amendment proposed, in page 9, line 20, after "districts," insert, "measuring the distance therein mentioned along the nearest road so as to."—(*Mr. Heneage.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. R. H. PAGET said, he could not see that this was a necessary Amendment; and if he had wanted anything to confirm him in his opinion it was provided in the remarks of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) who had moved it, and who was evidently quite ignorant of the whole subject. The hon. Member had spoken of four miles; but he would find, on reference to the Act of 1883, that the law as it at present stood was that the polling place should be not more than three miles distant and not "four miles." This matter was one which should be left altogether to the discretion of the Local Authorities, who would do all they could to facilitate the convenience of the labourers. This Amendment, therefore, be submitted was altogether unnecessary.

MR. HENEAGE said, the Act provided that the polling place should be not more than four miles distant.

MR. R. H. PAGET asked what Act the hon. Member was quoting?

MR. HENEAGE said, the Act he held in his hand was the Ballot Act of 1872.

MR. R. H. PAGET said, he had quoted a later Act—namely, that of 1883.

MR. HENEAGE urged that the distance—whether three or four miles—did not affect his point at all. Whatever the distance, it should be measured along the nearest road.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, there appeared to him to be a great deal of force in the observations of his hon. Friend the Member for Grimsby (Mr. Heneage). It was the intention of the Legislature, when the Act of 1883 was passed, that the voter should have a polling place within three miles of his residence, which, of course, meant three miles measured along the road he had to travel. Surely the three miles intended was not an imaginary line through the air, but three miles travelling for the voter. If they now said that the three miles should be as the crow flies, they would not be giving the voter what they had intended to give him in the Act of 1883. In any case, he hoped the Local Authorities would do their best to carry out the spirit of the provision.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he did not see any objection to the Amendment of the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Heneage), only that it seemed to imply distrust with those whose duty it was to carry out the law. In his part of the country they had not been particular about having 100 voters, but had done all they could for the convenience of those who desired to record their votes. He did not know if the Amendment were necessary; but if the hon. Member went to a division, he, for one, would support him.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he was quite agreed to insert the Amendment. In his district, where they had a great many difficulties to contend with, the

magistrates had done all they could to carry out the spirit of the Act; but, on the whole, he thought it would be better to put in the Amendment.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he understood that the object of the Bill was to make it possible for a voter to pass from his district to the polling place; but if that were so, other considerations must be taken into account besides mere distance. Special arrangements were necessary in cases where Party feeling ran very high. In some towns in the North of Ireland—Newry, for instance—where political feeling was very strong, the polling place was always put in the Orange district. He trusted that in such cases something would be done to arrange that each district—the Orange and the Catholic—should be provided with a separate polling place, in order that the voters of each Party would be able to record their votes in safely.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that was a question for the Local Authorities.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, would it not be possible to introduce a provision in this Bill which might afterwards be transferred to the Irish Bill making it compulsory, on requisition by a certain number of electors, that the Authorities should provide polling places in districts where it would be perfectly safe for the voters to go?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the Local Authorities already had the power to arrange the polling districts as they thought right.

MR. PELL said, it appeared to him that they were now entering into very complicated matters. What were they to measure? Where they to measure the high road? And supposing there was a ferry, was that to be measured also as the boat travelled, or were they to take the nearest cut across the river? What was meant by the hon. Member's Amendment? He did not wish to place obstacles in the way of the voter; but he did not think that any practical inconvenience arose under the present system, and it appearad to him that they were introducing complications into the working of the Act.

MR. HENEAGE said, he did not desire to press his words, if any hon. Member could suggest any that would be better. What he meant to provide was that the distance should be the distance along the ordinary road which would be travelled in getting from the voter's residence to the polling station. He had received a great number of letters upon this subject, and he knew that in some districts great inconvenience arose from the present state of things. It was shown, in one case, that 200 voters were between eight and 12 miles from a polling place.

MR. WARTON said, he did not care what number or quantity of letters the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Heneage) had in his possession. This matter had been before the Courts on various occasions, and in all the decisions the Judges had made it perfectly clear that the distance must be measured as the crow flies. If the Committee altered that, they would be flying in the face of the legal mind, and what the Judges had practically settled. If they once allowed this loose Amendment to be put in, the question would at once arise—"What is a road and how are you to define it?" It was clear that if they were to have a distance at all they must have the actual distance and nothing else. This Amendment would open the door to all sorts of confusion as to what was a road and what was not. The distance must be the distance and nothing else. If they once went into the question of the way round, they would land themselves into all sorts of difficulties. The Amendment seemed to him to be very absurd and opposed to all the late decisions.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, that in spite of all the recent decisions which the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Warton) had referred to, he was obliged to say that the County Justices had not limited themselves to so narrow a view, but had acted in the spirit of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Grimsby (Mr. Heneage).

MR. SEXTON said, he thought that the point advanced by the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had been misapprehended. He was referring to the towns in Ireland. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General (Sir Henry James) had great confidence in the Justices; but they in Ireland had no confidence in them, and believed they would make the polling places as inconvenient as they could to the National Party. He would ask the

Government, therefore, if the Corporations in Ireland could not be allowed to have some voice in the matter of arranging the positions of polling stations, or if the power of the Justices could not be modified in some way?

MR. BIGGAR said, that, at the last General Election, he was at a particular polling place in Ireland, and he found that some of the people who lived within a short distance, instead of coming there to record their votes, had to go to another polling place five or six miles distant. He did not know if this had been wilfully arranged, or if it was the result of gross negligence, but it had given rise to much inconvenience, and in cases where there was great political excitement it was calculated to prevent opposing parties registering their opinions. He hoped the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General would adopt some means for influencing the Local Authorities. In the case of Newry, the Authorities were, of course, the county magistrates, and it was notorious that the county magistrates did not belong to the popular Party in Ireland; and he thought, in order to encourage people to give their votes, it would be better if the Government would give attention to the recommendation of his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton).

Question put, and *agreed to;* words *inserted* accordingly.

On the Motion of MR. HENEAGE, the following Amendment made:—In page 9, lines 20 and 21, leave out "and may."

MR. HENEAGE said, he wished to move an Amendment, the object of which was to provide that the magistrates residing within the county districts should be the authority to regulate these polling places. The suggestion he made had been acted upon by the Quarter Sessions in Somersetshire already voluntarily; and he thought his hon. Friend opposite (Mr. R. H. Paget) would tell them that it had been working well. What they in Somerset had done voluntarily he proposed to make compulsory. He proposed that the Court of Quarter Session, instead of sending this subject to a Committee of magistrates of the whole Quarter Session, should appoint a Committee in each electoral division of magistrates residing in the division, and that they should sit as a Court to arrange this question of polling places. This, however, was not so much a question for the Government as for the Committee itself, and therefore he would appeal to the Committee generally to support his Amendment. He hoped he should get the support of the two Front Benches; but, in any case, he strongly appealed to those magistrates in the House who had had a great deal of experience with regard to local self-government. There was one case he should like to bring before the Committee. It was in South Lincolnshire, where the Quarter Sessional areas of Kesteven and Holland overlapped with regard to the Parliamentary county divisions. What he desired in this case was that the two Courts of Quarter Session should each appoint Resident Magistrates to act as a committee to decide the question as to the positions of the polling stations. He begged to move the Amendment standing in his name.

Amendment proposed,

In page 9, line 22, at end, add the following sub-section:—"(4.) Where a parliamentary county is not co-extensive with one county quarter sessional area, the court of quarter sessions having jurisdiction within such parliamentary county shall, within one month after the passing of this Act, for a committee of all the magistrates acting for and residing in the said parliamentary county, who shall hold sittings within the said parliamentary county, and take into consideration the division of such parliamentary county into polling districts, and hear applications for and assign polling places to such polling districts in such manner as may make the districts conform with the enactment relating to the division of counties into polling districts, and measuring the distance therein mentioned along the nearest road, so as to meet the convenience of electors in recording their votes; the report of such committee shall be entered upon the records of such court or courts of general sessions, who shall make orders thereupon according to the respective areas of such parliamentary counties within the jurisdiction of the said courts."—(*Mr. Heneage.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. R. H. PAGET said, he hoped the Committtee would not entertain the proposal made to them by the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Heneage). It was objectionable on several grounds, which he would very briefly indicate. In the first place, it produced a feature which was entirely unnecessary. The powers of the Local Authority were ample to deal with the matter as it now existed;

and when that was the case—when they had an authority having entire control and knowing exactly what it had to do—he could not see why a change should be made. Now, what was it that was proposed? The Bill provided that the Court of Quarter Sessions should assemble within one month, and having assembled they would, if the Amendment were accepted, proceed to form as a committee all the Justices residing in the division. The words of the clause were—

"Alone or jointly form a committee of all the magistrates acting for and residing in the said parliamentary county."

They would therefore get a committee consisting of 50, or 80, or even 100 Justices; but no provision was made for assembling this monstrous committee. His experience was that if they wanted work to be done, and done well, the Court of Quarter Sessions must select the men, and make the committee as small as possible. In Somerset, they had already set up committees for each of the seven divisions into which the county was to be divided by the Redistribution Bill. They had formed committees by taking two of the Justices from each of the Petty Sessional divisions comprised in every one of the seven divisions. They knew their work; they had already got to work—in fact, by the end of the present week their work would be done. It was entirely unnecessary; indeed, it would hinder, instead of help the work, to appoint the vast committee now suggested, with nothing to direct it—no head, no centre. The 47th section of the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act provided for the revision of the polling districts; that revision could be thoroughly well done under the existing system. He believed the plan of the hon. Member would cause delay and difficulty, because it would produce committees too large for practical work. It would be a very unfortunate thing if the Committee were to adopt this proposal.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he joined with his hon. Friend (Mr. R. H. Paget) in thinking that this clause was not required. He was satisfied that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General (Sir Henry James) could, supposing it was necessary, bring up, on Report, much better words, because to make the large committee proposed would be the very worst thing that could be done, and even opposed to the interest which the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Heneage) really wished to serve. His (Sir Walter B. Barttelot's) county (Sussex) was a very typical county, because, for all practical purposes, it was divided into two counties. Two of the new Parliamentary divisions overlapped the present boundaries; there were two divisions, each of which took in a portion of East and West Sussex. Now, it would be most unwise to hamper the Court of Quarter Sessions, because what was it that those Courts—for there were two Courts in Sussex—always did? They appointed the best and smallest committees that they could select; and when they had anything to do which affected the interests of both divisions of the county, they had always appointed joint committees to act together. If they showed their mistrust of the Courts of Quarter Sessions to do their work properly by accepting the present Amendment, they would strike a great blow at the administration of the county business throughout the country. The proceedings of the House of Commons afforded a very proper precedent in this matter, because the Report of every Committee was brought up to the whole House for its sanction. He was certainly of opinion that the committee appointed to assign the polling districts of a county should submit their report to the general body of Justices. The clause now proposed was quite unnecessary, and, therefore, he trusted it would be rejected.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, the hon. Gentleman the Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) had proposed this clause with the double object of dealing with a particular case and also of making an amendment of the law in all counties. As to the general question, he (Mr. E. Stanhope) had made certain inquiries, and he was bound to say his Friends did not approve of the proposal. His Friends were of opinion that the machinery proposed would not be suitable for the purpose in view, and that it would be much better to leave the matter to the Court of Quarter Sessions, who had hitherto had no difficulty in dealing with it, and who would not have the smallest difficulty under the altered circumstances in dealing with it. He,

therefore, hoped his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General would not accept the Amendment. If the hon. and learned Gentleman did accept it, he would find his action very bitterly opposed by many Members on the Opposition side of the House. He (Mr. E. Stanhope) had no doubt the hon. Member for Great Grimsby raised a very special case when he mentioned Kesteven and Holland. But surely Kesteven and Holland, with their two Courts of Quarter Sessions, might appoint a joint committee which would be able to deal with all the matters in that respect. He was not quite certain whether, under the existing law, that could be done; but on Report words could be brought up to give the Courts of Quarter Sessions in question all the power they needed. On the general question he should be sorry to see the Amendment accepted.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he was glad to hear his hon. Friend (Mr. Heneage) say that this was not a question for the Government, but one to be settled by the Committee itself. It was essentially a question for the decision of the county Members themselves. He understood that the Amendment was intended to apply not so much to small counties as to large counties. It had been determined that, wherever it was possible, local knowledge should be brought to bear on this matter; and he certainly was of opinion it would be better that polling districts should be mapped out by magistrates living in the district rather than by strangers.

MR. R. H. PAGET said, that what they had done in Somerset was to get a committee for each of the new divisions composed of men from every locality, so that the local knowledge brought to bear upon the matter was complete. There was no area of any size in the divisions that was not thoroughly represented.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, it had been said that in many counties there was only one committee. He could well understand that under such circumstances there might be found a want of local knowledge which would be somewhat injurious in the formation of polling districts. There was a great deal to be said in favour of his hon. Friend's (Mr. Heneage's) proposition, presuming it was properly worded; but he (the Attorney General) had to ask himself what was the best course to take in regard to this Bill. As far as he understood, the majority of the county Members were opposed to the clause. He should be very sorry to take a course which would be contrary to the views of those Members; and, therefore, whilst he thought there was much to be said in support of the clause, he was afraid he must vote against it, leaving, of course, hon. Members of the Committee to vote as they pleased.

MR. BULWER said, that his practical experience as a magistrate in the county of Norfolk led him to the conclusion that the proposition of the hon. Member for Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) was entirely unnecessary. In the county of Norfolk they had two Courts of Quarter Sessions; but they did not interfere with one another, and the county had been divided for many years past into three representative areas. What the magistrates did was to appoint small committees throughout the county to map the county out into polling districts. Their propositions were submitted to the Court of Quarter Sessions, and adopted, modified, or rejected, as the case might be. No difficulty in the present system was found, and he presumed no difficulty whatever would be found under the extended franchise. As he read the clause of the hon. Member for Grimsby, the Committee to be appointed were to be paramount in the matter; they were to submit a report, and the Court of Quarter Sessions were to act upon it. Supposing that he and the hon. Member for Grimsby were magistrates in the same county, and both appointed on the committee, and that the committee mapped the county out into such and such polling districts. When the committee presented their report, the hon. Member, though he differed with the majority of the committee, could not object to anything that had been done, but all he could do as a member of the Court of Quarter Sessions would be to act upon the report submitted. His (Mr. Bulwer's) great objection to the clause was that it was quite unnecessary. Most of the county Justices were practical men of business and intelligence, and could be safely trusted to arrange proper polling districts. Now, there was a very important matter to which he wished to

call the attention of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General. When the Redistribution Bill was before the House, he (Mr. Bulwer) and several other hon. Members endeavoured to obtain separate representation for the Isle of Ely, and he pointed out on that occasion the great difficulty which would arise under the present arrangements. The Isle of Ely had a separate Court of Quarter Sessions and a separate Commission of the Peace—that was to say, the magistrates of the Isle of Ely had no jurisdiction in the county of Cambridge, and the magistrates of the county of Cambridge had no jurisdiction in the Isle of Ely. By the Redistribution Bill, the Isle of Ely was divided into three parts. Of course, no difficulty would arise as regarded the Northern part, which was altogether in the Isle; but difficulty would arise in the case of the other two divisions. Some portions of the Isle were in the Eastern Division of Cambridgeshire, and other portions in the Western Division of the county; and many of the Isle of Ely magistrates who had jurisdiction in those portions were not voters. They did not live within those political areas. Many of those magistrates who did live in those areas had no jurisdiction in the Isle of Ely. Now, who were to arrange the polling places in those districts? He saw nothing in this Bill to deal with the difficulty he had pointed out. Perhaps the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General would give his attention to the matter.

MR. ACLAND said, that as a county magistrate, he did not agree that all county magistrates were opposed to this proposal. He thought there was some necessity for the proposition of his hon. Friend (Mr. Heneage). The number of voters whose convenience had to be consulted had very largely increased, and therefore it appeared to him there was increased necessity for not only actual intimacy of acquaintance with the neighbourhood, the convenience of which had to be met on the part of those appointed to arrange the polling districts, but also for confidence by the electors that such intimacy of acquaintance existed. The proposal of his hon. Friend was precisely that which was most calculated to secure both these results, and therefore he hoped his hon. Friend would go to a division.

MR. HENEAGE said, that many objections had been taken to his proposal. One was the large size of the committee. Of course, he could not tell what was the case in other counties; but in his own county the committees in every case would not exceed 15 or 20. Their difficulty was to appoint a committee of 12 or 13; and having sat on every committee in the county for the last 18 years, he knew from experience that it was rarely that half-a-dozen or seven magistrates met together. It very often happened that the magistrate who was selected to represent a particular district—a district it might be in which a matter of interest cropped up—was not present. If the difficulty which hon. Members seemed to have with regard to large committees could be obviated by forming small committees, instead of committees composed of all the magistrates, he should be willing to meet their views in that respect. Indeed, if the Committee would accept the clause, he should be only too glad to see it improved in every possible way by the Government on Report. He really could not understand why the magistrates in the different electoral divisions were so much distrusted. There was another question which had been overlooked. It was said that county Members were opposed to this proposition. Were county Members the only persons to be consulted in a matter of this kind? He should have thought, now that Parliament had made large additions to the electorate, the voters were the people whose convenience ought to be consulted. He should certainly go to a division, and be very glad of any support he got. He only wished he could have the support of the two Front Benches.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he did not oppose the Amendment in any Party spirit—this was was not a Party question—and he would not have said a word upon it if he had not thought it was a purely practical question. County Members had a right to speak upon it, because they had great experience in the management of local affairs of the kind. They had had large experience of the increased number of polling places under the late Act. Hitherto, gentlemen had been chosen to fix polling places who had peculiar local knowledge. He quite agreed with what had been said as to the difficulty of getting

members of large bodies to come together. When comparatively small Committees were appointed, the members made it a point of honour to attend, and they set about the business with only one object in view—namely, to do it as well as they possibly could. The work of the Clerk of the Peace would be of great advantage in this matter. The Clerk of the Peace in Lancashire had always been found of the greatest possible use in matters of this kind. He had great knowledge of the localities, he had the maps of the different districts in his possession, and therefore his assistance was of great value. Then, he (Sir R. Assheton Cross) thought the body they would have, if all the magistrates were to form the committee, would in many cases—in his own county, at all events—be extremely unweildy, and they would not arrive at any more satisfactory conclusions than a small committee would—a committee composed of a certain number of each side of politics. Then, again, he did not think the Court of Quarter Sessions should be altogether excluded from any part in the settlement of the matter. If the matter was to be referred to them, they must have a voice in it. That would take up some time; and, therefore, he could not help thinking that the hon. and learned Attorney General had done wisely in saying that the Committee saw practical difficulties in the way of the acceptance of this proposition.

MR. ACLAND said, he would suggest that the words "all the," in the fourth line, should be omitted, so that the Court of Quarter Sessions might appoint a large or small committee as it thought fit.

MR. HENEAGE said, he was willing to adopt the suggestion of his hon. Friend.

MR. R. H. PAGET said, he wished to point out the practical difficulty in which the Committee stood. This was an Amendment which ought by right to have come up as a new clause. Then, on the question that it be read a second time, they could have considered whether they would accept the principle involved, and if they had agreed to do that they could have discussed it line by line and put it into shape. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) admitted that the Amendment was full of errors in drafting; he did not present it to the Committee as an Amendment so neatly and carefully drawn as to be worthy of acceptance. They would get into endless difficulty if they attempted to deal with the matter on the present stage. Besides, the Amendment appeared on the Paper in one form, and had been submitted to the Committee in another form. Indeed, he did not think the Committee knew exactly in what form it was presented to them. He followed the clause as read by the Chairman, and he noticed that several omissions were made. He was unable, hastily, to see what the effect of the omissions would be. What he was particularly desirous of pointing out to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General was that by this Amendment an entirely new principle would be set up. There would be set up a small Court of Quarter Sessions or a series of little Courts. His hon. Friend (Mr. Heneage) used the word "Court" again and again; he said the committee was to be considered as a Court, was to sit as a Court, and the Court of Quarter Sessions was not to have any authority over it beyond that of approving of what it did. He (Mr. R. H. Paget) ventured to say that the system they had employed in Somerset under the present law concurred with the wish of the hon. Member. In Somerset they had gone so far as to desire that their committees should be open; having settled for themselves a scheme, they announced by advertisement in the paper the day and the hour on which the committees would sit to receive suggestions from the public. They had adopted for themselves an admirable set of rules; but, at the same time, the Somerset people did not wish to press their system upon other counties. All they desired was, that they should be allowed to do what they considered best for themselves. The adoption of the Amendment would strike a great blow at the discretion of Local Authorities, for it would introduce uniformity which would be extremely objectionable. As well as for the reasons he had given, he objected to the Amendment on principle. There had been no unreasonable opposition to the Amendment; it was not a necessary Amendment, it was a contentious Amendment; it was badly drawn; it even appeared on the Paper in a shape in which

it had not been put from the Chair, because certain words had been omitted; and for all these reasons he trusted the hon. Member would be able to see his way to withdraw it.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS said, he would point out that it was the custom in many counties to appoint committees for the fixing of polling places which had the unanimous approval of both Parties.

MR. MELLOR said, he had no doubt that if Courts of Quarter Sessions generally had followed the excellent example set by Somersetshire no necessity for this clause would have arisen. But, in point of fact, this clause was not intended in any way to cast a slight upon the Courts of Quarter Sessions. The real object of the clause was to secure in each Parliamentary county a local inquiry on the spot; that that local inquiry should be held in such a way that everybody—labourers, for instance—should be able to come before the magistrates and say—"We think that in this district we ought to have a polling place." He could not see how the clause could in any way hurt anybody, for it merely provided that the magistrates should appoint a committee of their brother magistrates who lived in a particular district, and that that committee should sit in the district to hear evidence. He doubted whether it would have been possible for the Court of Quarter Sessions of Somersetshire to have arranged matters so satisfactorily without it appointed such committees as the hon. Member for Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) suggested, for the Court of Quarter Sessions sat at Wells, one of the most inaccessible places in the whole Kingdom. He sincerely hoped hon. Members would give this clause a favourable reception, for it seemed to him that the committees, appointed as they would be by the whole body of Justices, would be best able to decide where the polling places ought to be. The clause would give general satisfaction, because it was an endeavour to meet the convenience of the main body of electors.

MR. PELL said, he thought the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General should consider the point raised by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Cambridgeshire (Mr. Bulwer). The hon. Gentleman the Member for Grimsby (Mr. Heneage), in moving the Amendment, more than once referred to the fact that there were two Courts of Quarter Sessions in a Parliamentary county. Now, there was a separate Court of Quarter Sessions for the Isle of Ely, and another Court of Quarter Sessions for the county of Cambridge proper. Were the Committee to understand that each of those Courts of Quarter Sessions were to appoint a committee, and, if so, were the committees to meet conjointly? If the two committees were to meet together, where were they to sit? And who would be the clerk? He (Mr. Pell) would very much like to hear how the hon. and learned Attorney General or the hon. Member for Grimsby would clear up the point raised by the hon. and learned Member for Cambridgeshire.

MR. HENEAGE said, he did not think the clause now drawn would settle that question. As to the committees meeting, at the present time there were three Commissions of the Peace in Lincolnshire, and it was the constant custom to appoint three or four of each Quarter Sessions to meet and decide matters affecting the whole county. There was no difficulty in settling who was to be clerk to the committee.

MR. BULWER said, that the magistrates of Cambridgeshire had no jurisdiction in the Isle of Ely, and the magistrates of the Isle of Ely had no jurisdiction in the county of Cambridge. No difficulty could arise in Lincolnshire such as that in the case of the Isle of Ely.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he must make an appeal to his hon. Friend (Mr. Heneage). This Bill had been framed with one object, and that was to give the new county voters the same facilities for registration as borough voters possessed. All controversial matter had been avoided. It seemed clear, however, that this Amendment would raise much controversy, certainly on principle, and perhaps still more in detail. It was not now a question of general reform of the system. The one object in view was that this Bill should be passed—it might be but a temporary measure—as quickly as possible. Every Member of the Committee knew that they would certainly break down the Clerk of the Peace and the overseers, if they did not give those gentlemen almost every day from this time in which to do the work. He

would not discourage his hon. Friend entirely; but certainly the sub-section as now drawn would have to be discussed at great length in respect to detail. He appealed to the hon. Gentleman to withdraw the Amendment now, and if, after consultation with others, he could bring up a clause on Report to meet his view, especially with regard to the particular case of Kesteven and Holland, to do so.

MR. HENEAGE said, that after the appeal of his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General (Sir Henry James), he did not see what else he could do but withdraw the Amendment. He would consider the matter and bring up a clause on Report, and he hoped that in the meantime hon. Members would turn their attention to the subject.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 14 (As to expenses in case of divided county jurisdiction).

On the Motion of Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL, the following Amendments made:—In page 9, line 29, after "Acts," insert "or this Act;" and in page 10, line 6, after "Acts," insert "or this Act."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clauses 15 to 18, inclusive, *agreed to.*

MR. J. W. LOWTHER said, he wished to move the following new clause, to be inserted after Clause 9:—

(Voter may select his polling district.)

"Any person whose name shall appear in the list of voters of any parish or township in and for any Parliamentary county, shall be at liberty to make his claim before the revising barrister to vote at the polling place of any district within the same Parliamentary county; and every such person shall make his claim in writing under his hand, and such claim shall be delivered to and verified before the revising barrister holding his court for the revision of the list of voters in which the name of such person shall appear as aforesaid, and it shall then be lawful for the said barrister to insert in the said list, against the name of such person so claiming as aforesaid, the name of the polling place at which such person shall be registered to vote; and such person so registered shall be admitted to vote at every contested election for the said Parliamentary county at the said last-mentioned polling place and not elsewhere."

This was, he ought, in the first place, to say, merely an extension of a principle which had been already laid down in 1843. By the provisions of the measure passed in that year, it was enacted that if voters had a qualification in one polling district and resided in another polling district, they would be at liberty to select either as the place in which to record their votes. It was provided that even if a voter was not within the polling district, but outside the county altogether, he might be allowed to choose the polling district at which he might prefer to vote. The clause he proposed simply carried that principle a little farther, and, if accepted by the Committee, would enable the voter to choose whichever polling place might be the most convenient, whether he resided in the district from which he took his qualification, whether he resided in the county in which he had his qualification, or whether he resided outside the county altogether. He might say that the clause would chiefly tend to the convenience of those who lived in the North, and in the more mountainous parts of the country, where the population was extremely scanty, and where polling places could not possibly be brought within three miles of each elector without violating the law as to 100 electors being necessary to form a polling place. In these places, at the present time, it was very hard for a man to find himself 10 or 12 miles from his proper polling place, and yet to have, just over the hillside, it might be only two or three miles away, a polling station at which he could easily record his vote. On these grounds, he begged to move the insertion of the clause.

New Clause (Voter may select his polling district,)—(*Mr. J. W. Lowther,*)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, this was one of a class of Amendments which he thought would be an improvement in the general law, but which did not come within that which was the scope of the Bill—namely, the assimilation of the borough and county registration. He would ask his hon. Friend not to press the clause on this Bill, for, in populous places, like Accrington, where they could not expect the different agents to know every person who came to the poll, there

would be great temptation to personation. Considerable safeguards would have to be adopted, and a great deal of extra labour would have to be imposed on the Revising Barristers. No doubt, the clause, if properly worked out, would be of great benefit to the class of voters to whom the hon. Member had referred, and he should be glad to assist the hon. Member in carrying it if he could; but he would ask him, considering the course which had been taken in reference to other Amendments, and the course he would still have to take for the assimilation of the registration in the counties to that of the boroughs, not to press it.

MR. J. W. LOWTHER said, that after the appeal of the hon. and learned Gentleman, and also after the ray of hope he had thrown out that, at some future time, a Bill would be brought in dealing with the inconvenience he had pointed out, he would withdraw the clause.

Motion and Clause, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. ACLAND said, he was now a little in doubt as to what he should do in regard to the Amendment which stood next on the Paper in his name, dealing with "claim to vote at nearest polling place to voter's residence." His object was to secure the completest possible poll of occupation voters. The clause said—

"Any person entitled to be registered in respect of an occupation franchise in a district of a county may, by notice in writing, delivered to the overseer of his parish before the fifteenth day of July, claim to be registered as entitled to vote at any polling place which may be nearer or of more convenient access from the occupation in respect of which he is entitled to be registered than the polling place of the district in which the parish or part of a parish in which he resides has been included.

"And such claim once made by any such person shall, if allowed by the revising barrister, hold good from year to year so long as the place of residence of such person shall remain unchanged."

He hoped the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General would look favourably upon the proposal. He had limited it as to time, so that it should mean as little increased labour to the overseers as possible. He need hardly say to anyone acquainted with the rural districts of the country that it would be quite impossible for labourers who might be employed in various most important farming operations to attend other than the polling place nearest their residences. It was also notorious that there were a great many localities in which there were not 100 voters. Let the Authorities do the best they could, with the most loyal intention to meet the convenience of the inhabitants of all districts, yet he was certain that there would be many places where labourers would be included in parishes having voting places three miles away from the residences of those labourers. At the same time, there might be polling places in other districts much more convenient of access to the labourers than their own. He did not know whether there was any defect in the drafting of the clause which rendered it impossible for the hon. and learned Attorney General to accept it; but he did not know what other means could be taken to carry out the object he had in view. He was convinced that there was a necessity for some such provision; but he should be ready to fall in with any plan the hon. and learned Gentleman might propose, and which he was satisfied would have the desired effect. There were, he knew, many hon. Members who agreed with him in his desire; but he did not wish to go to a division unless it was absolutely necessary.

New Clause (Claim to vote at nearest polling place to voter's residence,)—(*Mr. Acland,*)—*brought up,* and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the hon. Member had been good enough to ask him to make a suggestion, and had said that if he would do so he would withdraw the clause. They should not occupy much time on the matter. After what he (the Attorney General) had said to the Mover of the last new clause, it was obvious that he could not accept the present Amendment, which was of the same character, though it came from so stalwart a supporter of the Government. The clause now before the Committee was open to the same objection as that already disposed of. It did not come within the scope of the Bill.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS said, he hoped that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General would see the advisability of providing in the future that all boundaries of polling districts should be conterminous with the boundaries of parishes. In many counties, such as that he represented, there were detached portions of parishes more than three miles from the parent parish that would be outside the polling district, and it would be very hard for a voter living in such detached parish to have to go four or five miles to poll; whereas if he were allowed to poll in another district, the difficulty would be got rid of.

MR. ACLAND said, he did not wish to press his Amendment against the desire of the hon. and learned Attorney General; but, at the same time, he would put it to the hon. and learned Gentleman, whether there was not some other means by which the object in view might be attained? Could not some Amendment be brought up on Report? The condition of the labourers in certain parts of the country was very different to the condition of other people. There were operations they had to attend to, and could not leave without loss to their employers. He was certain the Committee were with him in his desire to give to these labourers the most convenient access to the poll possible, and he was sure such access would not be given by the Bill in its present form. If some Amendment could not be inserted in this Bill, some indication should be given by the hon. and learned Attorney General as to the mode in which the desired result could be attained.

MR. TOMLINSON said, he was not only desirous that the object the hon. Member (Mr. Acland) had in view should be carried out, but that it should be carried out in this Bill. He did not at all agree that the matter was one outside the scope of the Bill. It was necessary that the voters enfranchised by the Act passed last year should be placed in such a position as to be able to exercise the privilege conferred upon them. If the hon. and learned Attorney General would consider the matter carefully, he would see that the Amendment was one which should be agreed to.

MR. E. STANHOPE hoped the Committee would not overweight the Bill. They had already imposed duties enough on the overseers; in fact, he was not sure that these officials would be able to got through the work they had to do.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that no one wished to prevent a voter from recording his vote—no doubt, every Member of the Committee desired to see every elector come to the poll. The Government, at any rate, had shown that this was their desire by passing an Act for the extension of the hours of polling to 8 o'clock at night. With regard to labourers being unable to leave their employment in certain seasons of the year, it would not be inconvenient for them to vote—in November and December, for instance—when elections were most likely to take place. He hoped this would remove the objection of the hon. Member (Mr. Tomlinson), who declared that whatever was done in this matter should be done in the Bill.

MR. ACLAND said, he would withdraw the Amendment; but, at the same time, would express a hope that when the general amendment of the Registration Law was entered upon, the hon. and learned Attorney General would give a favourable attention to the proposal he (Mr. Acland) had now submitted.

Motion and Clause, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. MARUM said, he begged leave to move the insertion of the following clause after Clause 14:—

(Repeal of s. 78 of 2 Will. 4.)

"From and after the passing of this Act section seventy-eight of the Act of Parliament passed in the second year of the reign of His Majesty King William the Fourth, chapter four, shall be and the same is hereby repealed."

The Amendment was on the same subject as one lower down on the Paper in the name of the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy). He (Mr. Marum) had not been aware, at the time he put down his Amendment, that there was another on the same subject on the Paper. If he had been, he should not have made his proposal. Even now he had been prepared to give place to the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan and his Amendment; but the hon. Member had desired him to retain his position and proceed with his proposal. That part of the Reform Act he wished to repeal set forth that nothing contained within its provisions should in any way affect the election of

Members to serve in Parliament for the Universities of Oxford or Cambridge, or for the city of Oxford or the town of Cambridge, in respect of any occupation of any chambers in any of the Colleges or Halls in the Universities. The merits of the matter had been fully debated by the House on the Amendment in regard to the Registration of Voters (Ireland) Bill brought forward by the hon. and learned Member, that Amendment having for its object the disqualification of certain students in the University of Dublin, and the bringing of them under a similar electoral law to that he had just mentioned. The House, by a large majority, had declared that it would not disqualify these students. There was no occasion for his entering into the merits of the large question as to whether students ought or ought not, under certain conditions, to be entitled to the franchise; but he took it that his Amendment would test the sincerity and consistency of the Committee. The Irish Members had determined to test that consistency, and to bring about an assimilation of the franchise, as regarded University students, throughout the United Kingdom. He did not wish to detain the Committee, and would merely state that there might be an objection raised to the Amendment of a technical character—it might be said that this was a Registration Bill, and that the Amendment was outside its scope. It was true that the Bill was a Registration Bill; but this was an enabling clause—a clause enabling persons to be put upon the register, and to avail themselves of the registration facilities of the measure. For this reason, he held his proposal to be thoroughly germane to the Bill. He trusted the Committee would vindicate the consistency of the vote it had given on a previous occasion, and would accept this proposal to enfranchise a body of literary persons.

New Clause (Repeal of s. 78 of 2 Will. 4,)—(*Mr. Marum,*)—*brought up,* and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

MR. HEALY said, he had expected the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General to at once rise and announce his determination to accept the clause. The hon. and learned Gentleman had not been in the House when the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) had so warmly defended the principle of retaining the franchise for the students of Trinity College, Dublin. The right hon. Gentleman had, at the commencement of the debate the other day, challenged the Irish Members to produce any Act disfranchising the students of Oxford and Cambridge Universities, and had declared that, if they could do so, he would be for disfranchising the students of Trinity College, Dublin. The hon. Member for Pembroke (Mr. Allen) had immediately risen, and quoted the section of the Act disfranchising the students of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had been immediately attacked by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the junior Member for Dublin University (Mr. Gibson), who said that this was not to be a disfranchising Act, and that the Premier had declared that the group of Bills associated with Reform were to disfranchise no one, but were purely enfranchising Bills. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had then got up, and expressed regret to find that there was an Act disfranchising the students of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. He declared himself precluded from voting for the extension of any privilege to Dublin which was not extended to Oxford and Cambridge. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) had protested against the conduct of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, who had excused himself by saying that he had only spoken for himself—as if a Member of a Government in charge of a Government Bill had a right to declare that "he only spoke for himself." The new clause before the Committee was a matter which would test the sincerity of the Government. He must say it was an extraordinary thing that Members of a Government should find it convenient to absent themselves from the House whenever anything embarrassing was coming on. He had first raised this question on the Redistribution Bill, when the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had declared that the matter, so far as Ireland was concerned, would be reconsidered. When he had brought it

on a second time on the Registration of Voters (Ireland) Bill, the right hon. Baronet, the moment he found his Colleagues in shoal water, scuttled out of the House. Now, when the question cropped up once more, they found the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General solely in charge, and he, in all probability, would get up presently and say that he was not in the House when declarations were made by other Members of the Government, and could not hold himself responsible for what might have taken place. As he (Mr. Healy) had before had occasion to remark, the Government was constructed in water-tight compartments. One set of Gentlemen faced them one day, knowing nothing whatever about what had been done or said by their Colleagues yesterday, or the day before; and another day a fresh set of Gentlemen faced them, equally ignorant of what had been said or done by other Ministers. As he had said, this proposed new clause would put to the test the *bona fides* of the Government. He, of course, admitted that if the clause were carried the towns of Oxford and Cambridge would fall to the Tory Party at the next Election. He believed the Tory Party in those places would be immensely strengthened by the clause, just as the Tory Party in Dublin had been immensely strengthened by the Government refusing to assimilate the law of Ireland to that of England; but what was sauce for the goose should be sauce for the gander—what was sauce for Trinity College should be sauce also for the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Could hon. Gentlemen consistently vote for the continuance of a law in the case of the English Universities which they said should not be applied to the Irish University? He appealed with confidence to English Members, and asked them not to allow themselves to be misled into inconsistency; and those who opposed his proposal the other day he would ask to explain why it was that a provision which applied to Dublin should not also apply to Oxford and Cambridge?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he was in charge of this English Bill, and could only deal with the provisions of it as they were required in regard to the registration of voters. The hon. Member for Kilkenny (Mr. Marum) knew very well the objection which had been taken on behalf of the Government to this proposal. It was not germane to the Bill; in fact, he (the Attorney General) had rather doubted whether it would be considered in Order. It was a matter of franchise, and not of registration. It was not enough to say that because they used registration as a means of putting voters on the list, therefore they could deal with the question of enfranchisement or disfranchisement, otherwise they might now be discussing the subject of female suffrage. Their object was not to make the action of one day consistent with the action of another, or the legislation of one country consistent with the legislation of another. They must deal with these questions as they were proposed, and on their merits. What was now submitted to them? Why, that the settlement arrived at in 1832 should, in consequence of something which had been said by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman), be put on one side. Why was that to be done? Assuming for a moment that what the hon. and learned Member opposite (Mr. Healy) had said was true, and that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had made a mistake, were they, in consequence of that individual mistake, to be asked to legislate in a particular direction? The object of the legislation of 1832 was this—the 78th section of that Reform Act, having allowed the representation of the Universities, said that the persons voting at elections for the Universities of Oxford or Cambridge should not be allowed to vote also at elections for the city and town. The clause applied not only to students and undergraduates, but to members of the University and of Convocation; and now Parliament was asked to reverse that law. Hon. Gentlemen opposite admitted it was evil legislation to give a double representation; but they based their claim for it in this instance on something which had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. He (the Attorney General), however, asked the Committee to deal with the case on its merits, to be consistent with itself, and not to say that, because a course was taken in one coun-

try which might be wrong, therefore they were to take a wrong course in another.

MR. JAMES STUART said, he must apologize for interposing to address to the Committee a very few words on this subject. He had not adopted the line of argument he was about to develop because of what had been said or done in the House the other evening in regard to the University of Dublin. He had adopted it because of the sense of injustice which he had suffered under for 20 years, which made him glad of the opportunity, on this Bill or on any other, of making a plea for representation for a class of whom he was one. It had been impossible for him to take any part in the franchise debates, because when they took place he was not a Member of the House; and in connection with the Registration of Voters Bill, he should, at an early period, have put down some Amendment—if not exactly the same as those which had been put down by hon. Members opposite, yet somewhat similar—had he not imagined that that which the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General said ought to have been the case really would have been the case, and that the Committee would not have been permitted on this Bill to enter into any question of enfranchisement or disfranchisement. But, now that the question had been raised, he was glad to give his support to, at any rate, a part of that which was contained in the clause before them. The hon. and learned Attorney General had said they must remember that the Disfranchising Clause of the Act of 1832 applied not only to students—meaning certain persons *in statu pupillari*—but also to Professors, Fellows, and graduates of their Colleges; and it was precisely because it did not apply to these that he (Mr. Stuart) wished to see the law amended. The hon. and learned Attorney General had made use of the very remarkable argument, which went the rounds pretty generally on such occasions, that the Government did not want to give those who were resident members of the University—not *in statu pupillari*—a vote for the city of Oxford and the town of Cambridge, because it would be giving them a dual vote. Well, no one took more than he did the view that it was a pity that there should be a dual vote. He was sorry that there should be two votes; but if any set of persons were to have the dual vote, let it be justly distributed. If any member of the Senate of Cambridge University resided in Chelsea or Hackney, or wherever else it might be, he not only had a vote as a member of that Senate, in consequence of his degree and his payments, but he had a vote for the borough in which he resided. When, however, he went to live in one of the Colleges of Oxford or Cambridge, he still, of course, retained his vote for the University, in virtue of his degree and payment and of nothing else, but he was not allowed by this Disfranchising Clause of the Act of 1832 to have any vote whatever for the city or town. And the ridiculous character of the disqualification was more evident from this, that if he chose to keep outside the College gates, and took lodgings in the town, he possessed a vote for the town just the same as if he were in any other borough. It really was a remarkable thing that a man should be disfranchised by Act of Parliament as soon as he went to reside within the College walls. He should have been only too glad, if he had been able, to move an Amendment—if it were in Order, he should ask leave to do it on Report—to the effect that all persons not *in statu pupillari* occupying chambers in any of the Colleges or Halls of the Universities of Oxford or Cambridge, should be entitled to be registered as voters and to have votes, notwithstanding the 78th clause of the Reform Act of 1832. That was the form in which he would desire to see the present Amendment modified, if adopted, as he had already given Notice on the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) on which he expected the discussion would arise. The body whose disqualification he wished to see removed were persons of full age, who had political instincts, who were permanent residents, and who paid rates—who paid large rates, although they paid them collectively and not individually. They were in a position no other set of people in the country occupied, except women. This it was, possibly, which gave them sympathy for women in their electoral disqualification, and which accounted for the number of Petitions which reached the House in favour of the enfranchisement of women, signed by resident

members of the University of Cambridge. The Government were proposing to tax corporate property, and the corporate property they were proposing to tax might include University and College property, and might come to 3*s.* in the pound on the resident members of the Universities, whom they debarred from the vote in the boroughs of Oxford and Cambridge, though if they were living in other boroughs they would not be so debarred. If they came to the other portion of the Enfranchising Clause submitted to the Committee, if he might so call it—that portion which related to the undergraduate students in the Universities—that was a different question; but let them consider for a moment whether there might not be a mistake as to what the extent of that enfranchisement might be. He had heard it said by an hon. Member, in conversation somewhere or other outside the House—"If this proposal is agreed to, you are going to enfranchise about 3,000 voters in the town of Cambridge, and, in that way, to swamp the whole of the ordinary electors." There never was a greater mistake. There were not 3,000 undergraduates in the University over the required age. The age that entitled a man to a vote was not 21, but was nearer 22, because he had to be an occupier for a year, and he could not be an occupier until he was of age. If that was so, a man must be nearly 22 before he could come upon the register properly. If he were wrong in this statement, he could be corrected. If, however, he were right, there were a large number of students in Cambridge who were undergraduates, or *in statu pupillari*, under the age of 22, and only a small number of the 3,000—if that were the total number—were over that age. It would not be a great number of the students, therefore, who would have the right to vote. The Amendment put on the Paper by the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) referred to students, and he (Mr. Stuart) presumed it meant all members of the Universities, whether students technically *in statu pupillari* or not—those who occupied chambers in the Colleges or Halls of the Universities were to be registered and have the right to vote. The clause dealt with students having chambers in the University, and he did not know whether it meant simply students having chambers in the Colleges or Halls of the University. If it was not limited in that way, but applied to all students in the University, then he must say he had never heard of any enactment or of any interpretation of the law whereby a student of the University of Cambridge living in lodgings, and not in one of the Colleges, and possessing otherwise the proper qualifications, was debarred from having a vote. How many students in the University of Cambridge lived in lodgings? Why, considerably more than half. The number, therefore, living in the Colleges was under half the total number of students, or rather over 1,200. Of that number, those over 21 would, he should think, be not more than one-third. He spoke roughly, from long acquaintance with the subject. He could not give exact statistics; but he should say that those over 21 years of age who would ever be able to qualify themselves as lodgers or occupiers would not be more than one-tenth of the whole 3,000, for of the students living in the Colleges there were only a small number who occupied their rooms under circumstances that would eventually qualify them to vote—in regard to continuity, and so forth. He held himself justified in voting for the Amendment, therefore, without any apprehension of swamping the town constituency with the University vote. He did not feel any predilection for that part of the clause which placed members of the University *in statu pupillari* on the register. He wished to point out another thing in connection with this matter. It was to his mind somewhat doubtful whether the clause would admit upon the register any persons who were undergraduates and who were resident in College, for the restrictions to which they were subject were such that it might be fairly argued that they were living under circumstances where their tutors or the Heads of the Colleges stood towards them *in loco parentis*. He should vote for the Amendment before the Committee, and should it fail to pass, he should propose on Report the modified Amendment he had referred to.

Mr. RAIKES said, he thought that what had fallen from the hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. J. Stuart) left little more to be said on this part of the

question. The hon. Member had pleaded the cause of the resident graduates, who were at the present moment deprived of the franchise, because they happened to live within the University, with all the fervour of one who was personally interested in the question. The Committee was called upon to contemplate a state of the law which, though it did not exclude his hon. Friend (Mr. J. Stuart) from sitting in the House, excluded him from being placed on the Register for the borough of Cambridge in which he resided. That was a good illustration of the injustice of the present state of the law, and, no doubt, would intensify the desire of the Committee to see it remedied. For himself, he (Mr. Raikes), broadly speaking, wished to lay stress upon two points. This exclusion of the residents in the Colleges, which was made part of the Act of 1832, was decided on at a time when the constituencies in towns were very much smaller than they were at present, and when it might, perhaps, have been argued—he did not know whether it was so argued, but it might well have been—that the admission of 200, 300, or 400 voters who were connected with the Universities would have unfairly biassed the elections in the towns of Oxford and Cambridge. But now that the constituencies had enormously increased, and that the standard for voting was less exacting than it had been, it appeared to him that the whole argument, as far as this point was concerned, had materially changed. He would lay stress also upon the injustice done by the present law to some members of the University as compared with others. There might, for example, be half-a-dozen Fellows, three of whom resided in the town and could vote at the elections of its Members, and three of whom were excluded from the right to vote in consequence of their residence in College. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the borough of Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler), though a Fellow of his College, was not allowed to vote at an election for the borough. This was even a more striking example of the injustice of the law than that supplied by the case of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Hackney (Mr. J. Stuart). It must be borne in mind, moreover, that the chief residents in the Colleges were the representatives of property which contributed very heavily to the rates, and yet they were excluded from a franchise the basis of which was said to be a ratepaying qualification. Take the case of a Master of a College. He resided in a commodious house, which was heavily rated, but was not allowed to vote for the borough. The Dean was similarly situated, whilst the tutors, who might be married men, would be allowed to vote. How was it possible for anyone to say that such an arrangement was just and equitable? Then, as to junior members of the Universities. He thought the calculation they had heard from the hon. Member for Hackney as to the number of undergraduates who would be likely to come on to the Register was as fair a one as they could arrive at without more accurate material to go upon. But if they were to consider the number of undergraduates out of a total of 1,200, or 1,500, who might be resident in the Colleges—if they were to consider the number of those who continued to reside in the Colleges, after having turned 21 years of age, they would find that a very small addition would have to be made to the electorate from that quarter. As to Bachelors of Arts, they, he thought, had a special claim to vote. Most of those who were resident had had distinguished academical careers, and yet they had no vote for the University, the right to vote for that constituency being attached exclusively to the degree of Master of Arts. Surely these Bachelors of Arts ought not to be excluded from voting for the borough in which their University was situated. During the three years they remained Bachelors of Arts he ventured to think they would be as capable citizens as Members would be likely to find in the country, even amongst the 2,000,000 of newly enfranchised electors they were about to put upon the Register. But he would not argue the matter of the justice of the present appeal any further, preferring to leave the matter to the general sense of justice of the House of Commons. He did not think a Registration Bill the most convenient means of dealing with this subject; but having regard to the question as raised, and to the arguments put forward by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway on the Opposition side of the House, and by the hon. Gentleman the Member for

Hackney on the other side, he sincerely trusted the Government would fall back on the views of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) and the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Judge Advocate General, rather than adopt the more restrictive interpretation of the law given to them to-day by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General, who had done his best to defend the Bill as it stood. It did not appear to him (Mr. Raikes) that anything which had fallen from the hon. and learned Gentleman should induce them to reject the Amendment of the hon. Member for Kilkenny (Mr. Marum); and if that hon. Gentleman went to a division he (Mr. Raikes) should certainly support him.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS said, he should like to say a word or two about this clause, partly because he had voted for the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) the other day in favour of excluding from the franchise the students of Dublin University, and partly with a view to pointing out why this Clause 78 was put in the Act of 1832. When the first Reform Bill was passed the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge and the Colleges paid no local taxation whatever. Later on, the University of Cambridge was constrained to pay local rates by an adverse legal decision, and when that decision was given the University of Oxford yielded the point quietly. So far, therefore, as the position of residents in the Universities was concerned, he admitted that it had materially changed since the passing of the Reform Act of 1832; for, whereas they paid no local taxation whatever at that time, they did contribute to such taxation now. And here he might observe, with regard to the clause which had been put upon the Paper by the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), that he thought the word "students" was extremely ambiguous. He presumed the hon. and learned Member did not mean to include everyone resident in the Halls of Colleges, as that would in many cases embrace the College servants; and he could point to a case within his own knowledge, where the occupant of the porter's lodge lived out of the College, and, if he were registered as residing in the College as a lodger, he would be entitled to a vote as a lodger in the College, and as a householder in the town. The word "lodger," again, was an objectionable word to employ in regard to a College, because every one of the College rooms in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge was a separate tenement—that was to say, each room was a separate dwelling-house; and, consequently, if every person residing in one of those rooms was entitled to be registered, he would be registered not as——

THE CHAIRMAN called the hon. Member to Order. He was now discussing a clause that had been put on the Paper in the name of the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), whereas the Question before the Committee was the clause that had been moved by the hon. Member for Kilkenny (Mr. Marum).

MR. THOROLD ROGERS bowed to the ruling of the Chair. He would say, then, with regard to the general policy of the Question before the Committee, he did not think, as a resident in Oxford, that it would be expedient to confer the franchise on the residents in the Colleges. He had no means of knowing what direction the views of those who might be so enfranchised would take, and whether the effect would be to give a preponderance to the Conservative or to the Liberal Party was a matter about which he did not care; but he thought the residents in the Universities had quite sufficient to distract their attention already without the introduction of so fruitful a theme of debate and discord as the adoption of such a proposition would necessarily bring. When, for example, the junior Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) went down to advocate his peculiar views, or when Mr. Hyndman went to Oxford to develop the principles of Communism, the authorities of the Universities very justly and wisely forbade the young men *in statu pupillari* to attend the meetings they addressed. On such occasions the presence of individuals who advanced the peculiar views they were known to entertain produced a good deal of excitement, and the result was that the speakers were very apt to be mobbed. He did not think it desirable that these scenes should be encouraged, and was of opinion that the University authorities were perfectly right, and acted very

wisely, in checking the free access of the young men who were *in statu pupillari*, and preventing their attendance at popular political meetings. At the same time, if the Amendment were carried and the residents in Colleges were indiscriminately admitted to the franchise in the way proposed, he did not see how the University authorities could be expected to prevent the undergraduates from attending all kinds of public meetings. If the proposal were confined to the graduates in the Universities, the number of persons who would be enfranchised at Oxford and Cambridge would be very small; but, at the same time, he protested, on behalf of the two ancient Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, against the enfranchisement of the undergraduates and the permission that must be given to them, as a necessary consequence, to take part in all kinds of public meetings.

MR. SHIELD said, that, as the Representative of a University town and the Fellow of a College, he had no objection to his own enfranchisement; but he certainly entertained a decided objection to the enfranchisement of the undergraduates generally. It was, he admitted, quite true that only a small number of undergraduates would be enfranchised, but it must be remembered that if they were to repeal the 78th section of the Act of William the Fourth, although they would only confer votes on a few undergraduates they would be converting the whole body into an electioneering element; and his own experience had been sufficient to convince him that this would be a very undesirable proceeding. One of the reasons why he entertained a strong respect for the memory of the late Lord Beaconsfield and had always felt grateful to him was that he had brought about the General Election of 1880, at the end of a term, and therefore at a time when they were not troubled with the presence of the undergraduates during the electioneering proceedings in the University towns. He was quite convinced that in the interests of the Universities it was very undesirable to bring the undergraduates into the political arena. Personally, he was not glad that the Dublin students had acquired a dual vote; but the cases of Oxford and Cambridge were very different from that of Dublin, as in the latter University the residents were but a small and unimportant portion of the Dublin constituency whereas in Oxford and Cambridge they would dominate the elections. On the whole, he thought that if the franchise were to be given to residents in the Oxford and Cambridge Universities, it would be much better not to confer it on the undergraduate class.

DR. CAMERON said, the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General had based his objection to the Amendment on the grounds that it would introduce the principle of double qualification, and also that it was not applicable to the present Bill, inasmuch as the measure was not one which dealt with the question of the franchise. Now, as to the question of the double qualification, his hon. Friend the Member for Hackney (Mr. J. Stuart) had so effectually disposed of that point, that he (Dr. Cameron) should not attempt to slay the slain. He would, however, point out that at the present moment persons who would not be otherwise qualified to vote in the towns in which they resided were already entitled, if they lived within the walls of the Universities of Scotland or Ireland, to vote as electors for those boroughs; whereas in England this was not the case. What he desired to point out was that it was the policy of these Registration Bills to rectify such anomalies, and he had risen merely for the purpose of putting before the Committee a case in point. In the discussions that had taken place on registration matters in Scotland, it appeared that the joint occupiers of lodgings, who were entitled to be put upon the Electoral Roll in England, were not entitled to be put upon the Roll in Scotland; and this fact having been represented to the Government, the consequence was that a clause had been introduced into the Registration of Voters (Scotland) Bill assimilating the law on this point in the two countries. In that case, therefore, they had a precisely similar instance of dealing with the question of enfranchisement under a Registration Bill to the one now before the Committee. Moreover, a further illustration was to be found in the fact that the enfranchisement of joint lodgers in England originally took place under the Registration Bill of 1868. He thought these things showed that the objection urged by the hon. and learned Attorney General to the Amendment under discussion, on the ground that the

present Bill was not an enfranchisement Bill, was as futile as the objection with regard to the double qualification had already been shown to be, and that hon. Members opposite had particular reason to protest against any opposition on the part of Her Majesty's Government to the acceptance of the Amendment on such grounds, especially when it was remembered that when the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate had put upon the Paper his enfranchising clause on the Registration of Voters (Scotland) Bill, he was asked by the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) on what grounds he had proposed that clause, and had replied that he had introduced it for the purpose of assimilating the Scottish law with that of England; whereupon the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) had asked the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) whether he would bring forward the same proposal in regard to Ireland, and the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland had replied that he would give the matter his favourable consideration. Upon these grounds, therefore, he (Dr. Cameron) should give his support to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Kilkenny (Mr. Marum).

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he had not the opportunity of taking part in the debate that had occurred the other night; and, therefore, he thought it right to say a few words on the proposition now before the Committee. He admitted that there was some force in the observation of the hon. and learned Attorney General that the enfranchisement of the residents in the Universities was a question somewhat beyond the scope of a Registration Bill; but now that the matter had been brought before the Committee it was one on which their vote must be guided by the general feeling. For his own part, he should unhesitatingly give his vote for the proposal to extend to the students resident in the Universities of the city of Oxford and the borough of Cambridge the same privilege as had been conferred on students resident in Trinity College, Dublin. The hon. Member who had recently spoken (Mr. Thorold Rogers) had pointed out the dangers which, in his opinion, would be created by allowing persons *in statu pupillari* to take part in elections either at Oxford or Cambridge; but the hon. Member ought to have remembered that this was exactly what they were able to do at the present moment. There was nothing in the Statute 2 & 3 *Will.* IV. which prevented a student, either in the city of Oxford or the borough of Cambridge, from voting for the election of a Member of Parliament, so long as he occupied chambers or rooms that were independent of the Colleges. The section of the Act which it was proposed to repeal provided—

"That this Act shall not entitle any person to vote in an election of Members to serve in Parliament for the city of Oxford or the borough of Cambridge in respect of the occupation of premises in any of the Colleges or Halls."

They were all well aware that both in the city of Oxford and the borough of Cambridge there were a great many persons *in statu pupillari* who resided in lodgings, and who were just as much entitled to vote at any election of Members for those boroughs as any of the ordinary residents having the occupation or lodger franchise. It was, therefore, a mere bugbear to introduce the argument with regard to these students being *in statu pupillari*, because there were numbers who as lodgers in the University towns were already able to exercise the franchise. Besides, the Committee must remember that in the case of Trinity College, Dublin, the privilege that was now proposed to be extended to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge had been actually tried for a long time, and the evils that had been urged against it had not been shown to exist. It had been said that the number of residents in the Dublin University possessing the franchise was very small; but he understood, in regard to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, that, of the total number, some hundreds were in lodgings outside the Colleges, the remainder being in residence inside. Consequently, it seemed to him that all the objections urged against allowing the students to vote fell to the ground; and he should certainly give his support to the hon. Member for Hackney (Mr. J. Stuart), should this clause be rejected, if the hon. Gentleman carried into effect his promise to bring the matter before the House in another shape on the Report. On these grounds, and believing it to be desirable that the Universities in England and Ireland should be placed upon the same footing, and seeing also

that Her Majesty's Government had changed their front in regard to the matter since it was last before the House, he should unhesitatingly give his support to the Amendment.

MR. BRYCE said, he wished to say only a word or two on this subject. He desired to remove any apprehension that might exist in the minds of the Committee with regard to an undue extension of the franchise to the undergraduates of the University of Oxford, by pointing out that in the case of that University the custom was for the students to reside in the College rooms during the earlier part of their time, and to go out into lodgings in the town afterwards. Very few, therefore, would be above 21 years of age at the time when, in respect of the occupation of College rooms, they could acquire a vote; and those who were living in lodgings during the last year of their University residence might, under the present law, enjoy the franchise for the borough, so that the adoption of the clause would make little or no difference with regard to the Oxford undergraduates. He could say, however, that it would be very unwelcome to the University authorities if the right to exercise the franchise were to be extended to students who were *in statu pupillari*, or, at any rate, to such of them as had not taken even the degree of B.A. [MR. HEALY: How about Dublin?] He was only now referring to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge; but he thought that exactly the same rules ought to be applied to Dublin; and he was of opinion that if the clause were passed, and the franchise were thereby extended to those who were *in statu pupillari*, that House would have strong representations from the University authorities against introducing undergraduates into the political contests of the borough, representations to which the House would do well to listen. He should be ready to give his support to the hon. Member for Hackney (Mr. J. Stuart) if, in case of this clause not receiving the assent of the Committee, he were to bring up on the Report a clause limiting the operation of the proposal in the manner he had stated—that was to say, allowing graduates, but not undergraduates, to vote in respect of College rooms.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, his hon. Friend who had just spoken, and several other hon. Members, had expressed their desire to minimize the effect of the clause now under discussion. It would seem that they regarded the clause as an evil, or they would hardly desire to minimize its operation. There was one point he desired to put before the Committee in connection with this subject, and that was that it was now proposed to give the students of the Universities generally votes for the election of Members of Parliament, while it was not proposed to give them municipal votes. They were prevented by statute from voting at municipal elections, and yet it was proposed that they should have the Parliamentary vote conferred upon them, and this, too, under circumstances that were not relevant to the scope of the Bill by which it was to be done, and which, it had been argued, would be detrimental to the interests of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. The matter was, however, fully before the Committee; and although Her Majesty's Government regarded it as one of very great importance, they proposed, at the same time, to leave it as one upon which the Committee could exercise its own judgment.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause read a second time accordingly, and *added* to the Bill.

MR. HORACE DAVEY said, he had now to move the insertion of a clause providing that medical or surgical assistance, or the giving of medicine, should not be deemed to constitute parochial relief within the meaning of the Representation of the People Acts. In doing so, he hoped he should not be told that this proposal was outside the scope of a Registration Bill, especially when he referred to the fact that what was asked by the clause had already been acceded to in the case of Ireland. He might, however, be told that the two cases were widely different, and he was prepared to admit that medical relief in Ireland stood on a somewhat different footing from that which it occupied in this country. He was well aware that it had been a question open to a certain amount of doubt, whether medical relief, under the Acts relating to this subject in Ireland, did, in reality, constitute parochial or Poor Law relief within the meaning of the law; and that in Ireland

the people did not look to the provision of necessities of that kind, in the shape of public medical relief, as constituting a disqualification for the exercise of the voting franchise. He was quite free to admit the general principle that the acceptance of Poor Law relief, by which the individual accepting it lived at the expense of the public, ought to be a disqualification for the exercise of the franchise, and he did not deny that medical relief was, both in law and in fact, Poor Law relief. But there were several considerations which had led him to think that, in the case of the administration of medical relief, the Committee would be justified in making the exception for which he asked, considerations which he ventured to urge before the Committee as involving reasons why the argument as to medical relief, which no longer applied to the Poor Law in Ireland, should, therefore, in this country continue to be employed for the purpose of maintaining the existing disqualification for the exercise of the franchise. The first of these considerations was a practical one, and, in putting it before the Committee, he asked them to bear in mind that this question related almost exclusively to the country districts, in which a very large number of people would be enfranchised. The practical consideration which influenced his mind in reference to this matter was, that in many instances the labouring people could not conveniently obtain the services of any other doctor than the parish doctor; while, in some instances, owing to the distances which separated them from the residences of other medical practitioners, it was actually impossible for them to obtain the assistance of any but the parish doctor. Of course, it might be said that those who were thus compelled to avail themselves of the services of the parish doctor might pay him for the medicine and attendance they obtained; but he thought the Committee would agree with him in saying that it would be asking too much of human nature to expect that when, as in these cases, a man availed himself of the services of the parish doctor, he would volunteer to pay him for those services. The second consideration which had influenced his mind in bringing forward this proposal was the circumstance that in fact and in truth medical relief of a parochial character was not regarded in the same light as other kinds of Poor Law relief. As a matter of fact, it did not destroy, and he might say it did not even impair, the independence of the person to whom it was administered; for if he were a man living and supporting his family by his own labour, he did not regard the acceptance of medical relief as in any way interfering with his own independence. It was, he felt confident, a general rule that medical relief was not regarded by anybody living in the country districts as coming within the same category as other forms of Poor Law relief. But there was a further consideration which he desired to put forward, and it was this—that a vast number of persons would be disqualified from the exercise of the electoral franchise which Parliament was about to confer upon them if the existing disqualification were maintained. He was certain that a large proportion of those who were about to be admitted to the franchise were totally unaware of the fact that the acceptance of medical relief was an electoral disqualification. There were many in the rural districts who might obtain a bottle of medicine, or whose wives might be attended in their confinements by the parish doctor, or who might call him in to mend the broken arm of a child, or to perform some service of a like character, who would do so without being in the slightest degree aware that in thus receiving the services of the parish doctor they were doing what would have the effect of disqualifying them from the exercise of the Parliamentary franchise. He did not speak without having had some experience in reference to this question; for the borough he had the honour to represent (Christchurch) contained a large agricultural district, in which what he had just stated had been the effect of the existing law within his own knowledge, so that many men who would otherwise have been entitled to the franchise had, without being at all aware of the legal consequences following the receipt of medical parochial relief, been disqualified from giving their votes. He hoped Her Majesty's Government would see their way to the acceptance of his Amendment, and he would only add that he trusted his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General would not tell him it was not a proper Amendment to bring forward on a Registration Bill; because,

unless he was very much mistaken, it had been copied, *mutatis mutandis*, from the Amendment that had been introduced that Session into the Registration of Voters (Ireland) Bill. He begged, therefore, to move the clause which stood in his name.

New Clause :—

(Medical or surgical attendance not to constitute parochial relief.)

"Medical or surgical assistance, or the giving of medicine, shall not be deemed to constitute parochial relief within the meaning of the Representation of the People Acts,"—(*Mr. Horace Davey,*)

—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he wished to express his view, in the strongest possible manner, against this clause being read a second time. He objected to it on this ground—in the first place, this was not a Bill on which to introduce a matter of this kind; and, secondly, it was a most objectionable clause. The clause raised questions of franchise, and was therefore altogether irrelevant to this measure, which was a Registration Bill. It was no argument to say that if they could introduce this clause it should be introduced. The tendency of such a clause would be to induce persons to pauperize themselves, to give up independence, and to seek that relief from the rates which they ought to obtain from friendly societies, or out of their own pockets. He did ask the Committee not to proceed with this clause. If they did, they would have a number of other matters of a like character introduced, and they would have a state of things happen which had been predicted by the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope). This Bill was not strong enough to bear the introduction of all these foreign matters. He hoped the Committee would allow them to proceed with the work of registration.

MR. E. STANHOPE hoped the Committee would follow the advice of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General. This matter had been fully discussed when the Representation of the People Bill was under discussion, and, after due consideration, it was decided not to interfere with the disqualification which existed. It was a franchise question, and, having been dealt with in the Franchise Bill, they were now asked to re-open the matter on a Bill which was not a Franchise Bill, but one purely of registration. He hoped the Committee would not assent to this, and that they might be allowed to proceed with the work before them.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he was sorry he could not agree with the hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope). He thought the clause was quite relevant to the Bill before them; for it dealt not with the conferring of the franchise on anyone, but to certain conditions which should not lead to a man being struck off by the Revising Barrister. He had observed some very hard cases, in which the wife and children of a man had obtained medical relief, unknown to him, and he had been struck off the Register. If a child got hurt in the hayfield, for instance, and the mother took it to the parish infirmary for medical relief, the father would be liable to be struck off. He hoped his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Davey) would press the clause to a division.

MR. CAUSTON hoped that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General would see that there was some force in the proposition which had been made to the Committee that day, and if he could not consent to insert the clause which was now before them, that he would consent to a provision that the Relieving Officer should warn applicants of the consequences of accepting medical relief. He thought that some provision should be inserted in the Bill which would prevent a man being pauperized by the fact that he accepted medical relief, under stress of circumstances, for some member of his family.

SIR JOSEPH M'KENNA said, that many people did not regard medical relief as a matter of charity; and, for his part, he failed to see why medical relief should not be accepted as a matter of course. He did not see anything more disgraceful, or of a more pauperizing character, in a man accepting medical relief for a sick child, than in accepting a grant for the education of his children who were perfectly healthy. He could not see why a man should be made a pauper because his child took a dose of Epsom salts at the expense of the parish, when his neighbour, who

had raised a large family, cost the parish £10 a-year for the education of them. The retention of the disqualification in regard to medical relief he regarded as the height of Parliamentary hypocrisy.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said, he was exceedingly glad this question had been raised. In rural districts pauperization for the acceptance of medical relief would have the effect of disfranchising a very large number of honest people. Parliament had wisely provided that the receipt of free education for one's children should not be an act of pauperism, and the receipt of medical assistance should be similarly treated. The hon. Member for Colchester (Mr. Causton) had suggested that the applicants for medical relief should be told what would be the result of their accepting it; but, in his opinion, that would be adding to the cruelty of the disqualification, because it would put a woman in search of medical relief face to face with the alternative of refusing medicine for her sick child, or sacrificing her husband's vote. He hoped the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General would take a broad view of this matter—he would say a common-sense view of the matter. The hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. E. Stanhope) had said that the question was not germane to the measure before the House; but hon. Members opposite did not hold that opinion last night, when they pressed a question which was in no way germane to the question before the House to an issue. He considered that the clause was germane to the Bill. As the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) had pointed out, it was not a matter of conferring the franchise, but of deciding what people should not be disfranchised. He hoped that the poor people of the rural districts would not be deprived of their votes. In the small towns the people had their hospitals to go to; but this was not so in rural districts. It would be a farce to give these poor people the franchise on the one hand, and to disfranchise them in consequence of their poverty on the other.

MR. PELL said, he could add nothing to the argument of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General as to this not being the place to move such a clause; but he opposed it on behalf of the Friendly Societies of England. If the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Christchurch (Mr. Davey) had a real acquaintance with the true interests of the humble orders of the people he would not have moved that clause. It was to be feared that its adoption would have the effect of discouraging the establishment or extension of sound Friendly Societies. In some districts the acceptance of parochial relief was very prevalent among persons who were able to pay for such assistance if they joined a Friendly Society; and representations had been made, over and over again, by managers of certain of the largest institutions of that description to Boards of Guardians, asking them to cease to exercise, by means of that form of parochial relief, a demoralizing influence among the people, so as to give those Societies a chance of rendering the people independent. There were, of course, certain Friendly Societies of the most vicious description, which would not allow a man any funds at all until he had made a most desperate effort to obtain from the Guardians medical relief; and although, happily, they were few in number, they would be encouraged by the passing of a clause such as this. He lived in a rural district—a very poor district. Ten or 15 years ago every eleventh person was a pauper; but now only one in 61 were paupers. The cases of medical relief in former times were innumerable; but, owing to the action of the Guardians, during the last three years there had only been two cases of medical relief. He assured the hon. and learned Member that if he had more acquaintance with the poor people he would never have moved such a clause as this.

MR. PICTON said, they were all agreed that pauperism should disqualify from voting; but he contended that the receipt of medical relief did not make a pauper of a man. The receipt of elementary education did not do so. He held that actual pauperism only existed when a man, so to speak, surrendered in the battle of life, and made himself a burden, temporarily or permanently, to his neighbours. Whatever tended to that state pauperized, and, he quite agreed, should disenable a man from exercising the franchise; but he submitted that any other form of relief

which enabled a man to tide over an emergency and preserve his self-reliance and self-respect ought not to be allowed to remove a man from the list of voters. There were a great many people who obtained charity from Benevolent Societies, and they were not disfranchised; but the poor people who were obliged once in a way to have recourse to parochial medical relief, who had no friends, and who might happen to be entirely outside the circle in which private benevolence administered such aid to others of their class, were to be struck off the list of voters. He did not think that this was a proper state of things, and especially when they considered how very hard the struggle of life was for millions of people. The man who was only receiving from 10*s.* to 15*s.* a-week, and broke his arm, or had his family down with measles, was absolutely unable to provide medical relief; and yet, perhaps, he was making a most heroic struggle to keep himself off the rates generally. He hoped the Committee would listen to the arguments which had been used in support of this Amendment.

MR. J. R. HOLLOND said, that the difference between free education and medical relief was that, as a matter of fact, the former did not tend to pauperize, while the latter, as everybody who was well acquainted with the administration of the Poor Law system knew, was often the first step towards pauperism. If they once commenced to make subtle distinctions between medical relief and other forms of parochial relief, they would be led into all sorts of difficulties; and they would run great risk of breaking down the great principle under which the receipt of relief from the rates was held to be a disqualification for the exercise of the franchise. For his part, he thought it was extremely important that that principle should be maintained; and though there might be hard cases under the rule, yet if they once began to legislate on hard cases they would find they had the proverbial bad law.

MR. GREGORY said, he thought it was inexpedient for them to enter into the discussion of the question on the present Bill. When he served on the Select Committee, he understood the measure was merely one to provide for the registration of those persons who were already enfranchised, and he thought they ought to confine it to that object.

MR. VILLIERS STUART said, that, having had a pretty intimate acquaintance with the circumstances of the labouring classes and their difficulties and trials, he could state that the principal causes of sickness amongst them were hard work, exposure to weather, and damp, unhealthy dwellings. It was the most industrious who suffered most from the two first causes, and those whose fault it was that their labourers were ill-housed were responsible for the last. It would be a monstrous injustice to disfranchise labourers who had been compelled to accept medical relief owing to either of these causes. If, therefore, the hon. and learned Member for Christchurch (Mr Horace Davey) went to a division he should vote with him.

MR. ALDERMAN COTTON said, there was nothing fell more hardly on the poor man than illness, which was a calamity and not a fault, and the medical bill; and in many cases, no matter how hard he worked, it became necessary that he should obtain medical relief. He hoped the Government would not take the vote away from the poor man because he happened to be afflicted. To do so would be one of the greatest injustices which could be imposed. In the interests of the poor man he trusted the Committee would accept the clause.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 102; Noes 170: Majority 68.—(Div. List, No. 158.)

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow*.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—ORDER OF PUBLIC BUSINESS.

MR. GLADSTONE said, that it had been intended to proceed with the Army Estimates to-morrow; but it was so important to get on with the Registration of Voters (England) Bill, that if they could conveniently arrange for breaking off the Army Estimates at a reasonable hour—say not later than 11 o'clock—they should be very glad to get the residue of the evening for that Bill, as time was very important.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, this proposition would require a little further consideration on the part of the Opposition. They thought it would be necessary that the question discussed last night, on registration expenses, should be pursued at a further stage of the Bill. If the Committee were finished to-morrow, he presumed the Report could be taken on Friday.

MR. GLADSTONE said, that that would have to be considered to-morrow; he could not say anything now.

SIR MASSEY LOPES gave Notice that, in consequence of the very strong expression of opinion manifested last night with reference to the question mentioned by his right hon. Friend (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) he should move that the Bill be re-committed.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Supposing the Bill before the House to-day gets through Committee to-morrow, will the Report of it on Friday be the first Order?

MR. GLADSTONE said, it was of great consequence that the Bill should be got through as early as possible. However, he could not give a definite answer in the absence of his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General; but he was disposed to think that that course would be adopted.

MR. PARNELL said, he should like some information as to when the next stage of the Registration of Voters (Ireland) Bill would be taken.

MR. GLADSTONE: I believe the hon. and learned Gentleman who is in charge of the Bill has just left the House.

MR. PARNELL: I wish to ask whether the Report of the Bill will be taken on Friday first?

MR. GLADSTONE: I will answer that Question to-morrow.

MR. PARNELL: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will say upon what stage of the Bill the Government propose to move its re-committal in respect to the new clause about registration expenses?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: At the conclusion of the Report.

MR. PARNELL: Can it not be put down in the beginning of the Motion for Report?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Either at the end of the Report, or on the third reading.

MR. GIBSON: As it is quite obvious, from the narrow division of last night, that this is a matter upon which there is likely to be very considerable discussion, and also as many hon. Members would be anxious to take part in the discussion, I should therefore like to know what arrangements will be proposed? It would be very inconvenient to many of them if the matter was postponed from the beginning, which is a period which will be known to the final stage of the Bill, which is a period which cannot easily be fixed.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Does the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite seriously urge that, in the present period of extreme pressure upon the Government, we should have four debates and four divisions upon the same subject?

MR. GIBSON: I only ask for some definite information on the subject, which is one of importance.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: We have already had two debates and two divisions, and now we are threatened with another, by the Motion of which the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Massey Lopes) has just given Notice.

MR. GIBSON: Very possibly.

MR. PARNELL: As I suppose, from the very narrow division which was taken last night, it is evident that this question will be raised again, I presume it will be equally competent for me to raise the same question in regard to the Irish Bill, in reference to which matter I may say we defeated the Government, in the same way as the hon. Baronet (Sir Massey Lopes) proposes to raise it on the English Bill. I suppose that it will be arranged for a single discussion to be taken, either on the Irish or the English Bill, and so settle the question. [SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Hear, hear!] But it would be desirable for the Irish Members to know whether the Irish Bill or the English Bill is to be taken first? It will be also desirable to know what will be the order of procedure in regard to the Motion for the re-committal of the Bill; because it will be on the Question "that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," after the Motion for the re-committal of the Bill, that I am advised that the Irish question will have to be raised?

MR. GLADSTONE: It is manifest that Notices of Motion of great import-

ance having been given in to-day, I have no option but to say that I have to consider them, and will give an answer to the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gibson) as to the procedure on these Bills when the House meets to-morrow.

MOTION.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE (CONSOLIDATION) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. HARDCASTLE, Bill to consolidate the Law relating to the Representation of the People of England, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. HARDCASTLE and Sir ALEXANDER GORDON.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 160.]

House adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 7th May, 1885.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Submarine Telegraph Cables * (104); Burial Boards (Contested Elections) * (105).

Second Reading—Elementary Education Provisional Orders Confirmation (Birmingham, &c.) * (80); Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (London) * (79); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Public Health Act) (No. 2) * (83); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 3) * (84); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) * (89); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 5) * (90); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 6) * (94); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 7) * (91); Industrial Schools (Ireland) * (95); Friendly Societies Act (1875) Amendment (77), *negatived*.

DOMINION OF CANADA—INSURRECTION IN THE NORTH-WEST TERRITORY.—QUESTION.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON said, that he wished to ask the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the information respecting the two engagements which were reported in the papers was accurate; and, whether the noble Earl was in a position to give the House any further information as to what had taken place in Canada between the insurgents and the Colonial troops?

THE EARL OF DERBY: My Lords, I shall be happy to lay before your Lordships the information which I have received. One telegram is from the Marquess of Lansdowne, the Governor General, in these words, received at the Colonial Office, 2.25 A.M. May 7:—

"Colonel Otter has fought successful engagement with Indians west of Battleford. Middleton resumes advance against Riel tomorrow."

Another telegram, which has been addressed by Sir John Macdonald to Sir Charles Tupper, has been communicated to me, and it gives rather fuller details—

"Ottawa, May 7, 1885.—Otter's command attacked Poundmaker on Sunday, and demolished his camp. Our losses eight killed, 15 wounded. Indian loss, fully 100 killed and wounded."

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES) said, he would like to know what all that was going on was about; and whether the Indians, who were contending for something, deserved relief or not? He thought that many persons were totally ignorant of the cause of the rebellion.

THE EARL OF DERBY: The Government of Canada is responsible for the internal administration of its own affairs, and the question of the relations between the Government of Canada and the Indian tribes is not one which has come, or can come, before the Colonial Office, except, of course, in the exceedingly improbable event of the Canadian Government not being able to deal with the insurrection by means of its own resources. The question, therefore, is not one on which I can give any authoritative information; but, if I may give such information as I have received, I believe that the Canadian Government themselves are very much in the same perplexity as the noble Earl at the Table as to what the real causes of this movement are.

SALMON FISHERIES (SCOTLAND)—LEGISLATION.—QUESTION.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY asked, When the Report and the recommendations of the Scotch Fishery Board on Salmon Rivers and Fisheries would be presented to Parliament; and, whether, considering the demand and necessity for legislation, the Government intended to introduce a Bill dealing with the subject?

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE, in reply, said, the Report of the Scotch Fishery Board was presented last year on the 25th of July, and probably this year it would be presented about the same time, or possibly a little sooner. It was the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill dealing with the matter.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT (1875) AMENDMENT BILL.

(*The Lord Greville.*)

(NO. 77.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

LORD GREVILLE, in moving that the Bill be now read the second time, said, its object was to prevent the existence of bogus and swindling Friendly Societies, which at the present time many people were induced to join under the misapprehension that because a Society was stated to be "registered under the Act of Parliament" it must be a sound and honest one. The Bill would not be retrospective, but would apply to all Friendly Societies to be henceforward formed; and he thought that in proportion as those Societies were made sound undertakings they would inspire confidence among the working classes, who would be thereby encouraged in habits of thrift, and induced to invest their savings. He had received letters from working men expressing a hope that the law would be amended as this Bill proposed; and the Rev. Canon Blackley, who had very great experience on this subject, wrote—

"I hope and trust that this Bill may pass into law; I think it most highly desirable in order to protect the interests of those young men who may desire to join Friendly Societies."

The object of the Bill was to amend the Act of 1875 with regard to the registration of these Societies. There were at present two kinds of Societies, those registered and those not registered; but under his Bill it would be requisite for those who formed a Society to obtain an actuarial certificate as to the tables of contributions and subscriptions and the rates of payments for relief before they were admitted to registration. If the Bill passed into law he thought it probable that many of the Societies against whom it was directed would become affiliated with the great Societies—such as the Foresters, the Odd Fellows, the Shepherds, &c.—some of which had over 500,000 members. He thought the Bill would be welcomed by the thoughtful and prudent working men of the country, who would look to their Lordships' House with feelings of gratitude for introducing a measure which would greatly conduce to their comfort and prosperity.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª." —(*The Lord Greville.*)

LORD THURLOW said, he was sorry he was not able, on the part of the Treasury, to support the Bill. He thought the House would appreciate the motive of the noble Lord in bringing it forward. The object aimed at was undoubtedly a most excellent one. It was the diminution of insolvency among Friendly Societies, which, it was stated—he did not know with how much accuracy—was assuming considerable and increasing proportions. There could be no question of greater importance, because nearly every working man in the country was connected with them in some form or other. But, at the same time, this was a question on which legislation ought not to be rashly and inopportunely pressed forward. The Act of 1875, which the noble Lord sought to amend, was very carefully drawn and considered, and was the result of, and embodied, most, if not all, the recommendations of more than one Select Committee which considered the subject. The Treasury had recently considered the subject with great care, and with the assistance of those most entitled to speak with authority on the matter—namely, the Chief Registrar and Actuary of Friendly Societies—and both those gentlemen concurred that to take the step contemplated by the noble Lord's Bill would be to take a retrograde step, and to return to the course which was abandoned in the Bill of 1875. It would practically re-enact Section 13 of the Act of 1846, which, in like manner, made the certificate of an actuary the absolute condition of registration. The Act of 1846 was repealed four years after it was passed, as experience showed that it drove the Societies from seeking registration. Immediately before the Act of 1846, 2,101 Societies applied for registration, and of them 1,683 were admitted; but during the two years immediately following that

Act 1,780 Societies sought registration, and only 423 were actually enrolled. This falling off was, according to the high authority of Mr. Tidd Pratt, entirely owing to that Act, which, it would be seen, had had a decidedly deterrent effect. The Chief Registrar opposed the Bill, because it would practically have the effect of undoing what had now been going on very satisfactorily since the passage of the last Act in 1875. Compulsory actuarial certificates did not insure the safety of Societies, but rather created a false sense of security, and the only effect of the Bill would be to reduce registration to a minimum. The existing Act was sometimes considered a weak one; but it was really a stringent one. The result of the Bill would be to throw on the State the moral responsibility for the well-being and solvency of these countless Societies; while, as a matter of fact, the provisions of the existing law as to making Valuation Returns to the Registrar practically achieved the object of the proposed measure. Under the circumstances, he ventured to assure their Lordships that this was not a question to be hastily or rashly approached by Parliament without much further evidence of the desirability of amending the Act of 1875. Probably their Lordships would concur in the view taken by the Treasury, that it would be unwise to attempt new legislation on this subject except after due consideration by a Committee of equal weight to the one on whose recommendations the existing law was mainly based. He therefore ventured to appeal to the noble Lord not to press the second reading of the Bill.

THE BISHOP OF CARLISLE said, he had had the privilege of knowing Mr. Tidd Pratt very well, and it was a curious circumstance that that gentleman had once pointed out to him the very blot which the noble Lord's Bill was intended to cure. He said there were a large number of Societies throughout the country supposed to be perfectly sound, and which were joined because they were registered; but which were, in reality, perfectly unsound, and he also said the fact of registration was no guarantee of the soundness of a Society. This Bill was intended to cure that defect, and to give some real guarantee that a Society, when registered, was a sound and well-constructed Society. That purpose was a very important one; and he rejoiced to hear that it would be taken into careful consideration by Her Majesty's Government, and that the purpose of this Bill would therefore probably, somehow or other, be carried into effect.

LORD NORTON submitted that without a proper certificate of the tables there was no guarantee for the soundness of these Friendly Societies, many of which were admittedly unsound. Registration became a snare and a delusion to the people in the most essential concerns of thrift and savings. Without a guarantee of scientific calculation there was no use of registration at all, and it was simply a publication of names, not worth the cost of a Registrar. He suggested that if the Bill were rejected the subject should be referred to a Committee of Inquiry.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON said, he had not looked very closely into the Bill; but the subject was a most important one. There was great force in the proposal of his noble Friend who had just sat down, that the Government should assent to its being referred to a Committee of Inquiry, as it was a matter on which there was a very serious and real grievance. A large number of the Societies which it would affect were insolvent, and yet poor subscribers were induced to join them. He failed, however, to see why the Bill was to be thrown out.

On Question? Their Lordships *divided:* —Contents 32; Not-Contents 33: Majority 1.

Resolved in the *negative.*

TURKEY—THE BOSPHORUS AND DARDANELLES—CONVENTION OF PARIS, 1856, AND TREATY OF BERLIN, 1878.

ADDRESS FOR PAPERS.

LORD STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL: My Lords, I rise to move an humble Address to the Crown for the Protocols or Treaties which regulate the authority of the Sublime Porte to admit foreign ships of war into the Dardanelles. It is hardly necessary to refer to the circumstances which suggest a Motion of this character. In every society, young or old, grave or gay, political or private, they have recently been mentioned. It is true that on Monday last a new fact entered the discussion. I

deferred, in consequence, the Motion on that day, and would have willingly postponed it altogether, unless reflection had convinced me that the official statement, although calculated to diminish, ought not to remove the public apprehension as to differences with Russia. Before sitting down, I may offer something in defence of that opinion. But it is first desirable to touch on the Conventions which explain the power of the Sultan in the matter now before us. My Lords, the Press at home and on the Continent is full of ambiguity regarding them, which can only be corrected by the documents I ask for united in a single view, and not dispersed in many volumes. We are always meeting statements that Germany or Austria, or some other Power, in the event of serious contingencies, will prohibit the Sublime Porte from admitting foreign ships of war into the Dardanelles. These statements are made with little reference to past occurrences, or past enactments on the subject. Journalists, in agitated times, are too much hurried to investigate. I will submit what seems to me a faithful outline of the question. In the beginning of the century there were, no doubt, Conventions to restrain foreign ships of war from going into the waters of the Sultan when he was at peace. So far back as 1809, it is certain, on the authority of Calvo, the great master of public law, that they existed. In a Treaty of 1841 they are referred to, in those of 1856 they are repeated. But in 1871 they underwent a grave modification. At that time, as a counterpoise to the arrangements by which Russia regained the power of cruising in the Black Sea, taken away after the Crimean War, the Sultan was permitted, even without hostilities beginning, to invite into the Bosphorus the armed ships of friendly Powers when he deemed it for his own security to do so. The new authority was brought about by what was termed the Black Sea Conference in London. It has never been exerted; it has been absolutely latent during the burning questions of the Eastern Question, which have followed it. But such a fact, whether the result of chance, irresolution, or impolicy, leaves the power equally unquestioned. The Treaty of Berlin does nothing to correct the rules as left in 1871. It, on the contrary, embodies and repeats them. As regards that point, the Treaty has been recently and carefully examined under my direction. The whole matter, if I am not deceived, admits a summary expression. According to the Law of Nations, it is open to any State to give a passage over land or water it possesses to the military or naval force of a belligerent. But as regards the Straits within the Ottoman Empire, the Law of Nations has been disturbed and superseded by Conventions. Those Conventions have again, in 1871, been modified and widened. The upshot is, that prohibition falls not upon the Sultan, but on other Powers. No Power can despatch its Fleets without his sanction to the Dardanelles. But that sanction turns entirely on his judgment. His right over the waters on his territory is similar to that of France upon the Seine, of Russia, on the Neva, of Portugal, upon the Tagus. If this interpretation is erroneous, the Papers I demand will bring the true one into notice.

Whenever the collision, so frequently anticipated happens, the facility of operating in the Black Sea is most important to this country. It is the only area in which Russia has ever been successfully encountered by Powers wishing to restrain her. Since she became a formidable member of the European system, there are but a few instances in which campaigns have been designed or organized against her. They may be all enumerated in a moment, and the lesson is most apposite. The earliest was that of the Swedish Monarch Charles XII., which was directed from the North to the South East, and ended fatally, at least disastrously, for him and for his Kingdom, at the well-known battle of Pultova. The next in order is that of the First Napoleon in 1812, of which the detail lives in the immortal pages of the Count de Segur. Advancing from the South to the North East, it culminated in the fire of Moscow, and the destruction of the Army which retreated from it. The third was our own attempt to threaten Cronstadt, in the Baltic, under Sir Charles Napier. Your Lordships know—as those times come back with force upon us—that while it succeeded as a defensive measure, or blockade, it failed no less completely as an effort of invasion. The

Expedition to the shores of the Crimea was almost a simultaneous one. It is the only Expedition against Russia which has had a brilliant, although, in some degree, ephemeral result. The Black Sea was its necessary channel. If the Black Sea is closed for her advantage, Russia is entitled, by the history of the past, to deem herself invincible. It is of practical importance to explore with accuracy all the diplomatic grounds on which the Sultan may be asked to grant her an immunity from the only danger which experience has taught her to consider as a grave one. My Lords, there is but one mode of thinking to which the Address would be obnoxious, and which it is therefore indispensable to guard against. It is the mode of thinking which rejects the possibility of war with Russia and counts upon a satisfactory adjustment. The announcement of the Government has, of course, done something to encourage that impression. The financial world has seized it with a natural, but yet, as it appears to me, unreasoning avidity. Let it be granted that the Government may smooth over the immediate questions on the Afghan Frontier. Let it be granted that arbitration may patch up the controversy between Sir Peter Lumsden and General Komaroff. But the movement on Herat which tends undoubtedly to war, on that point the voice of Professor Vambery is known to us, can scarcely be arrested so long as Russia has rare, immense, and previously unknown encouragements to prosecute it. It is worth while to glance at those encouragements before the Motion is rejected as an useless one. Those encouragements reside not in the intrinsic force or unity or resolution of that Empire, great as they may be, but in the peculiar circumstances both of Europe and Great Britain. The Holy Alliance is in avowed, in flagrant lately-renovated vigour. Had it been working for two or three years we might derive a slender hope from its exhaustion and satiety. Like individuals nations may grow tired of one another. As things now stand, it is well known at St. Petersburg that Germany and Austria can offer no assistance to this country. There is no drag-chain upon Russia from that quarter. In the Crimean War it was not easy to obtain it. It is impossible at present. It is seen that France is bitterly opposed to us, or she would hardly have resented the suppression of a malignant journal by the Khedive. The Sublime Porte is irrecoverable until our Ministerial position has been altered. It would be devoid of memory, of dignity, of prudence, unless it were so irrecoverable—without some kind of reparation and security—after the series of transactions by which it has been diligently alienated. Those who know Constantinople — amongst whom I cannot reckon many Members of the Government — are aware that when the Embassies of Russia, Germany, and Austria are united, the British Embassy is pulled down to utter insignificance. It may be that acting on this theory the Government have virtually closed it. The Earl of Dufferin has not been replaced. There is no Ambassador at present to attempt communication with the Sultan. If he excludes Great Britain from the Black Sea, Russia may attempt Herat with absolute impunity. If he admits Great Britain to the Black Sea, she is wholly unsupported in it. Do we forget how many nations were required in the Crimea? It was only by the solemn union of this country, of France, Sardinia, and the Porte, with Austria in the rear as a benevolent spectator, that after countless toils and tragical vicissitudes Sebastopol was taken. But there is something else to urge on Russia to adventurous persistence. My Lords, it is that our foreign policy is still directed by the very agency, which led in 1870 to the concessions she obtained, which took away Sir Henry Layard from Constantinople, which did her work in Montenegro, which organized, or tried to organize, an European Concert in her favour. In our day, the problem of diplomacy, to put it in its essence, is a contention between London and St. Petersburg for influence at Berlin. Who does not see to which the palm belongs, to which it has inevitably fallen? But it is not only incapacity or isolation seen in Great Britain which urges Russia to activity and enterprize. It is well known to her rulers that our Government are unavoidably affected by the consciousness of military failure. The same body which retired from South Africa because unable to redeem its pledges or hold its ground against barbarians, the same body which has failed egregiously to rescue General Gordon, the same body which is now disposed to give up Khar-

toum, would have to undertake a task too great for the abilities of the First Napoleon, with recent laurels to inspire, with tributary Sovereigns to back, with conquered nations to fight under him. If nothing, according to the proverb, is so successful as past triumph, nothing is so calamitous as recent and profound humiliation. But there is something else to paralyze the Governnment and lead on Russia to the conflict. The movement on Herat can only be suspended or retarded, but never actually renounced, so long as Russia sees in Downing Street a First Minister—however subtle and ingenious—who encouraged the aggressive war of 1877, who opposed the Vote of Credit in 1878, who did not wish the Treaty of San Stefano to be attenuated to the Treaty of Berlin, who only the last autumn on the 1st of September, in his own name before his own electors, held up the keenest advocate of Russian despotism and of Russian conquest as the person to whom the British public ought to look for guidance and direction. So long as he remains, the temptation to advance we offer at St. Petersburg is wholly irresistible. It is imagined, feebly and erroneously, that a recent speech involves a metamorphosis which would no doubt be critically useful. In point of fact that speech blots out no passage of his conduct, since he invented the new faith in Russia as a civilizing Power to be followed. But if he underwent a moral revolution, a political convulsion—and he has traversed many—the old impression could not be immediately dispersed and superseded. The speech upon the Vote of Credit is a new encouragement to Russia, if only followed by concessions as it has been. It proves to Russia that his language may be safely disregarded, whatever colour it assumes. My Lords, in spite of any language he may hold, and even more of any views he may arrive at, the Russian leaders know that so long as he is our First Minister he shelters them from all the perils which might otherwise arrest them. So long as he remains it is impossible that the mass of European Powers should be arrayed against them. So long as he remains the Holy Alliance cannot be divided; the German Empire cannot be successfully appealed to; the Sublime Porte cannot be won back to common action with Great Britain. It must be also recollected by the statesmen at St. Petersburg that in the event of war Constantinople will be as much an object as Herat. When are they to reach Constantinople, so nearly grasped, so painfully relinquished, if not when the Western Powers are embroiled, and when the First Minister of Great Britain is unable to defend it without the sacrifice of something more than his professions and his policy? My Lords, that war with Russia is the consequence of retaining a First Minister who has, or only seems to have, an inclination to that Power does not stand on reason, probability, or theory, although they would effectually uphold it. A sad and not remote example has betrayed it. It is seen by all who accurately measure that transaction that the imputed partiality of the late Earl of Aberdeen for Russia produced the war which led us on to the Crimea, and that had Viscount Palmerston replaced him in 1853 the Danubian Principalities would not have been invaded. There is not wanting evidence to show that the Czar Nicholas was lured on to aggression by his dependence on the leniency and confidence with which the head of our Government apparently regarded him. The observation has been made a hundred times, but ought not to escape us when its conclusion is so vital. We do not come here to display originality at such a moment as the present. The situation is a clear one. An arrangement demonstrably calculated to bring on war with Russia in spite of pledges the most solemn was made in 1880. In 1885 for weeks that war has been impending. So long as the First Minister continues in his Office, so long as Russia keeps her eyes upon Herat, the cloud remains, although the storm has been retarded. But while the cloud remains the storm is always ready to descend upon us. We are bound, therefore to look forward to hostilities. It is in the Black Sea alone we can pursue them with advantage. Until these Protocols or Treaties are collected, it will be doubtful how far that zone of operations is accessible. The research is insignificant, as I could easily convince the Government. As to the expense, it will not be considerable, and ought not to weigh with men who have prepared a gulf which only millions can bridge over.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Protocols or treaties by which the authority of the Sublime Porte to admit foreign ships of war into the Dardanelles is regulated." — (*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell.*)

EARL GRANVILLE: Although I am not aware I gave any exaggerated expression with regard to any hope of peace, I am bound to say I do not share in the very gloomy views which the noble Lord has just expressed. He really reminds me of those who have enteredin to a certain place and are said to have left all hope behind them. I do not believe that war with Russia is perfectly unavoidable. I do not agree that if that war came we should wage it with every possible disadvantage against us, and with every advantage in favour of Russia. I deny that Her Majesty's Government are conscious of constant military failures. I deny that it is certain Russia will go to Herat. I also deny—at least I disagree with—the sketch the noble Lord has given of Mr. Gladstone, which is one he gives from time to time from the seat he occupies in this House. On the other hand, I am confident my noble Friend was perfectly accurate, so far as I followed him, in what he said of the Treaties to which he alluded. I believe he is quite right—and I shall be corrected by the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Salisbury) if I am wrong—that the Berlin Treaty confirms the Treaties of 1856 and 1871. And I may mention as important that during the Conference at Berlin the noble Marquess declared, as is recorded in the Protocols with regard to the obligations concerning the closing of the Straits, that Her Majesty's Government's obligations were limited to the engagement to respect the independent judgment of the Sultan according to the Treaties in existence. Count Schouvaloff made a declaration on the following day to the effect that, in the opinion of the Russian Government's Plenipotentiaries, the principle of closing the Straits is a European principle, and that the Treaties concluded in that respect in 1841, 1856, and 1871, and confirmed by the Treaty of Berlin, were binding on the part of all the Powers, in accordance with the spirit and letter of the existing Treaties. If I am not mistaken, I think the noble Marquess, in his despatch, explains one of his main reasons for making the statement he did; it was made in consequence of the delaration which had just taken place that Batoum should be a free port or a commercial depôt. With regard to the production of the Treaties, I really think my noble Friend need not press for them. They have been often presented; and in 1877 and 1878 they were presented and printed for Parliament.

LORD STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL: The remarks of the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs demand one observation upon my part. The language of despair which he imputes to me is not despair as to the resources of the country, when the peculiar burden of the Ministerial position is withdrawn from it, but as to its power of opposing Russia when artificially and wantonly deprived of all support in Europe. For the rest, the personal allusions of the noble Earl are thoroughly innocuous. They are the necessity of his position since he resolved to be the organ of the Premier. He holds his Office on the tenure of attacking those who have disputed the authority of the right hon. Gentleman. I repeat what I have urged before, after full inquiry, that these Protocols and Treaties exist in no collected form, and that until they do the prevalent obscurity as to the rights of entrance to the Dardanelles is likely to continue. I shall not be able, therefore, to withdraw the Motion.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I would make one observation with respect to the declaration to which the noble Earl referred. The object of the declaration which I had to make on behalf of Her Majesty's Government I understood to be to establish the principle that our engagements in respect of the Dardanelles were not engagements of a general, European, or International character, but were engagements towards the Sultan only; the practical bearing of that reservation being that if, in any circumstances, the Sultan should not be acting independently, but under pressure from some other Power, there would be no International obligation on our part to abstain from passing through the Dardanelles. Of course, that is a purely theoretical matter. I wish to point out that it was not merely with respect to Batoum, but with respect to any other matters which may arise calling for our presence in the

Black Sea, that the reservation then made was made.

EARL GRANVILLE said, that if he found he was wrong with regard to the Protocols he should have no objection to present them.

On Question? *Resolved* in the *negative.*

House adjourned at Six o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 7th May, 1885.

MINUTES.]—SUPPLY—*considered in Committee* —ARMY ESTIMATES.

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered in Committee*—£13,315,334, Consolidated Fund.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Resolution in Committee—Ordered* —*First Reading*—Burial Grounds * [164].

First Reading—Water Companies (Regulation of Powers) * [161]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Public Health Act) (No. 1) * [162]; Federal Council of Australasia * [165].

Committee — Report—Registration (Occupation Voters) (*re-comm.*) [140-163]; East India Unclaimed Stocks * [125].

Report—Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders * [123]; Gas Provisional Orders (No. 1) * [126]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 1) * [128].

Considered as amended—Registration of Voters (Scotland) [151].

QUESTIONS.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—INCIDENCE OF TAXATION.

MR. R. H. PAGET asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he will be good enough to lay upon the Table a Return embodying the details of the four groups of figures (between the years 1858 and 1885) introduced by him into his Budget Speech, to institute a comparison of the incidence of taxation on "Articles of Consumption" and on "Property" respectively?

MR. HIBBERT (who replied) said: My right hon. Friend will be happy to lay on the Table a Return as desired by the hon. Member.

VACCINATION—HOSPITAL ATTENDANTS.

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, in the case of officers and servants for the service of the Metropolitan Asylums Board Hospitals, a proper interval is always allowed to elapse between their re-vaccination and their entering on their duty; and, whether it is the fact that certain officers or servants at the Fulham Small Pox Hospital have entered on their duties without re-vaccination?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL (who replied) said: We have made inquiry, and find that in the cases of the North-Western, South-Eastern, and South-Western Hospitals an interval is allowed to elapse between the re-vaccination of the officers and servants and their entering on their duties. In the first mentioned hospital the interval is stated to be 48 or 72 hours. As regards the Eastern Hospital, it has been the custom to re-vaccinate the officers and servants on the day of arrival at the hospital or the day following. At the Hospital Ships no interval elapses betweeen the re-vaccination and exposure to small-pox infection. At the Western or Fulham Hospital the officers and servants are usually re-vaccinated on the day of their entering on their duties. There have, however, since May, 1884, been two instances in which the re-vaccination was not performed until some days after the assistants had commenced discharging their duties, and this was in consequence of an omission to report the cases to the Medical Superintendent.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND) —THE SHOTTS SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS.

DR. CAMERON asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention has been called to the allegations contained in *The West Lothian Courier* of April 25th, that public houses were engaged, and "free tables" established, for the promotion of the interests of certain candidates at the recent election of the Shotts School Board, and that "as much as five shillings was offered to certain voters for their votes;" and, whether, in view of the numerous complaints as to bribery and treating at School Board elections that have recently appeared in the

Scotch Press, he will consider the propriety of extending the provisions of the Corrupt Practices Acts to School Board elections at as early a date as possible?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): I have seen the letters in *The West Lothian Courier*. On inquiry I can find no confirmation of the statements that public-houses were engaged and free tables established in the interests of the candidates, and I have not learned of any instance in which money was offered for a vote. The only foundation for the last statement which I have been able to trace is that in the case of two miners who were asked to assist one of the candidates in his election, 1*s.* or 2*s.* were given to the children of each of them. It appears, however, that certain of the candidates treated the voters to drink. The instances which have recently been brought to light appear to me to establish the necessity for extending the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Acts to School Board elections in Scotland; and, as I think I have already mentioned, a Bill is in preparation which will extend those Acts to such elections, as well as to municipal elections. We cannot hope to pass the Bill this Session; but the School Board elections will not recur for three years.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT, 1884—RETURNS UNDER THE ACT.

MR. W. H. SMITH asked Mr. Attorney General, If his attention has been drawn to the form of a Return under the provisions of "The Representation of the People Act, 1884," which has been issued by the Parochial Authorities of the Metropolis, requiring Returns to be made, as follows, under a penalty of forty shillings:—

Form of Return.

1.

Property in respect of which the Person making the Return is rated [or liable to be rated, or occupied].

2.

Situation or description of every Dwelling House, as defined by the Representation of the People Acts, forming part of the property in the first column.

3.

Surname and other name of every Man who was, on the 15th day of July last, and has been up to the date of the Return, an inhabitant occupier of any Dwelling House in the second column.

whether he has considered how far it is likely that an ordinary ratepayer or occupier is in possession of sufficient information as to the meaning of the Legislature to enable him to fill up the first column; whether there is any clear and precise definition of a Dwelling House in the Representation of the People Acts which would enable him to fill up the second column; and, if there is, whether the ratepayer or occupier is to have recourse to the Acts for that definition, or whether the Parochial Authorities should not themselves supply it to him under some authoritative and legal definition; and, whether some guidance should not also be furnished to the person having to make the Return in the third column as to who is an "inhabitant occupier," and as to the circumstances and conditions under which the "inhabitant occupier of any Dwelling House" is entitled under that description to be entered upon the Return?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES), in reply, said, he had seen a form of Return in the Representation of the People Act of last year, which had been issued by the Parochial Authorities to the ratepayers of the Metropolis. This form was enjoined by the Act. When it was being discussed in the House the view of the Government was to leave the drawing up of the form to the authorities; but the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Stanhope) expressed a strong wish that a form should be placed in the Schedule, and after consideration this form was adopted and inserted. He admitted the difficulty ratepayers would experience in understanding the form; but he had that morning received from the Vestry Clerk of St. Marylebone an instruction which had been issued along with the form, and which appeared to make the matter much more clear. He (the Attorney General) would suggest that in the Registration Bill now before the House a provision might be inserted in the Schedule enjoining upon the overseers the issue of a similar instruction. He would confer with the right hon. Gentleman opposite on the question.

MR. HEALY expressed the hope that the Attorney General would confer with the Irish Attorney General, in order that Ireland might participate in any benefit from the conference.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) intimated his readiness to do so.

PARLIAMENT—PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—WESTMINSTER HALL (RESTORATION).

MR. R. H. PAGET asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether with reference to the Report of the Select Committee on Westminster Hall Restoration, and in view of the indefinite recommendation of the Committee that they

"Suggest for consideration, that the wall of the two storied building should be somewhat lowered, and that a plain coping should be substituted for the battlemented parapet,"

he will be good enough to have elevations prepared, showing accurately the proposed treatment of the west front of Westminster Hall, and its general effect in combination with the existing buildings of the Houses of Parliament; whether he will further direct plans and sections to be prepared, showing the proposed Committee Rooms to be constructed, with an explanatory memorandum, setting forth the means of access to such Committee Rooms, the provisions for their lighting, warming, and ventilation, and the uses to which it is proposed to devote them; and, whether he will afford ample opportunity for consideration of such plans, sections, and elevations and memorandum before presenting to the House any vote for carrying out the recommendations of the Committee?

MR. HERBERT GLADSTONE (who replied) said: Mr. Pearson has reported that the models on the side of Westminster Hall, being only of canvas, are already in such a state that it is necessary to remove them without delay; and the Department cannot go to the expense of erecting further models to show the exact elevations. But the Appendix to the Evidence of the Committee will contain a drawing by Mr. Pearson showing the modifications which he proposes to make to meet the views of the Committee. The evidence and plans laid before the Committee will supply all the information required as to the rooms in the gallery proposed to be erected under the buttresses. These rooms are not intended as Committee Rooms for the use of the House; but will be available for conference or deputation rooms, or for such other purposes as may be ultimately found desirable.

In reply to Mr. R. H. PAGET and Mr. MITCHELL HENRY,

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that an alternative design had been laid before the Committee by Mr. Pearson as to the restoration of Westminster Hall, and was now under consideration.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—VISITATION OF MOUNTJOY PRISON.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How often Mountjoy Prison was visited in 1883 and 1884 by the visitors appointed for that purpose by the Lord Lieutenant; and, whether, as recommended by the Royal Commission on Irish Prisons, full Reports in writing as to the condition and discipline of that prison for the above years were presented to the Lord Lieutenant?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It appears that when the term of office of the Visitors of the Dublin Prisons expired at the close of 1882 their appointment was not renewed, nor were new appointments made. This appears to be entirely due to an inadvertence, so far as I can see. Last year the Royal Commission was sitting, and no appointments of Visitors were made pending their Report. They have reported strongly in favour of such Visitors; and His Excellency, who fully concurs, has appointed five Visitors for the Dublin Prisons—namely, Viscount Powerscourt, Sir James Mackey, Mr. Joshua Pim, Mr. Robert Warren, and my hon. Friend the junior Member for Dublin City (Dr. Lyons). I understand they visited the prisons last month, and made observations in the books provided for the purpose; but their formal Report will not be presented until the end of their year of office. If the hon. Baronet will be good enough to move for it, I shall be happy to lay on the Table a copy of the letter of appointment and instructions given to these gentlemen.

EGYPT—THE SOUDAN—MILITARY OPERATIONS—THE SUAKIN-BERBER RAILWAY.

SIR BERNHARD SAMUELSON asked the Surveyor General of the Ordnance, Whether, in view of the reported destruction of the wooden sleepers on the Suakin-Berber Railway, directions will be given to employ metal

sleepers in future, the latter having been found serviceable on the Indian Government Railways and elsewhere?

LORD EUSTACE CECIL asked whether the construction of the Suakin-Berber Railway was to be continued at all?

MR. BRAND: The noble Lord asks me to prophesy, which I must decline to do. In answer to the Question of the hon. Baronet, I have to say that the relative advantages of metal and wooden sleepers were carefully considered before shipments were made for Suakin. Upon the advice of the contractors and their engineers it was decided to use wooden sleepers in the first instance, on the ground that they were best adapted to the rapid construction of a temporary line; they were ready to hand, while steel sleepers must have been specially manufactured, and would not have been so useful in completing cargoes. Under the circumstances which were sure to prevail at Suakin during the pressure incident to the disembarkation of troops, transport, animals, and stores, it was thought that the use of wooden sleepers, which could be floated on shore, would greatly facilitate the difficult process of unloading, while for rough and uneven ground they would offer great advantages in making a more secure road. A limited supply of metal sleepers has been sent out for use in watercourses; and in the event of a continuation of the line, or of the permanent completion of the part now constructed, under circumstances offering less difficulty, both in respect of the delivery of cargoes and of the rate of construction, metal sleepers would no doubt be preferred.

SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE: Is the report true which has reached me, that a portion of the railway plant has already been shipped homewards?

MR. BRAND: No, Sir; I am not aware that there is any truth in the report.

SUGAR BOUNTIES—PROPOSED CONFERENCE.

MR. E. STANHOPE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Belgian Government have recently proposed that a Conference should be held on the subject of Sugar Bounties; what answer has been given by Her Majesty's Government; and, whether he can lay any Papers upon the Table on this subject?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: An invitation to attend this proposed Conference was conveyed to Her Majesty's Government in December last by the Belgian Minister. Baron Solvyns was informed, in reply, that, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, any active steps for the relief of the sugar industry must be taken by the countries whose duties and bounties have placed this industry in an artificial position. Her Majesty's Government, before accepting the invitation, wished to know whether the Governments of the countries which grant bounties had expressed their intention of being represented at the proposed Conference. An answer was shortly afterwards received to the effect that the proposal was postponed. I will consult the President of the Board of Trade, whose Department deals with the general question, as to the presentation of the Papers on the subject to Parliament.

SPAIN—THE ZAMORA WATERWORKS COMPANY.

MR. J. R. YORKE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Government can state what is the present position of the proceedings for enforcing payment of the amount due from the Municipality of Zamora, in Spain, to the Zamora Waterworks Company; whether it is the fact that whereas the Spanish Government at one time used their powers so as to compel the municipality to pay, they have now not only ceased to do so but are placing difficulties in the way of the creditors; and, if there are any papers on the subject which can be produced?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The real estate of the Municipality of Zamora was put up for sale on October 16 last, but there was no bidder. The Company then applied for a second sale at a reduction of 25 per cent on the upset price. In consequence of the action of the Spanish Home Office on the subject, Her Majesty's Minister felt obliged to address a protest to the Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs, who promised to insist on the property being at once put up again for sale at the reduced price. Nevertheless, the property was again offered for sale without any reduction, with the same result as before.

There is reason to fear that the Spanish Home Office contemplate a revaluation of the property, which would entail a further delay of many months. Her Majesty's Government hope, however, to effect a speedy settlement of the case. They are in communication with the German Government, whose subjects are also interested. I cannot undertake at present to say whether Papers can be laid on the Table or not.

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS—THE JAPANESE VILLAGE—CONSTRUCTION AND MEANS OF EXIT.

MR. ONSLOW asked the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, Whether it is a fact that the condition of the Japanese Exhibition had been brought to the notice of the Metropolitan Board; if so, what action was taken; and, whether, if it is true that the premises are to be rebuilt, he will guarantee that sufficient protection will be afforded to the public against fire, both as regards the construction itself and also for proper means of exit?

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG: In reply to my hon. Friend, I beg to inform him that the attention of the Metropolitan Board was called, at the end of January last, to the state of the building in which the Japanese Exhibition was held, and that previous to that time communications had taken place between the Board's Superintending Architect and the District Surveyor on the subject. In the result, the owner of the hall was summoned by the District Surveyor before the magistrate, in order to obtain an amendment of certain irregularities in the construction of the hall, and the magistrate made an order that the works should be amended in accordance with the requirements of the District Surveyor. This order was not, however, complied with; and subsequently the Board was informed that the owner had obtained a licence for music from the Justices of Middlesex, although the Board had not issued a certificate that the building had been completed in accordance with their regulations, as required by the Building Act of 1878. Proceedings were accordingly taken to recover penalties against the proprietor of the Japanese Exhibition, and the case was heard at the Westminster Police Court on April 23; but at the hearing the owner of the hall put himself forward as, in fact, responsible for keeping open the entertainment, and, under these circumstances, the magistrate dismissed the summons. I may add that the Board had prepared a series of requisitions for remedying the structural defects of the building, which would have been served in a few days but for the recent fire, which has shown conclusively that the Board has throughout been right in its contention that the building, until amended in accordance with the requirements, was totally unsafe and unfit for a place of public entertainment. With regard to the latter part of the Question, I can assure my hon. Friend that, in the event of the premises being rebuilt, the Board will spare no effort to secure proper protection for the public, both as regards construction and exit.

SECRET SOCIETIES (IRELAND)—USE OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS FOR MASONIC MEETINGS — THE COURT HOUSE, MARYBOROUGH, QUEEN'S CO.

MR. LALOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is true that a Freemason Lodge was held in the County Court House, Maryborough, on the 14th of April last; and, if this is the usual place for meetings of this Society; and, if so, have the Freemasons any special right to make use of this building, erected by the ratepayers of the Queen's County for public purposes?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am informed that the Freemasons use this Court House in common with other persons. The control of the Court House is vested in the Grand Jury, and the Government have no power to interfere in the matter.

MR. SEXTON: Would the right hon. Gentleman be in favour of a branch of the National League holding its meetings there?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have no power one way or the other.

MR. LALOR: Who are the other persons who meet there?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have no knowledge on the subject.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS, MALLOW.

MR. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland,

Whether the Returning Officer and the Mallow Board of Guardians have refused Mr. Thomas Barry, candidate for the poor law guardianship of the Clemor electoral division, permission to examine the claims lodged by landowners for property votes in the said division; and, if so, whether the Local Government Board will direct that facilities be given to Mr. Barry for the purpose of testing the legality of these votes; and, whether in view of the charges made by Mr. Barry that the votes cast against him by Lord Doneraile, Mr. W. Johnson, and Mr. B. V. Mackay were bogus property votes, and that two men named Hunter and Nagle, having three votes apiece, and having filled up their voting papers in Mr. Barry's favour, were intimidated into tearing up the papers, a sworn inquiry into the circumstances attending the election will be ordered?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I understand the Guardians have passed a resolution to the effect referred to, and they were within their right in doing so. It is, of course, open to Mr. Barry to appeal to the Local Government Board. If he does so, and furnishes particulars of his objections, the Board will take the matter into consideration.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND) — SUNDAY DELIVERY IN CO. MAYO.

MR. O'BRIEN asked the Postmaster General, Why the Sunday Post established last year between Ballandine and Irishtown (county Mayo), on a numerously subscribed Memorial from the inhabitants of the district, has been discontinued; and, whether, having regard to the fact that the district served by the Sunday delivery contains three thousand persons, and that, under the present arrangement, letters arriving at Ballandine at twelve o'clock on Saturdays are not distributed until nine o'clock on Monday mornings, to the great inconvenience of trade in the district, arrangements will be made to re-establish the Sunday delivery at Irishtown?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: The hon. Member appears to be under a misapprehension in stating that a Sunday post was established to Irishtown last year, and has since been discontinued. There never has been a post on Sundays; but the late Mr. Fawcett promised that the accommodation should be afforded if applied for in accordance with the rule by persons receiving two-thirds of the letters for the district. No such application has yet been received; but when it is I shall be glad to give it my best consideration.

POST OFFICE—SUNDAY DELIVERY IN THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT.

MR. SMALL asked the Postmaster General, Whether he could not take steps to have even one delivery of letters on Sundays in the Metropolitan district, and thus obviate the inconveniences of the present system to dwellers in London?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: There does not appear to be any such general demand for a Sunday delivery in London as to justify me in making any change in the existing arrangements.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—ARMS LICENCE—NENAGH PETTY SESSIONS—CASE OF GEORGE NAPIER.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that on the 20th ultimo, a young man named George Napier, of Roscrea, was charged before the magistrates at Nenagh with having, on the 6th of the same month, "presented a revolver at a number of children;" whether several witnesses deposed to his having gone through the streets of Nenagh shouting "for the north," and calling the people "papists and rebels," and saying that he would "put a bullet through a Catholic or a rebel;" whether he was discharged without punishment on the occasion, and on what grounds; whether Major Waring, R.M., in giving the decision of the Bench, said—

"The magistrates who gave the defendant license to carry arms did not use discretion in doing so, and that he handled the weapon in a manner he ought not to have done;"

whether it is the custom with the magistrates of Roscrea to grant largely licenses to carry arms to persons of the same class as George Napier; and, whether the Government will make inquiry into the manner in which these licenses have been granted as well as into the decision of the magistrates in this case?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Perhaps the hon. Member will be good

enough to repeat this Question on Monday, by which time I hope to have a written Report of the case which is on its way, but has not yet reached me.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS—ESKER DIVISION, EDENDERRY UNION.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will cause inquiry to be made into the circumstances under which Mr. Bor, clerk of the union and returning officer for the Esker Division of the Edenderry Union, failed to send a voting paper to one Luke Dunne, and afterwards, at the casting up of the votes, rejected the voting paper of Dunne, on the ground that he had not applied for it on the 20th March; whether, in fact, Dunne applied on the 19th March at the workhouse for the voting paper in question, and filled it up under the direction of Mr. Bor himself, to whom he then and there delivered it; and, whether the Local Government Board have already had cause to complain of the conduct of this officer in similar matters?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It appears the clerk made a mistake in allowing Dunne to vote on the wrong day, and on an objection being made to the vote on this ground, he felt himself compelled to disallow it; but this did not affect the result of the election. The Local Government Board had some reason to complain of the manner in which this clerk discharged his duties last year; but his proceedings have been more satisfactory at the recent election.

SEED SUPPLY (IRELAND) ACT — EXTENSION OF TIME FOR REPAYMENT OF LOANS.

COLONEL NOLAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he would extend by a year the time allowed the Unions to collect Seed Rate; and, if this extension can be legally granted by an order of the Local Government Board or the Treasury, or if special legislation would be requisite?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: There does not appear to be any necessity for this extension of time, which would require legislation. It is open to any Board of Guardians desiring additional time to make application to the Board of Works, who, I believe, usually accede to any request of the kind made on reasonable grounds.

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE ULSTER CANAL.

DR. LYONS asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether My Lords will consent to stay the sale of the Ulster Canal until further evidence be taken as to the bearing and influence which this important link of connection in the inland waterways of Ireland may possibly exert in facilitating the transport of the materials and products of an extended system of industries in that part of the United Kingdom?

MR. HIBBERT: The Question of my hon. Friend affords me the opportunity of explaining the position of the Government with respect to this matter. The primary object of the Government throughout has been to do what seemed the best for the interests of the locality concerned, so far as could be done consistently with our duty to consider the pecuniary interests of the general taxpayer. As far as it was possible to ascertain it, the opinion of the districts through which the Canal passes was, and is, unanimously in favour of its retention as a water communication. There is also a general desire that the Canal should be improved, so as to make it more available for traffic; and my hon. Friend the Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) thought that he had secured both these objects with terms favourable to the interests of the locality and fair to the public by the scheme which is embodied in the Bills of the last and present Sessions. The local opinion appears to be in favour of this scheme, subject to certain amendments with respect to details, which have been accepted by the Government; but I have gathered, greatly to my surprise, that, although the opinions of the localities are favourable, the feeling amongst the Irish Members is adverse to it. The objections of hon. Members seem to rest mainly on financial grounds; but they could be remedied by modifications in the scheme.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Does that mean that the Government will withdraw the Bill?

MR. HIBBERT: No; but that they will consider what modifications could be made in it.

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—SLIGO HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS—MEMORIAL FOR EXTENSION OF TIME FOR REPAYMENT OF LOAN.

MR. SEXTON asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If the Treasury will grant the prayer of the Memorial of January last from the Sligo Harbour Commissioners, for extension of time for repayment of loan, postponement of instalments of principal, and lowering of rate of interest?

MR. HIBBERT: A full Report of this case has recently been received for consideration. I have already told the hon. Member that the interest on existing loans is based on the lowest rate legally possible, and therefore cannot be reduced. The decision as to prolonging the period of repayment of the present loans must depend on the willingness of the Harbour Commissioners to improve the securities which they have offered by a re-adjustment of the tolls.

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—SUPPLIES FOR THE TROOPS AT SUAKIN.

MR. DIGBY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is true that fresh mutton from New Zealand has been refused and beef from Russia accepted for British troops at Suakin; and, if so, whether it would not be possible to give a preference to Colonial meat, which would, in certain eventualities, probably become a matter of necessity?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The requirement of the Commissariat at Suakin was live cattle. The supply from New Zealand consisted of dead meat, frozen, and unsuited for use at the front. If Colonial live stock could be delivered at a price not greater than that paid for the produce of other countries, there would be every desire to give it the preference.

THE PAPAL SEE—DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATION WITH THE VATICAN—MR. ERRINGTON.

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If it is true that, with the concurrence of Her Majesty's Government, Mr. Errington has been making endeavours at Rome to prevent the appointment of a particular ecclesiastic to the See of Dublin?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, I am desired by Earl Granville to state, on his behalf, that I have no further information to give in addition to the statement which I have already made.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—HEALTH OF THE TROOPS ON THE NILE.

VISCOUNT LEWISHAM asked the Secretary of State for War, If his attention has been called to the letter published by their Cairo correspondent in *The Standard* of May 5th, from an officer in the camp at Kurot, near Debbeh; and, if the statements therein made, that the huts will not be completed till August, that seven men have died of enteric fever in the last twelve days, that, although the camp was only begun to be formed five weeks ago, there are already 150 sick, are correct; if so, and it is determined to keep the troops in that pestilential climate, if nothing can be done to alleviate their sufferings?

COLONEL DAWNAY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been called to the following extract from the letter of an officer in the camp at Kurot, near Debbeh, on the Upper Nile, in *The Standard*, of Tuesday, May 5th:—

"We are all in miserable bell tents, the huts cannot be finished till August. The temperature is now 120 degrees:

"Every day is 24 hours of physical torture:

"Seven of our men have died of enteric fever in the last twelve days, and although we only began to form our camp here five weeks ago, we have already 150 sick. It is a disgrace to keep us in such a fiendish country; nothing can excuse it:

"The food is bad, we are still in rags, as no clothing has come up yet:

"If they keep the troops here all the summer none will be left worth a straw:

"Now the correspondents are gone everything is concealed, and there is no one to say a word for the soldier;"

and, whether, considering that Lord Wolseley has left that country before the real hot season commenced, the British force on the Nile will be brought back, or is it decided to retain them there under the conditions above stated?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I have asked Sir Redvers Buller for information on this matter, and, by a tele-

gram, dated from Dongola, this morning, he reports as follows:—

"Hutting not yet finished at Kurot, Tani, or Merawi; should be this week. But troops have had day shelter for more than three weeks. Principal medical officer reports percentage sick, 7·1. Health of troops not so good, but not materially worse than at the date of last returns—viz., 15th April. Doctors report health at Dongola, Abu Gus, Tani, Merawi as good; at Shabadood, Kurot, and Fatmeh as fair."

With regard to the latter part of the noble Viscount's Question, I can only say that the statements made in Parliament have been sent to Lord Wolseley. We have been since that time in communication with him as to the measures to be taken upon them; and I expect that in the course of a very short time—probably in a day or two—I shall be in a position to inform the House that orders have been issued in accordance with the intentions stated to the House.

COLONEL DAWNAY: Are we to understand from the noble Marquess that the troops are still living in bell tents on the Upper Nile?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I presume that, at stations where the hutting has not been completed, they are; but, as stated by Sir Redvers Buller, day shelter during the great heat has been provided in all those stations for the troops for a considerable time.

VISCOUNT LEWISHAM: Can the noble Marquess tell us what kind of hutting it is?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: No, Sir; I cannot describe it accurately; but I presume it is in the nature of shedding.

MR. O'KELLY asked upon whose authority the noble Marquess made the statement that the troops were hutted? Last year the noble Marquess made a statement in that House that the troops were hutted on the Nile at a time when all the troops in the Valley of the Nile were living under canvas.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I have already stated that what I have said is on the authority of Sir Redvers Buller, who is the officer commanding at Dongola.

LAW AND POLICE—THE FOLKESTONE ABDUCTION CASE.

SIR EDWARD WATKIN asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he is aware that the woman Johnson, sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment for the alleged abduction of the daughter of the widow of a labouring man named Hearnden, of Acrise, in the parish of Folkestone, is about to leave prison; and, whether he has ordered any steps, and, if so, what, to be taken, in order to trace out the still missing child?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: With regard to the first part of this Question, I am informed that the prisoner will not be discharged till July. Every effort has been made by the police to find the missing child, both at home and abroad, but without success. The police are not of opinion that a reward should be issued.

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE RIVER BARROW.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Commission appointed early in the year to inquire into the Barrow Drainage has yet proceeded to work, and if he can say where and when it is proposed to take evidence, and what (if any) further surveys are considered necessary; and, whether they have yet been directed, and how long they are expected to take?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: My hon. Friend has asked me to answer this Question. The Secretary of the Commission informs me that they held their first meeting last month, and adjourned until they got the valuation, which is being made. This they expect to get in a few days, and they will then at once arrange for local sittings. No further surveys will be necessary.

ARMY (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT)—THE MARTINI-HENRY CARTRIDGES.

SIR FREDERICK MILNER asked the Surveyor General of Ordnance, What the Government intend to do with the large stock of Boxer cartridges to which he alluded on Monday; and, whether he will endeavour to arrange that they shall be used only for target practice, and not for purposes of war?

MR. BRAND, in reply, said, he had answered this Question the other day; but for the information of the hon. Gentleman he would repeat his answer. Those cartridges would be issued for purposes of practice to the Auxiliary Forces.

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE KILKENNY DRAINAGE DISTRICT SCHEME.

MR. MARUM asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the case of the arterial drainage scheme in the Goula and Erkina district, extending over portions of Tipperary, North Kilkenny, and the Queen's County for a distance of over twenty miles; that the land occupiers, mainly the tenant farmers of the locality, promoted this scheme, and subscribed a considerable sum out of their own resources to have the necessary surveys, maps, plans, and specifications executed by the county surveyor of Kilkenny, and further to have the same lodged with the Board of Works; that in due course, and during last autumn, the Inspector of the Board of Works, Mr. H. Barrington, C.E., inspected the drainage district and made his Report thereon, which was of a most favourable character, showing that it would highly improve the lands in the locality, and yield a considerable percentage upon the proposed outlay, besides exhibiting advantages of a sanitary nature, and further calculated to afford considerable employment in an impoverished district; that the summer period of the year is now at hand, when not only the proposed works can be executed with facility, but the labour market of the locality can be largely and beneficially availed of; and, whether the Board of Works, taking all these circumstances into favourable consideration, is prepared to carry out the undertaking of his predecessor in the office of Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, by forthwith giving effect to the long-continued and expensive efforts of the promoters of this important and desirable drainage operation?

MR. HIBBERT: I fancy that this is the same district as that about which a Question was asked me on February 24. If so, I can only say that the Government have every willingness to help this work forward. But there is no power under the present law to overrule the objections of the owners, which, apparently, are the sole obstacles to the completion of the Provisional Order. A Bill giving us that power is before the House, but it is blocked by the hon. Member for Cavan; and if the hon. Member could induce his hon. Friend (Mr. Biggar) to allow that Bill to proceed, this defect might be remedied.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—CASE OF MRS. ELIZA COLGAN.

MR. HEALY asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he can state his decision in the case of the trust money of Eliza Colgan, appropriated by an Irish Crown Solicitor?

MR. HIBBERT (who replied) said: In accordance with his promise, my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer has considered this question, and has reviewed all the facts and circumstances of the case, dating back to 1852. He has come to the conclusion that Mrs. Colgan may properly receive a further sum of £250, in addition to the amount already given, and payment of this sum was made to her on April 30.

MR. HEALY: On behalf of this poor woman I beg to thank the Chancellor of the Exchequer for looking into her case after she has been for 20 years in vain seeking justice from Dublin Castle.

LUNACY LAWS—MR. HILLMAN'S CASE.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to the decision of the Court of Appeal, in the Lewes lunacy case just concluded, in which, owing to a difference of opinion among the Judges on the Law, Mr. Hillman, who was unlawfully placed in an asylum, has to pay all the costs; whether it is true that the Lord Chief Justice of England decided in favour of Mr. Hillman, while two other Judges held opposite views; and, whether he will cause the Law regarding the confinement of persons alleged to be insane to be so altered as to be intelligible to those who have to administer it?

MR. GRANTHAM asked, Whether it was not a fact that Sir James Hannen and Lord Justice Lindley held in the Court of Appeal that Mr. Hillman had been lawfully placed in an asylum, and that there was no justification for the suggestion that the magistrates had acted in the slightest degree in any improper manner, or had not made a proper examination of Mr. Hillman before signing their certificate?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, that considering that the Court of Appeal had decided that Mr. Hillman was not unlawfully placed in an asylum, he did not see how he could interfere. It was, however, to be borne in mind that the judgment of the Court was not unanimous, and no doubt the Lord Chancellor would keep this case in view when dealing by legislation with the whole subject.

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—HEAD MONEY.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he has observed a statement, which appeared in a letter addressed to *The Times* by Mr. Wilfred Blunt, and which was published by that journal last Monday, that rewards had been given to any person belonging to the "friendly tribes," in the vicinity of Suakin, who brought in a human head; and, whether he will cause inquiry to be made, in order to learn whether there is any foundation for this report; and, if true, who is responsible for this barbarity?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No such information has been received; and until some evidence is adduced in support of Mr. Blunt's statement it does not appear necessary to make any inquiry on the subject.

CENTRAL ASIA—THE AFGHAN BOUNDARY COMMISSION—SIR PETER LUMSDEN.

MR. GIBSON asked the Under Secretary of State for India, When was Sir Peter Lumsden appointed on the Afghanistan Boundary Commission; what were the terms and tenure of his appointment; is his appointment over by his recall to London; what is the date of the letter or telegram summoning him to London; when Sir Peter Lumsden and Colonel Stewart leave Afghanistan, will any of their subordinate English officers remain; and, if so, what is to be their office and function; and, what is to become of the troops employed to escort Sir Peter Lumsden's Mission? He also wished to ask whether the Earl of Dufferin approved of the recall or withdrawal of Sir Peter Lumsden?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE (who replied) said: Sir Peter Lumsden's formal appointment bears the date of the 25th of August last, and nominated him as Her Majesty's Commissioner for the demarcation of the North-West boundary of Afghanistan. The instruction sent to him does not cancel his appointment, but requests his presence in London. It was despatched by telegraph on the 4th instant. Colonel Ridgway will remain in charge of the Commission, with Captain Yate and other officers as his assistants. Their office will be to examine and trace on the spot the details of the line of frontier under the conditions agreed upon in London. With regard to the future employment of the escort nothing is yet definitely settled.

MR. GIBSON: Has Sir Peter Lumsden been summoned to London to assist Her Majesty's Government on the question of the frontier?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No, Sir. The facts have already been stated by the Prime Minister.

MR. ONSLOW asked, Whether the escort which accompanied Sir Peter Lumsden will remain on the frontier of Afghanistan, or will at once return to India; what officers will remain to deliminate the frontier with the Russian Commissioner; and, whether the Ameer is to be represented on the new Commission; and, if so, whether his Representative will have an equal voice with the English and Russian Commissioner in the settlement of the frontier line? The hon. Member desired also to ask the Prime Minister, Whether the initial step for the withdrawal of Sir Peter Lumsden came from this country or from Sir Peter Lumsden; and if from the latter, how long ago had he tendered his registration to Her Majesty's Government?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No time has yet been fixed for the return of the escort to India. A portion of it will, in any case, remain to attend Colonel Ridgway and Captain Yate, who will carry on the work of the Commission. There will be no change in the position of the Ameer's Representative.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: Has any explanation been received from the Russian Government as to the reasons which prevented General Zelenoy from meeting Sir Peter Lumsden?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The hon. Member in putting the Ques-

tion is attempting to anticipate the information which will be in possession of the House when Papers on the subject are laid on the Table.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: When will the Papers be laid on the Table?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I cannot give the exact date; but I will present the Papers as soon as possible.

MR. ONSLOW said, the noble Lord had stated that there had been no change in the position of the Ameer's Representative; but the House had never been informed what the position of the Ameer's Representative was. Perhaps the noble Lord would now explain what the position was?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I believe this subject has been fully explained to the House.

"THE SYNOD OF THE CHURCH OF IRELAND."

MR. HEALY asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Did he officially authorise the letter, published on the 22nd inst., signed by his secretary, apologising for having addressed the Protestant Synod as "the Synod of the Protestant Episcopal Church of Ireland," and consenting to address that body as "the Synod of the Church of Ireland," if so can he state under what circumstances the latter title has been officially given, is he aware that the Government have always hitherto refused to the Disestablished Church the title it claims, that in the draft charter which the Government was asked to sanction they struck out the words "Church of Ireland," inserted by the representative body, that as in the Marriage Act of 1870, members and clergymen of this church are designated "Protestant Episcopalians," the Irish Registrar General, acting under the advice of the Law Adviser, Dublin Castle, directed clergymen of the disestablished religion to enter their church in the marriage register as the "Protestant Episcopal Church of Ireland;" that the Lord Lieutenant, in the recent order as to precedence, published in *The Dublin Gazette* of April 3rd, styles its bishops "Protestant Episcopalians;" that at the last Census members of this denomination numbered only 639,574 as against 3,960,891 Catholics, 470,734 Presbyterians, and 103,107 persons of other persuasions, and do the Home Office intend officially to style the Disestablished Church by a title calculated to give offence to other religious bodies in Ireland, while the Irish Government avoids the title complained of?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have not an intimate acquaintance with this matter—indeed, I never heard of it until I saw this Question on the Paper. This Question comes within the Heraldic Department of the Home Office, and, like all questions of nomenclature — especially ecclesiastic nomenclature—it is a very complicated question. However, I may tell the hon. and learned Member that I will consult the Irish Government as to the practice in the matter, as whatever is the practice of the Irish Government, it ought to be followed by the Home Office. The matter will be cleared up, so that in the Home Office and the Irish Office the Government might use some practice in the matter.

MR. GIBSON: Will the right hon. Gentleman, or the person in his Department who will consult the Irish Government, also look into the various Acts of Parliament relating to the matter, beginning with the Church Act, and see that they all recognize the title of "the Church of Ireland?"

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: What is the Heraldic Department of the Home Office? Who is the Head of it? I never heard of it.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: These heraldic questions are extremely complicated questions, as are mostly all questions of changes of name when other people object to have the name changed. The question was dealt with by those of the Department having to do with the styles and titles, proceedings of which I am not very fond.

MR. HEALY: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman if he can state whether the letter signed by his Secretary, apologizing for calling this Body the "Protestant Episcopal Church," was written without his authority, because this was a matter that created a great sensation in Ireland?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I am not sure when the letter was written. I am aware of the importance attached to these matters, and I can assure the hon. and learned Member that this matter will be carefully considered.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Is the right hon. Gentleman not aware that when a

short Bill was passed after the Church Act, and when it was proposed to call the Church "The Church of Ireland," it was called "The Disestablished Episcopal Church in Ireland?"

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I am not aware of that; but I see that I will have to get up this subject.

MR. SEXTON: Would the right hon. Gentleman have any objection to consulting the Irish Government as to whether there could be any reason in calling a certain Church "The Church of Ireland," when everybody knows the Church of Ireland is another Church altogether?

[No reply.]

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—M. OLIVIER PAIN.

MR. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY asked the Secretary of State for War, If there is any truth in the following statement from the Cairo Correspondent of *The Daily Telegraph*, dated Cairo, March 23rd, and appearing in *The Daily Telegraph* of April 3rd:—

"You have already heard that Olivier Pain, the Communist, is 'wanted,' and efforts are being made to capture him on his way down country. Whether he has had enough of the Soudan, and wishes to avoid spending the summer there, or has been sent north on a mission by the Mahdi, is much in doubt. The official information about him is meagre; simply that he was seen near Debbeh with a small retinue, making his way on camel-back down country. The following is the official notification:—'£50 Reward. The above reward is offered to anyone producing Olivier Pain (and his papers) dead or alive. He left Debbeh on a camel on the 13th March 1885. His description is as follows: Fair, with light hair and beard, about 5 feet 7 inches high, blue eyes, slight build, thin compressed lips, with a cruel looking face, reticent in speech and manner. He is very probably disguised as an Arab. His blue eyes should betray him. G. F. Wilson, Capt. R.E. Commandant, Sarras, March 16th 1885.' I knew of Pain's efforts to get down country at Dongola, but because of official interposition could not wire about him at that point;"

and, whether the alleged action has been sanctioned by the Government?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON, in reply, said, that he was not aware that the facts were as stated with regard to M. Pain, or with regard to the reward said to have been offered. The proceedings had not received the attention of Her Majesty's Government.

MR. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY asked whether the Government would hold an inquiry into the case?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON replied, that no information had been received from Sir Evelyn Baring on the subject, and that no instructions had been given by the British Government to countenance the arrest of M. Pain.

MR. O'KELLY asked whether the noble Marquess would undertake to give orders that the offer of the reward should be withdrawn?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I am not aware that the reward has been offered. If the hon. Member wants any information on the subject he had better give Notice of a Question to the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs with regard to it.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked whether any such reward as this could be paid out of the Army Fund, or whether it would be paid out of the Secret Service money?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, he did not think that any such payment could be made a charge against the Army Fund.

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—ARKLOW HARBOUR WORKS.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, with reference to the failure of Arklow Harbour Works, and the preliminary Report sent to the Treasury, which was alleged to be most re-assuring, Whether the preliminary Report has been borne out by the Report of Mr. Manning, Engineer in Chief to the Board of Works in Ireland, just laid upon the Table, in which the following statements are made:—

"On the 4th January a Report was received from the Superintendent of the works that on the previous day he observed cracks in the parapet of the sea wall, and that some of the face blocks had moved out. The principal Assistant Engineer was at once despatched to the Harbour, which he visited on the 5th, and reported that for 90 feet in length (of the 458 feet constructed) the face blocks had moved out from 2 inches to 20 inches, and had sunk a few inches, and that the sand had been scoured away from along the sea face of the Pier . . .

"I visited the work myself on the 6th of February, when it was in the same state as reported by Mr. Greene, and although it was to be regretted that any damage whatever had been done, still the amount of it was comparatively little, and its repair presented no difficulty, but it was obvious that the sand foundations had been scoured out . . . . on the 3rd March fresh subsidence was re-

ported. On the 9th March, Mr. Henry Keating, Assistant Engineer, was sent to Arklow to make a survey, but the weather was not sufficiently moderate to enable him to take soundings till the 14th and 16th of that month. This survey shows that for about 130 feet in length the sea slope had been more or less damaged, and that the sand foundations had been scoured out by the sea, forming a trench parallel with the Pier from 40 to 50 feet wide, and of an average depth of about 6 feet under the previous level of the bed of the sea.

"I need not here enter into more detail; it is sufficient to say that the damages described are to be entirely attributed to the scouring out of the sand already described, and which extended under the foundations of the storm-wall for its entire width of 19½ feet;"

whether he has noticed the following in Mr. Manning's Report:—

"It has been stated that the mode of construction adopted at Arklow was objected to by the members of a local committee; I have only to state in reply, that for the nine years during which I have been engaged on the subject of the design and erection of Harbour Works at Arklow, I have never upon any occsion received any suggestion of the kind from anyone;"

whether in consequence of this statement he will lay upon the Table the protest and objections submitted to the Board of Works by the local committee of Arklow; and, whether he will put a stop to the works until the opinion of a competent engineer is obtained as to what is best to be done under the circumstances?

MR. HIBBERT: The hon. Member's quotations from the Parliamentary Papers are accurately given so far as they go; but I do not know whether he disputes the statement which he omits to quote—that the local objections related to the general design, not to the method of execution. As the Question only appeared on the Paper this morning, I have not been able to look over the Papers bearing on this point; but I will obtain copies of them from Ireland, and show them to the hon. Member. The suggestion regarding the suspension of the works at the present moment seems to me inadvisable, as it would involve the loss of the favourable summer weather and incur the risk of exposing the works in an unfinished state to another winter's storm.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND asked whether, having regard to the fact that the official who reported was an *employé* of the Board of Works, and consequently interested in screening that Board, the Treasury would consent to the appointment of an independent engineer to give a Report on these works?

MR. HIBBERT: I would be glad to consider such an application if the Local Authority bore the expenses of it.

MR. PARNELL: With regard to the matter, I would ask the hon. Gentleman to consider again the desirability of sending over from this country some distinguished English engineer, so as to see how the Board of Works executes these undertakings.

MR. HIBBERT: I will consider the question of sending over an independent engineer to report on the matter.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked, did not General Sankey make a special inspection of the works, and why was not his Report published?

MR. HIBBERT: General Sankey's Report is not considered of any great importance; but if the hon. Member wishes to get it it will be given.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: If an independent engineer is appointed, why should the locality be asked to bear the expense, seeing that the whole thing has arisen from the failure of the Board of Works' officials?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

[No reply.]

INLAND REVENUE—STAMP DUTY ON FOREIGN BONDS.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the Stamp Duty of 10 per cent. upon bonds to bearer is to be levied upon all existing bonds to bearer of Foreign States, the coupons of which are paid in London; and, if so, how this Stamp Duty is to be levied in the case of bonds the interest of which is paid, either in England or abroad, at the option of the holder?

MR. HIBBERT: The rate in question is 10*s.*, or one-half per cent, not 10 per cent. It will not apply to existing bonds of the nature referred to.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN).—ALLEGED PROCLAMATION OF LORD WOLSELEY.

COLONEL DAWNAY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether Her Majesty's Government is prepared to support Lord Wolseley's proclamation that our troops would remain a hundred years, if necessary, in the Soudan

in order to recapture Khartoum; and, if they are not prepared to abide by this declaration, what steps they intend to take to defend the friendly tribes from the fatal consequences of trusting to these assurances?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I am not aware that Lord Wolseley ever issued any Proclamation in the sense of the Question. I have seen a report of a speech said to have been made by Lord Wolseley to some Black troops of General Gordon in which there is some expression to the effect stated; but I do not think that Lord Wolseley ever issued a Proclamation containing any statement of that kind. As I have stated already, we hope very shortly to be able to make a statement as to our intentions with regard to the troops in the Soudan; and I cannot say more upon this occasion except that I have not the smallest doubt that, on the movement of the troops in the Soudan, the officers in command will make as good arrangements as possible for the protection of persons who stand in need of protection.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked whether the noble Marquess would be in a position to make the statement to which he referred before the discussion on Monday?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I doubt whether I can make that statement to-morrow; but on Monday, before the discussion, I shall probably be able to state what orders have been given.

MR. O'KELLY asked whether the noble Marquess would take into consideration the desirability of issuing orders to the General commanding at Suakin to stop the attacks on the Arabs until the Government had made up their mind what they were going to do in the Soudan?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I do not think that Question arises out of the Question on the Paper.

CENTRAL ASIA—THE AFGHAN BOUNDARY COMMISSION.

MR. MONTAGU SCOTT (for Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the complete text of the Despatch from M. de Giers, which contains the following words:—

> "It is impossible for us not to trace back the cause of the present situation to the military aspect with which the English Government thought it their duty to invest their Boundary Commission," and "we cannot pass by the fact that the loudly proclaimed interview between the Amir and the Viceroy, and its bellicose surroundings, must certainly have emboldened the Afghans to the point of committing such acts of provocation as could not be tolerated by the Russian military authorities;"

whether there is the slightest foundation for the charges thus made by M. de Giers; whether the Russian Government have asked for the withdrawal of Sir Peter Lumsden and other British officers; and, whether the return of Sir Peter Lumsden to London is in consequence of such representations?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The hon. Member will receive the information which he desires from the Correspondence which will shortly be laid before the House.

EGYPT—SUPPRESSION OF THE "BOSPHORE EGYPTIEN."

MR. MONTAGU SCOTT (for Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If Her Majesty's Ministers will lay upon the Table the words of

> "The expression of regret to the French Republic, in which Her Majesty's Government associated itself with that of Egypt;"

and, whether it is true that *The Bosphore Egyptien* is shortly to re-appear?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The words used by Earl Granville to the French Ambassador were recorded in a despatch to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris, which will be laid before Parliament. I am informed that the owner or editor of the paper has announced that it will appear in a few days. I have no reason to believe that this will be the case.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that the Prime Minister had stated that the Papers could not be laid upon the Table until the unknown future had been rather more unrolled. He should like to know when they were to have Papers laid on the Table relating to matters as far as they had gone, and down to what date the Papers would go?

MR. GLADSTONE: The right hon. Gentleman has substantially conceived the Question in a proper manner, and conveys it very properly in his own poetical phraseology.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION) BILL—THE NEW DIVISIONS OF COUNTIES—ALTERNATIVE NAMES.

MR. FRANCIS BUXTON asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, considering the necessity for clearness and concise definitions in all matters connected with the Redistribution of Seats and the registration of great numbers of new voters, he will recommend on Consideration of the Redistribution of Seats Bill that no alternative names shall be given to the new divisions of counties, but that every such division shall be known solely and always by one single name?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I have frequently expressed my dislike for double names; but, looking to the most recent decisions of the House, I doubt if the House would agree to strike out all double names.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—THE RUSSIAN ATTACK ON PENJDEH—THE PROPOSED ARBITRATION.

MR. ONSLOW asked the First Lord of the Treasury, What steps have been taken to inform the Ameer of Afghanistan of the agreement recently arrived at between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of Russia on the subject of arbitration on the unprovoked aggression of General Komaroff on Penjdeh; and, whether the Viceroy of India has signified his approval of the recent decisions of Her Majesty's Government?

MR. HEALY rose to Order. He wished to know whether the words "unprovoked aggression" ought to be allowed to appear upon the Paper; and whether it was not an insult to a Foreign Power on a very delicate matter?

MR. SPEAKER: I understand that the Question of the hon. Member alludes to an expression previously used, and that the words are referred to as a quotation.

MR. GLADSTONE: If the expression referred to is intended to be a repetition of a phrase expressive of my own opinion it is nothing of the kind, and, moreover, it is not an accurate quotation. What I said was as follows:—Upon the very first day, I think, of the arrival of the first telegrams from Sir Peter Lumsden, having gone through all the material parts, or what we judged to be the material parts, of these telegrams as they had arrived, I stated that upon the face of those Papers what had taken place appeared to be an unprovoked aggression. I never presumed at that moment to qualify or to describe the incident in conclusive terms, because I knew very well that the information which we had received was partial; and, in point of fact, it was within 24 hours, or certainly within a very short time after the receipt of those telegrams, that very important qualifications of the information they conveyed were received from Sir Peter Lumsden himself. So much for this expression; and I will only observe that there is now a constant practice of inserting in Questions, as if they were matters of course, matters which do not touch the point of the Questions, but involve assumptions of the utmost consequence, and that these assumptions are sometimes made—as in the present instance—with very slight regard to accuracy. As to the substantial part of the Question, I am bound to say that this expression had escaped my attention, because it does not belong to the main issue of the Question. The Viceroy of India has arranged with the Ameer the basis upon which the British Government is proceeding; and if any further communication on the subject with the Ameer should be requisite he will make it. To that Question the hon. Member adds the inquiry whether the Viceroy of India approves the decisions which Her Majesty's Government have come to? I do not see that it would be any part of my duty to answer such a Question. The Viceroy of India must be taken to approve these decisions; and when the proper times comes the hon. Member will have plenty of information—perhaps a little more than he may like—as to what the Viceroy does think on the point.

MR. ONSLOW: I must remind the right hon. Gentleman that the Viceroy, in the speech he made after his return from Rawul Pindi, also made use of the words.

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN: I should like to ask you, Mr. Speaker, on the point of Order arising out of your ruling a moment ago, whether, if an expression is used in the course of a debate in this

House, it will afterwards be in Order if quoted in a Question?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is putting an utterly strained interpretation on my words.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: May I ask the Prime Minister whether it is not the case that the Viceroy of India, in a speech at the Durbar, in presence of a large number of Natives, described the attack of the Russians on the Afghans as an "unprovoked aggression," without any of the qualification which the Prime Minister now seeks to introduce?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have not before me the exact words of the Viceroy on the occasion. [*Ironical cheers and laughter.*] I am not surprised at that demonstration; but I must enter my protest against it on behalf of the dignity and the traditions of the House. To me, personally, it is a very small matter that such demonstrations should be made; but to this House, and the future of this House, it is a very grave matter. ["Order!"] I am not out of Order. I have not the smallest doubt that the expressions used by the Viceroy have been perfectly warranted by the circumstances.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I shall put the Question to the right hon. Gentleman to-morrow.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—THE RUSSO-AFGHAN FRONTIER—THE BATTLE AT AK TEPE—COLONEL ALIKHANOFF.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the letter in *The Daily News* of Tuesday, from a Correspondent who was present at the battle of Pul-i-Khisti, in which it is stated that Colonel Alikhanoff ordered his Sarik Turcomans to attack Captain Yate's party; whether Captain Yate was deputed by Sir Peter Lumsden to watch the course of affairs at Penj-deh; whether Captain Yate had taken any part in the engagement of March 30th, or in any way transgressed the limits of his Commission; and, whether Colonel Alikhanoff is one of the gallant Officers whose conduct is not to be inquired into?

MR. GLADSTONE: The Question of the hon. Member is in four parts, and I shall reply to them as they are stated. With regard to the first statement, as far as the Russian Government is concerned, the report has been repudiated by them in the strongest terms. As far as we are concerned, I am not aware of any foundation for the report except rumour. I have not seen the letter referred to. As to the second part of the Question, Captain Yate was deputed by Sir Peter Lumsden to watch the course of affairs at Penj-deh. With regard to the third paragraph, so far as we are informed, Captain Yate took no part in the action, and did not transgress the limits of his commission with regard to it. With regard to the fourth paragraph, Colonel Alikhanoff, as I presume, stands relatively to the agreement in exactly the same position as all the other officers on both sides who were concerned in directing the operations.

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN).

MR. A. J. BALFOUR asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he can make any statement with regard to the policy they intend to pursue in the Soudan in the event of a peaceful settlement of the present controversy with Russia?

MR. JOHN MORLEY: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers, perhaps he will allow me to put another Question on the same subject. I must apologize for not giving due Notice; but the point is one of great and immediate urgency. My Question is, whether it was in accord with the policy announced by the right hon. Gentleman in presenting the Vote of Credit that what was called the "brilliant engagement" of May the 5th took place when an encampment of Bedouins, their women and children, and their flocks, were attacked by General Graham, and 150 men killed, although it is alleged by eye-witnesses that they never made any serious defence?

MR. GLADSTONE: In regard to the first Question, I am not about to make any statement on the subject. With respect to the second Question, I think my hon. Friend would do well to put this Question to my noble Friend the Secretary of State for War, to whom it belongs, to receive information on the subject.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: May I ask the noble Marquess the Question now?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I have received nothing but a very short telegram from Lord Wolseley, containing a very short account indeed of something that appears to have been in the nature of a reconnaissance by General Graham yesterday. If I had thought the Question would have been put, I would have brought down the telegram and read it to the House. As far as my recollection serves, it does not confirm the particulars the hon. Member refers to as contained in the telegram of one of the correspondents. The hon. Member asks whether such an operation is consistent with the terms made use of when the Vote of Credit was laid on the Table. As far as my recollection serves me, what my right hon. Friend (Mr. Gladstone) said with regard to the Suakin Railway was that it was not intended to prosecute it for military purposes to Berber; but that it would be continued to such a point as the Government might consider expedient after consulting with the Military Authorities, and that, in the meantime, further proceedings with regard to the railway would be considered. Under these circumstances, I do not think it is inconsistent with that statement that the railway should be continued till such progress has been made as may be desired by the Military Authorities. While any progress is being made by the railway, of course adequate protection must be given, and measures of the kind referred to may be found necessary by the Commander-in-Chief.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: May I ask the noble Marquess whether he is aware that the telegram from Lord Wolseley has been communicated by the War Office to the evening papers, and that, so far from the operation being a reconnaissance, the words used are, "Graham made this morning a most successful raid?" I should like to ask the noble Marquess whether, in the course of the evening, he will despatch orders to Suakin absolutely prohibiting the repetition of such aimless and purposeless raids?

LORD EUSTACE CECIL: Is the noble Marquess aware that a great number of sheep and cattle were driven off, that the village was burnt, and that the wells were blown up with gunpowder?

MR. LABOUCHERE: May I ask whether the noble Marquess is aware that not only one correspondent, but two, have confirmed the report? I am told that even three have done so. It is confirmed in strong terms by the correspondent of *The Morning Post.*

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I have no doubt the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill) is correct in regard to the description that is given of the operation by Lord Wolseley. It appears to me to be a matter of very little importance whether it is described as a "raid" or as a "reconnaissance." No doubt there was a military movement, and no doubt some fighting took place. In regard to the other Questions, hon. Members appear not to be aware that a body of troops, or more than one body of troops, under Osman Digna are still threatening, not only the advanced posts held by our troops, but would also threaten Suakin itself. Until a decision has been arrived at entirely to abandon the further construction of the railway, I consider that the General Officers are entitled to take such measures as they may consider necessary for its protection.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I beg to give Notice, in consequence of the answer of the noble Marquess, that I will put the Question on the Paper for to-morrow, in order to enable the noble Marquess to give all the information in his power.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: May I ask the Prime Minister, considering that the House is occupied in voting money for the Soudan, and considering the slaughter that is going on in that part of the world, how soon he expects to be able to make a statement on the subject?

MR. GLADSTONE: My noble Friend has already stated that on Monday he expects to be able to convey to the House the instructions which have been sent to the military officers in the Soudan, and I think it is too soon to make any statement on the subject generally. It is not usual, when one great subject of public policy is locked up with another, and dependent upon the conclusion of another, to make any statement in regard to it.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it was or was not a statement of policy when, in presenting the Vote of Credit,

he told us that, as to the Soudan, it was the intention of the Government not to prosecute further offensive operations?

MR. GLADSTONE: Most certainly that was a statement of policy, I conceive, of the utmost importance; but the Question put to me by the hon. Gentleman asks me to make a statement with regard to the policy we intend to pursue in the Soudan in the event of a peaceful settlement of the present controversy with Russia. I think I ought not to be called upon to say when I will make a further statement.

CENTRAL ASIA — RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN — THE RUSSO-AFGHAN FRONTIER.

MR. MONTAGU SCOTT (for Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether Her Majesty's Government have offered to allow the Russian Government to retain Ak Tépé and the Penj-deh oasis; and, whether an arbitrator has yet been found to adjudicate upon the breach of the sacred covenant?

MR. GLADSTONE: That is a Question with regard to particular communications now going on between the two Governments with respect to the Afghan Frontier, and I cannot enter into explanations while these negotiations are in progress.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Commission for the Delimitation of the Afghan Frontier is still in existence or has been dissolved by the recall of Sir Peter Lumsden and Colonel Stewart; if it is still in existence why it is considered desirable, as stated by the First Lord of the Treasury on Tuesday, that these officers should come home to London forthwith; whether the settlement in London of the main points of the Afghan Frontier will be postponed until the arrival of Sir Peter Lumsden; whether the date of Sir Peter Lumsden's recall was prior or subsequent to the departure of Mr. Condie Stephen for England; and, whether such date was prior or subsequent to the receipt of Russia's acceptance of the proposal of arbitration?

MR. GLADSTONE: I think it has already been stated by my noble Friend, as to the first head of this Question, that the Commission of Sir Peter Lumsden is still in existence. With regard to the second head—if the Commission is still in existence, why it is considered desirable that these officers should come home to London forthwith?—the fact is this, that as negotiations are to be carried on here, and only details are to be examined on the spot, it is not considered that the examination of details is a proper employment for Sir Peter Lumsden, a functionary who was despatched to that country for a purpose of a much higher order, and that is the cause of the change which has taken place in the instructions to Sir Peter Lumsden with Colonel Stewart to repair to this country. In reply to the third head of the Question—whether the discussion of the main points will be postponed till the arrival of Sir Peter Lumsden?—there is no such intention. We are in full communication with Sir Peter Lumsden, and I am not aware that there is any necessity for a postponement. In regard to the fourth Question, the dates, I believe, are as follow:—The telegram requesting Sir Peter Lumsden to come to England was sent on the 4th; the acceptance by Russia of the reference proposed to a friendly Sovereign was received on the 3rd. As regards the priority between the instructions to Sir Peter Lumsden and the information from Sir Peter Lumsden about Mr. Stephen, that information made us aware that Sir Peter Lumsden had directed Mr. Stephen to come home. It did not state the date when the direction to Mr. Stephen was given; but the information to us was despatched on the 22nd, and I have no doubt that the direction to Mr. Stephen must have been either on the same date or a date immediately antecedent to it. I have no doubt that the latter gentleman left about the same date.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the House may entertain the hope that the permanent presence of some Consular or Diplomatic Agent at Herat will form part of the contemplated arrangement with regard to the settlement of the Afghan north-western frontier, to whom the Russian Government may apply in case of any local disputes arising in connection with the frontier, and who will be in a position to advise Her Majesty's Government as to their merits?

MR. GLADSTONE: I take this Question to be in the nature of a friendly suggestion, which might well deserve

consideration; but I think the hon. Gentleman will see that it would be too early to make any Parliamentary statement on the subject.

EGYPT (THE SOUDAN)—MILITARY OPERATIONS NEAR SUAKIN.

MR. LABOUCHERE: With respect to the answers of the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for War in regard to these statements in *The Times*, I would really ask the Prime Minister, Whether he himself has read, or will read, what is stated by *The Times'* Correspondent; and, whether some communication will be made at once to General Graham, or the other officers commanding, to tell them that these acts are not in accordance with civilized warfare—that villages being looted and burned, and women and children being fired upon——

MR. SPEAKER: This is an argument, not a Question.

MR. GLADSTONE: With regard to the first part of the Question, it will be my duty, in conjunction with my noble Friend, to get the most authentic information of what has taken place; and my hon. Friend may rely upon it that any orders it will be our duty to give will be in strict conformity with the pledges we have given.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE REGISTRATION OF VOTERS BILLS.

MR. PARNELL wished to ask, Whether there would be any objection to take the Registration of Voters (Ireland) Bill first to-morrow, on the understanding that on the Motion for the Speaker leaving the Chair on going into a fresh Committee the question of the payment of registration expenses should be raised by an Amendment, and that the result of the debate and division on that Amendment should be held to decide the question of the payment of such expenses with regard both to Ireland and England?

MR. GLADSTONE said, when he was informed yesterday that the question which had been decided on Tuesday by a small majority was about to be raised again in Committee on the Registration of Voters (England) Bill, he felt it necessary, especially in the absence of many Members of the Government, to reserve the matter for consideration. With regard to the course of Business, on reflecting on it, it appeared quite evident upon the face of it that when it was desired and intended to raise again a question which had been settled in a House of nearly 500 Members that that was rather what might be called a serious intention. It was an intention to challenge the House at large, and the Government were of opinion that there ought to be sufficient Notice to Members of the debate and division which would take place. That being so, the Government could not propose to take that debate to-morrow. The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) has proposed that the Irish Bill should be taken first. There was no very great question of convenience in point of time as between the two Bills. Both were admitted to be urgent; but as the English question was much the larger, and was that upon which the House had already been called upon to give its opinion, the view of the Government was that they ought to proceed with the English Bill first. That was the appropriate method to give hon. Members the means of again raising the point. They had before them the Registration Bills, the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill, and the arrangement made with regard to the Vote of Credit. What the Government proposed was this—that they should make an effort to finish what remained of the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill to-morrow; and he thought—considering the importance of that question, and the relations of different portions of the House to one another with regard to it, and the general desire there was to close it without associating it with contested questions—what he hoped was that if it should be found that it could not be finished to-morrow, the House would not, for once, grudge meeting on Saturday for that purpose. There was no reason to suppose that there would be any large residue of Business after to-morrow. He sincerely hoped it would be finished to-morrow; but if a small residue were left, he gave Notice, without asking any pledge from the House, that the Government would think it their duty to propose that course. With regard to the Registration Bills, which were undoubtedly urgent, what the Government thought was that they should take those Registration Bills on Monday,

if hon. Gentlemen opposite were disposed to allow the debate on the Vote of Credit, which had been fixed for that day, to stand over until Tuesday. He should, however, have no power to secure Tuesday for that purpose by any right of the Government; but he thought he could undertake to try it if the arrangement were agreeable to hon. Gentlemen oppposite. If, however, hon. Gentlemen opposite attached importance to keeping their hold on Monday for the Vote of Credit, the Government would take Tuesday for the Registration Bills.

MR. GORST asked whether, if the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill was finished to-morrow or Saturday, the Prime Minister would on Monday make his promised Statement as to the legislation contemplated for the remainder of the Session?

MR. GLADSTONE said, the pressure upon the Government had been so great that he was not certain that he could make that Statement fully; but he would make a Statement sufficient for the convenience of the House, and consider what might remain. If the Business proceeded as was expected, he should make the whole announcement in the course of next week.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, it had been thought convenient to have the question on the Registration Bills decided before the end of the week; but if the right hon. Gentleman thought the other course more convenient, the Opposition were, he believed, disposed to take the arrangement he proposed. But what was more important than the question of redistribution, or registration, or anything else, was that they should have, as early as possible, a fair opportunity of hearing, and as soon as possible afterwards of discussing, the statement promised by the Secretary of State for War, because they felt it was becoming urgent—namely, an explanation of the policy of Her Majesty's Government with regard to the Soudan. He should be extremely sorry to consent to any arrangement for putting off the debate on Monday, which would deprive them of that opportunity. Were they to understand that in the event of the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill being finished this week and the Registration Bill put down for Monday, that the latter would be preceded by a statement of the character they had reason to expect from the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War?

MR. GLADSTONE said, his noble Friend had given the engagement with respect to Monday with every disposition to keep it; and he hoped his noble Friend would be in a position to keep it in the letter and the spirit. But it was really in the discretion of hon. Gentlemen opposite to determine what the course of Business should be on Monday and Tuesday as between the Registration Bills and the debate on the Vote of Credit. What he thought would be an inconvenient arrangement would be that they should nominally fix the Registration Bills for Monday, and then spend it on a debate on the statement of his noble Friend.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE thought that the arrangement proposed by the right hon. Gentleman would be satisfactory. They understood that they were to have the statement of the noble Marquess on Monday, and that the right hon. Gentleman would undertake to get Tuesday for the discussion of the Vote of Credit. [MR. GLADSTONE: Yes.] There seemed to be some misunderstanding, if they had the statement of the noble Marquess on Monday, whether they would not run the risk of losing the opportunity of discussing the Registration Bill.

MR. GLADSTONE replied that the Government had the arrangement of the Orders, and, that being so, they could provide against that.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked the right hon. Gentleman whether, as the matter in controversy was raised first on the Registration of Voters (Ireland) Bill, and as it was proposed by the Government to insert a clause in that Bill which they did not propose to insert in the Registration of Voters (England) Bill, it would not be more convenient that the question should be discussed on the Irish rather than on the English Bill? Gentlemen on his side had no desire to raise the same question twice, and they would be content to take the vote of the House on the Registration of Voters (Ireland) Bill.

MR. GLADSTONE said, that as the House, with a very large attendance and upon good Notice, had previously decided the point in reference to the English Bill, he hoped that they would proceed on that footing.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, that Members in his part of the House did not understand how any assurance could be given that there would be no debate upon the statement of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War on Monday, even if right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite raised none.

MR. GLADSTONE said, that if he might be allowed to state his opinion, the best and the clearest course would be if his noble Friend made his statement on Tuesday.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he hoped that favourable consideration would be given to the suggestion that the noble Marquess would make his statement to-morrow.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, he could not give an undertaking to the House, because the communications that were going on might not be complete. He might not be able to give a full statement to-morrow.

MR. PARNELL put it to the Prime Minister whether it would be fair to allow the question as to registration expenses to be decided, and the discussion taken on the Irish Bill, in view of the fact that, practically, there had been no debate on the merits of the question so far as the Irish Bill was concerned. When the question was raised and decided the other night, it was done in a very thin House, and almost without debate.

MR. GLADSTONE said, that the argument of the case, as he was at present advised, was quite the opposite to that indicated by the hon. Member.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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SUPPLY—ARMY ESTIMATES.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

(1.) £58,100, Divine Service.

(2.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £38,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Administration of Military Law, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886."

MR. HEALY said, he wished to put a question to the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) in regard to a case which had been mentioned in the American newspapers, of the alleged deportation to this country of a soldier who had been formerly a piper in a Highland regiment. It appeared that the man had deserted, and had gone to America. After residing for some years in the United States he was decoyed into Canadian territory, under the pretence of finding him employment, whereupon he was arrested, put in irons, and brought in that condition to England. It was further stated that the American Consul had interfered on behalf of the man, on the ground that he was an American subject; and that his case had been tried before a military tribunal and dismissed, on the ground that the original charge against him was unfounded. He thought the whole matter was one which required explanation.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, he had never heard of the case until that moment; and he regretted that the hon. and learned Member had not made it the subject of a Question, put after Notice, in the ordinary manner, before the commencement of Public Business. If the hon. and learned Member had taken that course, he would have been able to make inquiry, and give the hon. and learned Member full information. As the matter stood, he was not able to give any details; but if the hon. and learned Member would put a Question to-morrow, he would give the information asked for.

MR. HEALY said, he would adopt the suggestion of the noble Marquess.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR said, he had to complain that the information supplied with regard to Army administration was very meagre; and he thought there ought to be an annual Report presented to Parliament.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL said, that he had last year pointed out to the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Judge Advocate General (Mr. Osborne Morgan) that it was advisable to give some idea to the Committee of the character of the offences for which trials by courts martial had taken place, and punishments had been awarded. He was under the impression that the right hon. and learned Gentleman had promised that, in another year, information should be supplied. He had looked carefully over the Return presented to Parliament for their approval; but he could not find out that it contained any fur-

ther information with regard to crimes and punishments. He thought it would have been interesting to have had such a Return in connection with the troops now serving abroad in the Soudan. The system of military punishments had now been entirely changed, and it would be of advantage if hon. Members were able to form some conclusion as to the results of the change, as shown by the nature of the crimes, trials, and punishments in connection with courts martial. In the present state of the information, it was impossible to say whether the misconduct of the troops had been great or small. Then, again, they were unable to say under what conditions the men were kept in prison—whether they were detained in custody at Cairo, Alexandria, or elsewhere, or whether they were sent home to serve their sentences. He hoped the right hon. and learned Gentleman would be able to give the Committee a full account of all that had been going on in the course of last year, so that the Committee might be able to form for themselves some information as to the merits or demerits of the system of punishment now adopted as compared with that which formerly prevailed.

GENERAL ALEXANDER, in moving the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £2,000—the salary of the Judge Advocate General—said, he desired at the outset to disclaim all feeling of hostility towards the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Osborne Morgan) who now so pleasantly and ably discharged the duties of Judge Advocate General in that House. His business that night was not with the present or any past holder of the Office, but simply with the Office itself and its duties. He maintained, although he might be wrong, that there were no duties connected with the Office, or, at any rate, none which could not be equally well discharged by the subordinates in the Department of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. What, to begin with, were the duties of the Judge Advocate General in that House? His principal duty was either to pilot the Army (Annual) Bill in its several stages through the House—work which could not be said either to be very onerous, or of a very important character. His next duty in the House of Commons was to do that which he was now doing—namely, to be present at the discussion of the Army Estimates, and more especially of the particular Vote now before the Committee. In the third place, it was his duty in the House to answer any Questions which might be put to him in connection with the Department; but, as far as he (General Alexander) remembered, such Questions were very few indeed. As a matter of fact, no Minister of the Crown in that House was less troubled with Questions than the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Judge Advocate General. With regard to his duties outside the House, the first and most important was to attend Her Majesty, and, having previously read and ascertained the legality of the proceedings of all general courts martial, to submit them to Her Majesty the Queen for revision and confirmation. He had seen paragraphs from time to time in the newspapers, stating that the Judge Advocate General had had an audience of the Queen, and had submitted to Her Majesty the proceedings of certain courts martial; but by far the most onerous duty connected with the Office of Judge Advocate General, outside the House, was the revision of the proceedings of many thousands of district courts martial. Mr. O'Dowd, the permanent Judge Advocate, said to the Committee which sat to consider this subject in connection with the Mutiny Act in 1878 that there were between 7,000 and 8,000 district courts martial held annually. He understood that since that time the number had very largely increased. There could be no doubt that the revision would be laborious indeed if it involved the consideration of many abstruse legal points. But everybody who had served in the Army, and especially those who had discharged the duties of adjutant to a regiment, would know that that was by no means the case, and that the proceedings of most of the courts martial were of the very simplest possible character, involving no questions of law whatever. Even if there were any difficult points of law to be considered, it would not speak much for the system of examination to which the officers of the Army were subjected if they could not be dealt with by the officers themselves, as they had to pass a very strict examination in Military Law. He might mention that the sort of cases which came before the Judge

Advocate General for his revision were cases in which men had been tried by district courts martial for desertion, in which a difference arose between the Judge Advocate General and the court as to whether the offence amounted to desertion, or the minor offence of absence without leave. That was the sort of case which, as a general rule, came before the Judge Advocate General for revision, and there were very few even of those cases. He submitted that such cases of law, as did from time to time occur, might very well be disposed of by the permanent Judge Advocate and his assistants in the right hon. and learned Gentleman's Department. Mr. O'Dowd told the Committee in 1878 to which he (General Alexander) had just referred that he, or one of his military subordinates, was in the habit of reading over the proceedings of every court martial; and he (General Alexander) inferred from what Mr. O'Dowd told the Committee that the Judge Advocate General of the day was not in the habit of reading those proceedings himself. The custom in that respect might have changed in the right hon. and learned Gentleman's time, because he (General Alexander) understood from the right hon. and learned Gentleman that he was in the habit of reading the proceedings of all these courts martial himself.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN): Not all of them.

GENERAL ALEXANDER: Well; a considerable portion of them.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN): Only those in which questions of law are involved.

GENERAL ALEXANDER continued: Of course, the right hon. and learned Gentleman would have a right to read the proceedings of any of the courts martial he liked; but he (General Alexander) maintained that the work was a very unnecessary work, and that to perform duties of that kind was very much like attaching a fifth wheel to a coach. Mr. O'Dowd was perfectly competent, with his two military subordinates, who received £700 a-year each, to discharge all the duties connected with the revision of the proceedings of the district courts martial. A further point was that, in revising the proceedings of the district courts martial, the right hon. and learned Gentleman had nothing to do with the severity of the sentences, and had no right to interfere in that respect. Mr. O'Dowd told the Committee that it was not desirable the Judge Advocate General should be able to interfere with the severity of the sentence, as that would be, to a certain extent, an interference with discipline; and His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge, who appeared before the Committee, expressed a similar opinion. But Mr. O'Dowd further stated that the Judge Advocate General used a kind of back-stairs influence in order to secure a mitigation of the sentence, whenever he considered it desirable. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had friends in the Department of the War Office, and when, occasionally, he thought that a sentence passed by a district court martial was too severe, he made a representation with regard to it, and it need scarcely be said that his representations were generally attended to. Then there was another very important point to which he (General Alexander) desired, for one moment, to call the attention of the Committee, and it was this—that the judgment of the Judge Advocate General was not a final judgment. It might be referred—and it had been referred—to the Law Officers of the Crown. Mr. O'Dowd mentioned a case which occurred in November, 1872, in which the Law Officers of the Crown reversed the decision of the then Judge Advocate General. In that particular case the War Office had appealed from the decision of the Judge Advocate General to the Law Officers of the Crown, and the Law Officers reversed the decision arrived at by the Judge Advocate General. The Law Officers of the Crown, in reversing the decision, were of opinion that the Judge Advocate General was not so much a Judge as an Assessor, and he (General Alexander) thought it was just as well that the right hon. and learned Gentleman should not be a Judge; because he believed that a great evil might arise from having Judges sitting in the House of Commons. He believed there was only one exception to that rule, and that was the case of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Recorder of London (Sir Thomas Chambers), who was at present a Member of the House. Perhaps the strongest proof of all of the inutility of the Office was the circum-

stance that for two years and four months the Office actually remained vacant. From April, 1871, after the death of Mr. Davidson, until August, 1873, the Office was not filled up, and during the whole of the interval Mr. O'Dowd, the present permanent Judge Advocate, discharged the duties of the Office of Judge Advocate General.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN): Oh, no! The duties were discharged by Sir Robert Phillimore.

GENERAL ALEXANDER said, he was aware that Sir Robert Phillimore had been nominally Judge Advocate General; but he had been under the impression that he did not actually discharge the duties.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN): That is a mistake; Sir Robert Phillimore discharged the duties.

GENERAL ALEXANDER said, he thought the right hon. and learned Gentleman, if he would make inquiries, would find that Mr. O'Dowd virtually considered himself Judge Advocate General at the time, and he stated to the Committee that he had been discharging the duties of Judge Advocate General for a considerable period. Certainly, in the interval which elapsed from the death of Mr. Davidson in April, 1871, until the month of August, 1873, the Office of Judge Advocate General was not filled up. But, even admitting the statement of the right hon. and learned Gentleman to be correct, that Sir Robert Phillimore, who was also at the time Judge of the Admiralty Court, filled the Office, it showed that it was not absolutely necessary, under any circumstances, that the Judge Advocate General should have a seat in the House of Commons; and if the Office could be kept vacant for two years and four months, it certainly appeared to him (General Alexander) that there was no very great necessity for filling it up at all. He wished to call the attention of the Committee to another point—namely, that the Navy and Royal Marines were not represented by the Judge Advocate General in that House, and that when any question arose in reference to courts martial in the Navy, the Secretary to the Navy was always ready to answer it. As a matter of fact, the Secretary to the Navy answered far more questions on such subjects than the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Judge Advocate General. With regard to the remuneration of the Office, it appeared to him that the salary was very high compared with that of the Financial Secretary to the War Office, whose work was much more onerous. The Financial Secretaryship to the War Office was an appointment instituted by Viscount Cardwell, and that officer was certainly very inadequately paid compared with the Judge Advocate General, although his duties were far more onerous and difficult than those of the Judge Advocate General. He (General Alexander) was bound to add that since he came into the House he had heard that the right hon. and learned Gentleman had, temporarily at any rate, taken upon himself this additional appointment — namely, that formerly followed by Mr. Clode as Legal Secretary to the War Office. He was told that on good authority; but, of course, if the right hon. and learned Gentleman denied it, he would at once accept the denial, and would only say that the denial would make his case all the stronger, because, if the Judge Advocate General did not perform the additional duty he submitted that he had made out a clear case why the Office of Judge Advocate General in that House should be discontinued. It appeared to him that the Office was one of those which were maintained merely for the purpose of muzzling independent Members who might prove inconvenient. They all knew the great talent and ability of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, and that before he was appointed Judge Advocate General his voice was frequently heard in that House. It was now no longer heard, and he (General Alexander) was quite certain that it would be of advantage to the right hon. and learned Gentleman himself if he would give up the post he had so well filled for the last five years, and seek from the Government, as he had a right to do, an appointment upon altogether higher lines. He did not propose to trouble the Committee by going to a division, if he could obtain any satisfactory information from the right hon. and learned Gentleman. He certainly did not expect to get much support from either side of the House —either from those who had, or those who hoped to fill this position. He felt,

however, that it was only by appealing to the House, and thoroughly ventilating questions of this kind, that they could eventually hope to get rid of what he must call, without intending any disrespect to the right hon. and learned Gentleman, a useless excrescence. He begged to move the reduction of the Vote by £2,000, the salary of the Judge Advocate General.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £36,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Administration of Military Law, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886.'—(*General Alexander.*)

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN) said, it was quite unnecessary for the hon. and gallant Member (General Alexander) to apologize for having brought the Motion forward. Personally, he (Mr. Osborne Morgan) was much obliged to the hon. and gallant Member for having done so, because he was glad to have this opportunity of clearing up some most extraordinary misconceptions which prevailed with regard to the duties of the Office he had the honour to hold—misconceptions not only on the part of the hon. and gallant Member, but shared by many other hon. Members. The duties of the Judge Advocate General were two in number. In the first place, as the Committee knew, Her Majesty administered military law by virtue of Her Royal Prerogative; and, of course, it was necessary that she should be advised by some responsible Minister in doing so. That was the reason why the Judge Advocate General, who advised Her Majesty from a legal standpoint in regard to the proceedings of all general and district courts martial, was required to have a seat in the House of Commons. The hon. and gallant Member could hardly know how deeply he was cutting into the Constitution of the country when he suggested that the Judge Advocate General should not have a seat in that House. The Judge Advocate General was not only the direct Adviser of Her Majesty on all questions of Military Law, but he was called upon to answer a considerable number of Questions in the House of Commons. His first and, perhaps, most important duty, although it was not the most difficult duty he had to perform, was therefore to revise, from a legal point of view, the proceedings of all general and district courts martial. The proceedings of regimental courts martial were not, in the first instance, sent to the Judge Advocate General, even in the case of these proceedings; but the military officers could and did appeal to the Judge Advocate General if a question of law did happen to arise.

GENERAL ALEXANDER said, that he had only referred to district courts martial, and not to regimental courts martial.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN) said, that no man could have a higher opinion than he had of the sense of justice which animated officers when sitting upon courts martial; and he believed that in 19 cases out of 20, perhaps in 49 out of 50, or even in 99 out of 100, the conclusions at which they arrived were perfectly right and just. The cases with which they had to deal were generally simple cases; but, unfortunately, all cases were not simple cases. He wished the hon. and gallant Gentleman would call upon him at his Office and see the proceedings, sometimes 300 or 400 pages long, involving intricate questions, such as cases of embezzlement, or questions affecting the honour of officers, and other most important matters. He would then see whether the Office of Judge Advocate General was a sinecure or not. While he gave the very highest credit to the officers who sat upon courts martial for the sense of justice by which they were animated, it was undoubtedly the fact that now and then they would convict a man who had been legally found guilty of no offence whatever, perhaps upon hearsay evidence, or upon the evidence of an accomplice, in which case it became essential that some trained legal mind—a mind accustomed to sift and to weigh evidence—should go through all the evidence, not in order to decide whether the sentence, if legal, was, or was not, too severe, but whether any offence had been committed at all. What the Judge Advocate General had to do, in such a case, was to see whether there was any real case to go before such a tribunal. Whenever a case was found which ought not to have been tried, it was the duty of the Judge Advocate General to step in and reverse the proceedings. He had now held Office for five years, and he would

give the Committee some statistics to show the number of cases with which he had had to deal in four of those years—namely, 1881, 1882, 1883, and 1884. In the year 1881, the number of courts martial that came before the Judge Advocate General was 7,474; in 1882, 6,513; in 1883, 6,026; and in 1884, 6,108; making altogether 26,121 for the four years. The proceedings of every one of these courts martial was read over by one of the Deputy Judge Advocate Generals; and whenever any question of law or evidence arose, the matter was at once referred to him (the Judge Advocate General) personally, and he did not hesitate to say that, on the average, at least three or four such cases were every day brought before him. In order to show the hon. and gallant Member how constantly occupied the Office was in endeavouring to do justice, he might state that in 1881, out of 7,474 courts martial, 246 were set aside upon the ground of want of evidence, or for some other reason—that was to say, that 246 persons who, if this contemptible office did not exist, might have wrongfully suffered penal servitude, or imprisonment, had been set at liberty, or had had their sentences reduced. He maintained that if the Judge Advocate General did nothing more than save those 246 presumably innocent men from undergoing a punishment they had not legally incurred, he would have done his duty, and justified the retention of the Office. He did not suppose, for one moment, that the hon. and gallant Member, or any other Member, would wish that those 246 persons should have been punished unjustly. But he wanted to know who could have prevented the punishment of these innocent men if the Office of Judge Advocate General—the only individual who had the power of revising such cases—had been abolished?

GENERAL ALEXANDER said, he proposed that that work should be done by the permanent Judge Advocate General.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN) said, the hon. and gallant Gentleman suggested that the duty should be performed by the permanent Judge Advocate General; but the permanent Judge Advocate General did not possess a seat in the House of Commons. He was not, therefore, able to answer any questions that might be put in the House of Commons, and he would not be responsible to the House; and he took leave to doubt whether, but for the inducement of a place in the Government, any really competent man would be found to undertake the duties for the salary attached to the Office, to say nothing of the additional weight which such a position and a seat in the House gave to the Judge Advocate General in dealing with the Military Authorities. Every one of these cases had come before him (the Judge Advocate General) as a matter of course, and in many of them the most complicated questions of law which could be conceived had been involved. He did not mean to say that the Judge Advocate General in that House was always, though he ought to be, an expert lawyer. On the contrary, he deeply felt his own deficiencies in that respect. He only wished he was more capable; but he had done his best, and the result had been that, in the course of five years, something like 700 or 800 persons had been saved from undergoing what was, presumably, an unjust sentence. The hon. and gallant Member told the House that the Judge Advocate General had no power to interfere with the severity of a sentence if it was legal. That was quite true; but when he (the Judge Advocate General) discovered a sentence which he believed to be unduly severe, he took the opportunity of mentioning the matter in the proper quarter, and in every case, or in nearly every case in which he had made such a representation, the sentence had been remitted altogether, or reduced. He might tell the hon. and gallant Member one thing. The hon. and gallant Member must be aware that the courts martial in the Navy, to which he had referred, had frequently been brought before the House, and commented upon; but, although the proceedings of at least 30,000 military courts martial had passed through his hands, in not a single one of the cases dealt with by him had the decision arrived at in his Office been challenged in the House of Commons. The hon. and gallant Member said that very few Questions were put to the Judge Advocate General in the House itself; but he (the Judge Advocate General) constantly received letters from Members of the House calling attention to certain proceedings. As a

rule, he invited the hon. Member who communicated with him to wait upon him at his Office; and in the same way he was prepared to invite the hon. and gallant Member for South Ayrshire (General Alexander), if he wished for information respecting any case, when he (Mr. Osborne Morgan) would be prepared to produce all the documents in his possession to show that substantial justice had been done. Now, the House would see that the number of courts martial set aside for irregularity had been decreasing year by year. In 1881 the number of courts martial set aside was 246; in 1882, 154; in 1883, 116; and in 1884, 100. Therefore, in the four years from 1881 to 1884, no less than 616 presumably innocent men had been saved from unjust punishment; and it would be further seen that the number of courts martial set aside for irregularity in 1884, as compared with those set aside in 1881, had been nearly 150 per cent less. It might be asked what had caused the diminution? Probably the hon. and gallant Member was not aware that many of the difficulties which undoubtedly did arise in 1879, 1880, and 1881 had been got rid of by the simplification and codification of the law in 1881. Last year a book revised by the Judge Advocate General was published by the War Office, entitled *A Manual of Military Law*, in which each of the decisions of the Judge Advocate General were given in the form of notes to the Army Act of 1881. He was afraid that the hon. and gallant Member could not have examined that book. Certainly, he could not know the amount of labour the revision of the book had entailed in merely putting the decisions into shape. Probably, if he had been acquainted with these facts, the hon. and gallant Member would not have made his present proposal. But even that work was not considered enough, and the Office was now engaged in bringing out a pocket edition, containing everything that it was necessary for officers in the field to know. The result of their simplifying the law, and codifying it, had been to correct many of the errors into which officers presiding at courts martial had been previously led; and, instead of 246 wrong decisions in the year 1881, they were reduced to 100 last year. This, however, was only one of the duties of the Judge Advocate General. In addition to the duties connected with the revision, from a legal point of view, of the proceedings of courts martial, the Judge Advocate General had another duty to perform—namely, that of advising the Horse Guards and War Office on legal questions, many of which involved considerations of a most difficult and delicate nature. The hon. and gallant Member had referred to the retirement of the Legal Secretary to the War Office. He would explain exactly how that matter stood. Mr. Clode, who held the office of Legal Secretary to the War Office, retired in 1881. His right hon. Friend the present Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Childers), who was then Secretary for the War Department, asked him if he thought it was not possible to effect an economy by throwing the greater part of the duties previously performed by Mr. Clode on the shoulders of the Judge Advocate General. Of course, he said that he was only too happy to perform the duties without salary, although they involved a very large addition to his labours, and the consequence was that he had effected a saving in the Army Estimates of £1,600 a-year — £1,500 in the salary of the Legal Secretary to the War Office, and £100 per annum for certain allowances. Therefore, since that date, he had saved the country something more than £6,000 in four years. Reference had been made by the hon. and gallant Member to the duties performed by the deputies in the Office. He was glad to be able to say that another piece of economy would shortly be effected in reference to those officers. He found that he would be able to get on with three Deputy Judge Advocates instead of four, and by abolishing the fourth Deputy Judge Advocate a saving would be effected to the country of £456 a-year, making altogether £2,056, or £56 in excess of his salary. In every transaction connected with the Office strict economy was studied. He had pointed out to the hon. and gallant Member how entirely he was mistaken if he fancied that the duties of Judge Advocate General were confined to the revision of the proceedings of courts martial. There were always matters arising which demanded the personal attention of the Judge Advocate General. A considerable number of questions were raised in the course of last year which concerned

important legal points in reference to the Military Department, and all of them involved a considerable amount of responsibility. He might inform the hon. and gallant Member that, in the course of a single year, something like 800 Minutes and letters were written by the Judge Advocate General in which a legal opinion was expressed; and he would like to know what his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General (Sir Henry James) would say if he found it necessary to write 800 legal opinions in the course of a single year. If the Office of Judge Advocate General were abolished a substitute must be provided, and surely it was far better to have a Judge Advocate General with a seat in the House of Commons directly responsible to the House itself than to have an officer altogether without responsibility to Parliament. He did not think it was necessary to say more. He thought he had shown that the Office of Judge Advocate General was not a sinecure; but that it was one in which a vast amount of work was carried on. He had pointed out to the hon. and gallant Gentleman what he (the Judge Advocate General) had done since he had filled the Office. He had given the hon. and gallant Gentleman a number of statistics, and he would be happy if the hon. and gallant Member would call at his office to give even further information, and to point out to him the complex nature of the proceedings in connection with some of the courts martial of which the hon. and gallant Member had spoken so lightly. He believed the hon. and gallant Member had made this Motion under an entirely mistaken view of the duties of the Office of Judge Advocate General, and he thanked him for having afforded him an opportunity to give this explanation. With regard to the questions put by his hon. and gallant Friend (Sir George Balfour) and the noble Lord opposite (Lord Eustace Cecil), he was sorry that they had only the Returns from the Home Army for 1884 to go by; but, as far as those Returns went, he might say that there was an unquestionable improvement on the year 1883 in the number of courts martial held. This was particularly satisfactory, seeing that in 1883 the number of courts martial amounted only to 76 per 1,000 men, which was the lowest number they had ever had; and he might mention that in 1868 the number amounted to 144 for every 1,000 men, so that they had dropped down to little more than one-half that number. He had carefully compared the Returns from the War Office for 1883 and 1884, as far as they went, and he found that the improvement which took place in 1883 was still being maintained. The number of courts martial held in the Home Army in 1884 were 10,040, whereas they were 10,703 in the previous year. As to the punishments inflicted, they were 6,899 in 1884 against 7,209 in 1883, thus showing a considerable reduction. There had also been a great diminution in the number of non-commissioned officers who had been tried by courts martial. That was a very satisfactory fact, because he had always held that it was of the highest importance to get good and well-conducted non-commissioned officers. In 1883 the number of courts martial on non-commissioned officers in the Home Army were nearly 10 per cent, while last year they were under 8 per cent, showing a substantial decrease. There had been a remarkable decrease, too, in the punishments for drunkenness. In 1883 the number of men fined for drunkenness amounted to 102 per 1,000; but last year they were only 84 per 1,000. He had no desire to conceal the shady side of the question; but, at the same time, these figures were encouraging, and showed that there had been a considerable decrease both in the trials and punishments. He regretted that the Returns in his possession did not enable him to give the number of crimes which had been dealt with among the troops serving abroad. He had, however, noted all the proceedings of courts martial sent to him from Egypt up to a certain date — namely, since the 1st of November up to the present time, and he thought the result was highly encouraging. The total number of courts martial in Egypt and the Soudan between the 1st of November, 1884, and the present time—namely, May, 1885—had only been 171, and of that number there had only been two general courts martial. That, as far as it went, was, in his opinion, a very satisfactory result. He did not know exactly how many men there were in Egypt; but he believed the number was somewhere about 13,000; and that, among so many men, there should

have been only 171 courts martial, of which only two were general courts martial, in six months, was, he thought highly satisfactory. With regard to severe punishments — speaking from memory — he did not think there had been many. He was sorry that he could not give a more complete answer to the question of the noble Lord the Member for West Essex (Lord Eustace Cecil); but it was not his fault, but arose from the fact that the information he had to give, so far as it was derived from official sources, was limited to the Home Army.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL said, he had listened with great attention to the statement of the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, and he did not wish to enter into the merits of the case, so far as the Office of Judge Advocate General was concerned. He would only say that he did not quite take the same view as the hon. and gallant Member behind him (General Alexander). At the same time, he could not quite understand why the business of the War Office should not be done very much in the same way as the business of the Navy. In the case of the Navy, there was no Judge Advocate General at all. He would not say whether that was a better or a worse system; but he believed that in the Navy the proceedings of courts martial were brought under the notice of the First Lord of the Admiralty, and if the First Lord found any occasion to question the accuracy or the justice of the decision conveyed to him he had the Report cancelled. He (Lord Eustace Cecil) had never heard that the business of the Navy was not done satisfactorily. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had said that some changes had been introduced into the Office, and into the duties of the Office as originally constituted. It appeared that the present Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Childers), when Secretary of State for War, evidently thought that the Judge Advocate General had not enough to do, because when Mr. Clode retired from the position of Legal Secretary to the War Office, which, as he (Lord Eustace Cecil) happened to know, involved very laborious work, it was thought that the Judge Advocate General might very well do his own work and that which Mr. Clode had performed also. As far as he (Lord Eustace Cecil) was acquainted with the duties of the Legal Secretary to the War Office, they were quite enough for one person to discharge, seeing that, in the course of a single year, something like 800 cases came before him upon which he was required to give 800 legal opinions, or from two to three per day. Under the present circumstances, he did not think that the Committee would say that the right hon. and learned Gentleman had enough to do for the salary he received; but that, he thought, hardly touched the point. As to the duties of the Judge Advocate General before, it was clear there was not enough work; and that had been the opinion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer when Secretary of State for War. He (Lord Eustace Cecil) only threw that out as a hint; he was not going to support the Motion of his hon. and gallant Friend; but he would suggest for the consideration of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War, and the House of Commons generally, whether the practice which had hitherto succeeded with regard to the Navy might not also be carried out in the War Department. If it were necessary to have a Gentleman of the standing and rank of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, let the Office, at all events, not be an honorary one. That, however, was a point which he did not wish to go into, or to press upon the Committee at that time. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had shown that he did a large amount of laborious work which appertained to another Office, and he had also managed to dispense with the services of one of the Deputy Judge Advocates General in his own Office; and that he (Lord Eustace Cecil) thought was in itself a proof that he had not originally enough to do. He (Lord Eustace Cecil) should be the last person to wish to disestablish the right hon. and learned Gentleman of the Office which he, no doubt, so ably filled; but he thought, without any desire to interfere with vested interests, that, should promotion happen to the right hon. and learned Gentleman, or should there be any change, it should be a matter for the consideration of the Secretary of State for War whether the honorary Office of the right hon. and learned Gentleman could not be, in some way, arranged for, and the duties of the Office performed in the same manner as in the Navy, and whether the onerous office of Counsel to the War Office could not be otherwise pro-

vided for. There was a portion of the statement of the right hon. and learned Gentleman which his hon. and gallant Friend near him desired him to touch upon. That was the statement that 246 innocent men had been saved from punishment by the revision of the proceedings of courts martial. He (Lord Eustace Cecil) could quite understand the sense in which the right hon. and learned Gentleman had spoken; but the manner in which he had stated the fact gave the impression that the men were innocent men, and ought not to have been tried at all.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN): I intended to say legally innocent men.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL said, hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House understood perfectly what the right hon. and learned Gentleman meant; but coming from a Gentleman of legal attainments, who they knew always used the right word, his sentence might be interpreted to mean that the men were innocent and ought not to have been tried. He was glad, however, that the right hon. and learned Gentleman had explained. With regard to the point in connection with the Army, about which he (Lord Eustace Cecil) desired further information, the right hon. and learned Gentleman last year engaged to give that information, or else that he would make a statement on the subject when the Vote came on. He was afraid that the right hon. and learned Gentleman was not able to make that statement, or to fulfil his engagement; but he understood that he now engaged that the information should be forthcoming in future.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN): I am told that this cannot possibly be done before a month, or two months, have elapsed; but I am in hope that next year it will be in time for the Army Estimates.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL said, it was necessary that the Committee should have the fullest information before it passed that Vote, and it should have information not only with regard to the conduct of the Army at home, but with regard to that portion of it which was abroad. He took notice, in passing, of the increased number of desertions from the Army; they were certainly larger now than they were last year. The number for the present year, according to the Return which he held in his hand, was 4,300, as against 3,700 last year. He was at a loss to account for that very large increase in the number of desertions; but he observed that the two arms of the Service in which desertions were most frequent were the Cavalry and the Artillery; and the fact might be due to the excessive amount of work thrown upon those corps. He was also struck with the circumstance that a very large number of courts martial had taken place in the Artillery as compared with other corps; he believed that in the Artillery last year there were 1,268 courts martial—a very large number as compared with the Cavalry, for instance, in which there were only 740. Without making any reflection on that gallant corps, the number appeared so disproportionate that it seemed to him to demand an explanation, because it should be borne in mind that these were district, and not regimental, courts martial. He pointed out these and similar matters in passing; and he could not help recurring to the main idea—that Returns of this kind were most useful, because they gave the fullest information to the Committee and the public, and because they more or less formed a check on the appointment of unnecessary courts martial. He recollected that, in the time of the Crimean War, there were a large number of badly-conducted soldiers in the ranks, and that when they came home there used to be courts martial daily. That was a state of things which, for his part, he very much deplored; but now that education had so much extended in the Army, now that out of 84,000 soldiers at home all but 3,000, as it appeared by the Return, could read and write, he thought it was time that courts martial for grosser crimes should diminish; and he was greatly in hope, with the steps now being taken in the direction of not giving the men unnecessary work, and not harassing them either at home or abroad, with the steps taken towards dealing with offenders summarily, and not by court martial, that a better state of things would shortly prevail. But he again impressed upon the right hon. and learned Gentleman and the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War that it was most important for the interests of the Service that the fullest

information with regard to the conduct of the Army at home and abroad should be laid upon the Table of the House.

MR. HENEAGE said, he thought it was not necessary that there should be a Parliamentary Judge Advocate General. The War Department had three other Representatives in the House, while the Board of Trade and the Admiralty had only two. But he would like to know whether this question had not really been dealt with in another way than that in which the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite (General Alexander) proposed to deal with it? The hon. and gallant Gentleman proposed that the Vote should be reduced by the sum of £2,000, the amount of the salary of the Judge Advocate General; but he (Mr. Heneage) understood that already the War Office had reduced the Vote in another way by the sum of £1,600, and that the amount of the Vote was also to be reduced by £456, the amount of the salary of one of the Deputy Judge Advocates General; so that, as a matter of fact, the Vote was to be reduced by the sum which the hon. and gallant Gentleman proposed. The only questions that remained were as to whether the right thing had been done, and whether it would not be better to abolish—not his right hon. and learned Friend—but the Office of Judge Advocate General. He did not think the duties were very onerous, either of the Judge Advocate General or of the Solicitor to the War Office, because the right hon. and learned Gentleman, having, as he stated, done the work of the latter for over a year, had been able to compile a book.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN): I beg pardon; I said I had revised the book.

MR. HENEAGE said, the right hon. and learned Gentleman had stated that he had volunteered to take upon himself the duties of Solicitor to the War Office, and that he had thereby saved the country £1,600 a-year. It was public-spirited on the part of the right hon. and learned Gentleman to take over the duties of the Solicitor to the War Department; but he (Mr. Heneage) would like to know whether, if the right hon. and learned Gentleman were promoted to another Office, those duties would be left to his successor? The Committee had heard much about the legal knowledge necessary to the Office; but was it not a fact that, in former times, it had been held by Gentlemen who had not the slightest knowledge of Criminal Law? If that were so, he thought it followed that a knowledge of Criminal Law was not necessary for the Office of Judge Advocate General. If the hon. and gallant Gentleman divided the Committee he should vote with him.

MR. A. F. EGERTON said, he was unable to perceive how they could abolish the Office of Judge Advocate General without altering the whole constitution of the Army. The practice at the Admiralty was that the proceedings of courts martial came before the First Sea Lord, who, in case there was any doubt with regard to them, referred them to the counsel to the Admiralty. He had no doubt that, practically, the proceedings came before the First Lord, and that he gave an opinion upon them. But he thought it was hardly possible to proceed in the same way with regard to Army courts martial; and as the right hon. and learned Gentleman had shown how heavy were the duties of his Office, and how well he earned the salary which he received, he hoped the Committee would not adopt the Amendment of the hon. and gallant Gentleman (General Alexander).

MR. RYLANDS said, he certainly thought that great credit was due to the right hon. and learned Gentleman for undertaking the duties of Legal Adviser to the War Office without any additional salary. No doubt, the right hon. and learned Gentleman and the Chancellor of the Exchequer were perfectly aware that there was an opportunity of making an economical arrangement by adding those duties to the duties of the Judge Advocate General. His hon. Friend the Member for Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) had drawn attention to one point on which it was desirable that the Committee should have some information; he had asked whether the arrangement under which the right hon. Gentleman had taken upon himself the duties of Legal Adviser to the War Office was of a permanent character? He (Mr. Rylands) knew it was quite permanent, so far as the present holder of the Office was concerned; but he wished to be informed whether, in the unfortunate event of the present Government going out of

Office and a new Government coming into power, it would be practicable not only to fill up the Office of Judge Advocate General, but also to refill the Office of Legal Adviser to the War Office?

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN): It is a permanent arrangement.

MR. RYLANDS said, his right hon. and learned Friend said it would be a permanent arrangement. Well, he thought that was a fair reply to the very important inquiry made by the hon. Member for Grimsby. He recollected that it had once been asked in that House whether the Judge Advocate General was a General in the Army, and the reply was that he was neither a Judge, an Advocate, nor a General. No doubt, the Deputy Judge Advocate General performed very important duties towards the State—was there any Department of the State the permanent officers of which did not perform important duties? He was disposed to believe that the present Judge Advocate General brought to the Office not only great zeal, but great ability. The noble Lord opposite (Lord Eustace Cecil) had alluded to a very serious matter—namely, the desertions which took place from the Army. Now, he (Mr. Rylands) went entirely with the spirit of the noble Lord's remarks. He thought it of the greatest possible consequence that they should make the condition of the soldiers as comfortable as possible, and also such as was consistent with their own self-respect, and free from unnecessary interference—that they should treat the soldier in such a way as would encourage him to like his corps, and not in a spirit calculated to induce him to desert. But punishments were necessary, and in that respect he thought that the right hon. and learned Gentleman filled a position of great responsibility; it was a position which, in his (Mr. Rylands's) opinion, he had no right to delegate to any deputy. The right hon. and learned Gentleman stood there as the administrator of justice in the Army, and it would be quite right for the House to hold him responsible if any failure of justice occurred. Under the circumstances, he should not be willing at the present time to see the Office in question abolished. If any inquiry should be made hereafter into the various branches of the Military Service, he should think that then possibly the Office of Judge Advocate General might be put into the crucible; but for the present he should certainly not support the Amendment before the Committee.

COLONEL NOLAN said, he must question the policy of the hon. and gallant Member for Ayrshire (General Alexander) in moving this Amendment. The hon. and gallant Member generally took an enlightened view of military matters, over which he believed he was anxious to establish the control of the House. He (Colonel Nolan) would be altogether against the abolition of the Office of Judge Advocate General, not only because they had in that Office a very able and courteous Gentleman, but because he believed that the abolition of the Office would be a great injustice to the private soldier, and that the *morale* of the Army would be thereby very seriously impaired. Those would be great evils. He did not think that ordinary General Officers could know anything about Criminal Law. Sir Edward Ward was an exception, because he was a barrister, and had practised in Court; but the majority of Generals proceeded only on red-tape ideas, and as to looking into the evidence to see that it fully established the charge, that was a matter about which they knew very little. He thought it absolutely necessary that the Army should have a real lawyer to supervise the proceedings of courts martial, and he believed that they had a very efficient one at the present moment. It might be said that there were now three or four barristers in the Army, and that one of them might discharge the duties of the Office. He believed that that proposition had received a certain amount of support; but his own opinion was that it would be a very dangerous experiment, because those officers would be entirely under the influence of the Commander-in-Chief. If the Office of Judge Advocate General were abolished, he supposed that a barrister would be employed; and that, in his opinion, would be extremely wrong from a military point of view. The position of the Army would be totally changed if there was no Judge Advocate General. At the present moment a private soldier could ask the opinion of the Judge Advocate General upon any point of Military Law. A private soldier who knew nothing about Common Law or Military Law

could write to a Member of Parliament concerning any point of Military Law in which he was interested, and that Member could go to the Judge Advocate General, who would set him right, and show whether there was any foundation for the complaint the soldier might have. If the Office were abolished, who was the Member of Parliament to go to? He would have to go to the Secretary of State for War, who, perhaps, would know much less about the law than the Member himself; for it was not the business of the Secretary of State to know anything about the law. Therefore, as he had said, if the Office were abolished, the Member of Parliament would have no means of obtaining any redress desired except by going to the Commander-in-Chief, or refusing Supply. He (Colonel Nolan) thought the present plan a very good one. Of course, the Navy was very different to the Army. The Navy was generally afloat. In the whole of his Parliamentary experience, he never received a letter from a sailor with respect to a point of law; whereas he had received hundreds of letters from soldiers. Our Constitution taught us to be extremely jealous of the Army, but not of the Navy. The Army was a very Constitutional one; but it might take power into its own hands. It was very necessary, therefore, that people should be jealous of the Army, and keep the control of it in their own hands. Through the Judge Advocate General, Members of Parliament could exercise a very strict and Constitutional control over the Army, not only in a general way, but in matters of detail, and particularly in respect to the administration of justice in the Army. They would commit a great mistake if they abolished the Office. It was true they would not pay the salary of £2,000 a-year; but they would be required to pay large sums for counsel's opinions, and they would lose that control which, in the interest of the Army and the country, it was very desirable Parliament should exercise.

MR. JOHNSON said, that, of course, they knew the Judge Advocate General had very important cases to look into; but he should like to know how trivial cases, such as one which had come under his (Mr. Johnson's) notice, came under the Judge Advocate General's judgment? Some time ago he was at Chatham Station, waiting for the train, and there he met some officers with whom he fell into conversation. He asked them where they came from, and they told him they came from Maidstone, where they had been serving on a court martial; and it came out, as a matter of joke, that they had travelled considerable distances, at the public expense, to try a wretched boy—a boy who had only been a few hours in one of the Militia regiments—for not having sufficiently washed himself. It appeared that the boy, who had just been taken from the plough, was not over fond of soap and water; he was reprimanded by his lance corporal, who, possibly, was only a minute and a half his senior, the boy told him to go to Bath or something of the kind, and was reported to the Colonel. He (Mr. Johnson) was not conversant with Military Law; but he should have thought that a reprimand from the Colonel, or confinement to barracks for an hour or two, would have met the justice of the case. Instead of that, however, a court martial was ordered. Three or four officers were brought from Canterbury to Maidstone, at something like an expense to the country of from £5 to £10, merely to try this boy. "Mony a mickle makes a muckle," and £5 and £10 soon mounted up to large sums; and therefore he thought that if some means could be found of settling such trivial cases like that, without putting the country to expense besides taking three or four officers from their duties, a great step in advance would be made.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said, he had noticed, since he was elected a Member of the House, a great disposition on the part of hon. Members to make a great ado about very small sums of money; while they offered no opposition whatever to very lavish expenditure for very unworthy purposes. He had noticed this disposition very strongly marked in hon. Members who sat below the Gangway opposite and called themselves Radicals. The hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) had expressed the extreme indignation which he felt that the management of affairs in this country allowed the Judge Advocate General to receive a salary of £2,000 a-year. When the Vote was asked for £11,000,000 sterling, hon. Members, like the hon. Member for Burnley, had very little to say, either about the advisability of the expenditure of that money, or as to the

lack of economy, on the part of the Government, which allowed such expenditure to be made. It was extremely irksome to listen to debates carried on by men who were supposed to be sensible men, and to have some degree of common sense—it was extremely irksome to listen to such debates as that which had just taken place. None of the speeches delivered that night had contained a single bit of information; they were mere dry repetition, and so far as he could see the only object that hon. Members had in delivering them was to waste the time of the Committee. If the hon. Members who had taken part in the debate had been Irish Members, the Committee would have howled at them, and very possibly to-morrow they would have been accused by the English Press of wilful Obstruction. But, as those hon. Members were not Irish Members, he supposed that all the twaddle which had been talked that evening would be put down by the English Press to the great solicitude which was felt by the hon. Members of the House that the affairs of the country should be managed as economically as possible. He did not care very much whether the Office of Judge Advocate General was abolished or not. He was not very much interested in the matter; but having listened to the debate—he regretted that he had allowed himself to listen to it instead of going to dinner long ago—he certainly felt——

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member's remarks concerning other Members of the House are not proper. It is forbidden by the Rules of Parliament for an hon. Member to use language which is calculated to be offensive to his brother Members.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said, he was sure the Chairman would believe him when he said he had not the slightest intention of being offensive in any way. He had no intention whatever of being unnecessarily offensive, or offensive at all, to any hon. Members of the House; and if he had been so, he should endeavour, in the few remarks which he wished now to address to the Committee, not to offend again. He merely rose for the purpose of saying that, in his opinion, it was absolutely absurd for hon. Members to come down to the House, and object, upon the score of economy, to a hard-working official getting a salary of £2,000 a-year, while they offered no objection to expenditure of millions of money for the most unworthy purposes. He did not know whether the Committee would go to a division; but if they did he should certainly vote against the Motion of the hon. and gallant Gentleman (General Alexander).

MR. SEXTON said, he wished to ask what steps had been taken to apply the Military Law to a series of outrages committed by soldiers a few nights ago in the town of Downpatrick? He put a Question last week with regard to the manner in which these men were billeted in the town. Some time ago the Government gave £1,000 for the tenant right of a piece of land in Downpatrick, and in the town itself there were a sufficient number of unoccupied houses to give accommodation to all the men. In the exercise of their judgment, the Government had billeted the men in the vicinity of the town. He believed that the men were Protestants, and that they had been mostly billeted on Catholics. Now, Downpatrick was a place where religious feeling influenced political feeling; and it might have been foreseen by the authorities that the system of billeting which had been adopted would lead to undesirable results. When he put the Question last week, the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) said it was not usual to camp men out before the 1st of May, and there were not sufficient unoccupied houses in the town to accommodate them. (He (Mr. Sexton) had learned since that the latter statement was not correct. Anyhow, last week there were horse races near the town, and it was very desirable that care should be taken to keep the men apart from the general body of the people. They were, however, allowed on the racecourse, and they seemed to have partaken of a considerable quantity of liquor. They were allowed to go about as they pleased, and the consequence was that at 8 o'clock on Thursday night of last week, about 40 of the battalion, accompanied by three or four privates of the Devonshire Regiment, commenced an irregular march through the town. They were headed by a couple of civilians, whose names he had not ascertained, who pointed out the houses of the Catholics. The men broke the

windows of these houses; they went through the streets indulging in the most offensive and provocative Party cries they could invent; and they wound up their evening by rushing into the licensed premises of a Catholic and making most violent assaults with their waistbelts upon the waiters and everybody in the place. When a cry of police was raised, they ran away, but not before they had broken all the glasses they could find in the house. The result was riot and excitement, and there had been the greatest confusion and indignation in the town in consequence. He was told the other day that no complaint had been made with regard to the system of billeting the men in the town. As a matter of fact, the clergy made complaints on the subject, and he had letters in his possession complaining in the very strongest manner of the probable effects of the system. He believed that the day following these extraordinary outrages an inquiry of an informal nature was held, at which Major Stewart, an officer of the battalion and the resident magistrate of the district, was present. He wished to know what was the result of that inquiry; whether any trial of the men had been held; and, if not, how soon one would be held; whether communications had been held with the Civil Authorities; whether, by the machinery of the Crimes Act, an endeavour had been made to ascertain who were the two civilians who led the marauders and pointed out the houses occupied by Catholics? It was very desirable that persons concerned in promoting outrages should be punished, and it was equally desirable that the soldiers should be withdrawn from the town at once. There was a camping ground outside the town; why not put the men into tents? He could only say that if they were not withdrawn, but allowed to go on committing these outrages night after night, the probability was that if the people of the town had not the spirit to resent such proceedings, the people of the surrounding districts would come in and clear the military out of the town.

GENERAL ALEXANDER said, that, as the general feeling of the Committee appeared to be against the Amendment, he should be glad to ask leave to withdraw it. In doing so, he wished to thank the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Osborne Morgan) for the very valuable book he had laid on the Table. He was also glad that the Amendment had afforded the right hon. and learned Gentleman an opportunity of justifying the retention of his Office.

MR. CALLAN said, the hon. Member for Grimsby (Mr. Heneage), in the course of some observations which perhaps were not quite pertinent to the question before the Committee, made a sneering allusion to the right hon. and learned Gentleman the present Judge Advocate General for having written a book. The greatest enemy of the hon. Member, however, would never be able to accuse him of having written or even revised a book. He (Mr. Callan) rose on this occasion to bring before the Judge Advocate General a point concerning Military Law. He did not desire to bring it before the right hon. and learned Gentleman because he had written a book, but because he had a greater acquaintance with Military Law than the ordinary run of Judge Advocate Generals. He wished to put a question to the right hon. and learned Gentleman concerning a proceeding that had lately taken place in Ireland—a proceeding connected with the embarkation at Kingstown for Suakin of the Royal Irish Lancers. Some months ago the portion of the regiment told off for foreign service left the Royal Barracks at an early hour of the morning under the command of Colonel Chichester. The senior colonel, Colonel Vandeleur, saw them leave the barracks, but remained in charge of the depôt and of that portion of the regiment under orders to proceed to Dundalk. Now, the 5th Lancers arrived at what was called the jetty at Kingstown a few hours afterwards; but the steamer which was ordered for their embarkation was not ready to receive them, the consequence being that when the time for leaving arrived 20 or 30 of the men failed to appear. The jetty belonged to the town—the people had every right to it; indeed, no military order could exclude them from it. The troops remained there for some hours, and in course of time a large number of persons assembled to see them leave. He believed there was considerable confusion; but he was informed not more than always attended the embarkation of troops—not more, for instance, than occurred when the Guards were em-

barked on the Thames. When the facts became known, Colonel Chichester was recalled from the Soudan. He (Mr. Callan), however, was not at all concerned with Colonel Chichester. Colonel Chichester was in command of the troops; he was an Englishman, and he (Mr. Callan) would leave it to other people to take up the cudgels in that officer's defence. But Colonel Vandeleur was an Irishman; he belonged to one of the oldest families in Ireland—a family which had given heroes to the English Army. He was a near relative to one occupying an honoured position in the House of Commons. Colonel Vandeleur was the senior colonel of the regiment, and he handed over his command in obedience to the orders of the War Office—he handed over his command to Colonel Chichester at the Royal Barracks. In the course of the afternoon, Colonel Vandeleur, as was very natural, went to Kingstown to bid farewell to those who had for so many years been under his command; he went out unofficially and without any responsibility; he went to Kingstown, simply out of feelings of kindliness and as a mark of old friendship, to see his brother officers away. And he believed that for the same reason Lord Clarina, who was in command of the Dublin district, also went to Kingstown. Well, Colonel Vandeleur had been suspended. Colonel Vandeleur, who relinquished his command, or rather the command of the troops taken from him, that morning, had been suspended on account of what happened at Kingstown, while Lord Clarina went unscathed. If Colonel Vandeleur, who was not in command, who had no responsibility whatever attaching to him, was to be suspended, or have his conduct inquired into, because of the confusion which occurred in the embarkation at Kingstown, surely Lord Clarina, who was in command of the district at the time, who had relinquished none of his authority, should be similarly treated. It occurred to him (Mr. Callan) that Lord Clarina was much more censurable than Colonel Vandeleur. It was alleged that the War Office had suspended Colonel Vandeleur from motives which were anything but creditable. Whether that was so or not, the treatment dealt out to this gallant officer was not such as ought to be dealt out to a British officer, or a British gentleman. He was sorry the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Judge Advocate General had left the House. He had paid the right hon. and learned Gentleman a compliment, hoping to enlist his sympathies; he supposed that the Judge Advocate General took the compliment, and had now gone to take his dinner. Perhaps the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) would give him the information he desired. He wished to know how it came to pass that Colonel Vandeleur, who handed over his command at the Royal Barracks early in the morning, who might have remained in Dublin, and who by mere accident went down to Kingstown, was to have his conduct inquired into, while the commander of the Dublin district was to escape unscathed? The whole of the difficulty—that was to say, the negligence which led to the occurrence to which he was referring, arose in the Quartermaster General's Department. He wished to know whether it was not the duty of the Quartermaster General's Department, when the steamer was alongside the jetty in Kingstown Harbour, to have had it ready for the troops, when they arrived at the appointed hour? If the steamer had been ready the troops could have been put on board; they would not have been subjected to temptation, and these irregularities would not have occurred. Was it not the duty of the Quartermaster General's Department to have the ship ready for the reception of the troops at the hour appointed; and when an officer handed over his regiment, or a portion of it, for foreign service to an officer named by the War Office, to command it, did not his responsibility cease, and did not the fact of his being present accidentally, when irregularities took place amongst the men, relieve him from all blame? He would call the attention of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Judge Advocate General to the exact rules respecting the embarkation of troops, and ask whether the fault did not lie with the Quartermaster General's Department?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I am sorry I was not here when the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Callan) commenced his observations; but to so much of them as I did hear I am able to say a

few words in reply. It is true, as the hon. Member has stated, that a Court of Inquiry has been held for the purpose of reporting on the circumstances of the embarkation of two squadrons of the 5th Lancers for Kingstown some weeks ago. That Court has concluded its inquiry; but the decision of the Field Marshal Commanding-in-Chief has not been promulgated; and, therefore, it is impossible for me at present to state what that decision is, and it is also impossible for me to enter into the argument of the hon. Gentleman. I desire, however, to controvert two or three statements made by the hon. Member. I understood him to say that Colonel Vandeleur, having handed over the detachment to Colonel Chichester, could not be held responsible for what took place afterwards. But, in the first place, Colonel Vandeleur was responsible for the state in which that detachment was handed over to Colonel Chichester; and so long as any part of that regiment was within his reach, and under his cognizance, he, as its commanding officer, could not absolve himself from responsibility. Colonel Vandeleur thought it necessary, or part of his duty—and I do not suppose that any hon. Member will be surprised at it—to go down to Kingstown to see the embarkation of the detachment, though not in command of it. He was in uniform, and was present during the irregularities, which took place within his knowledge, and for any orders which were given or not given Colonel Vandeleur could not possibly be held as not responsible. The doctrine of the hon. Member is one which no military officer in the House, or outside it, will countenance—namely, that a commanding officer can, under any possible circumstances, be held as not responsible for what takes place under his very eye. The hon. Member asks whether the Quartermaster General's Department is not responsible for the arrangements of embarkation? The hon. Member is quite correct in supposing that that Department would be responsible for these arrangements, and I cannot say whether the irregularities that occurred were caused or exaggerated by the difficulties of embarkation. But, even if there were such difficulties, they cannot excuse the unsoldierlike conduct of the detachment on the occasion, or do away with the responsibility of the commanding officer. It is impossible, until the decision of the Commander-in-Chief is promulgated—which I believe will be in a few days—to add anything further on the subject. All I can do now is to protest against the doctrine that Colonel Vandeleur, in handing over the command to a subordinate officer, can be held to be not responsible for what took place under his cognizance. If any further information is required, I shall be very happy to give it to the hon. Member.

MR. CALLAN said, he would take advantage of the invitation of the noble Marquess. The noble Marquess had said that Colonel Vandeleur was responsible for all orders given or not given on the day of the embarkation; and the noble Marquess, he was sorry to say, had mentioned in a tone of aggravation or justification that Colonel Vandeleur, when the irregularities took place, was in uniform—which would lead the public to suppose that he attended the embarkation officially and in the performance of his duty. He (Mr. Callan) wished to ask if it was not a fact that Colonel Vandeleur—whether in uniform or not—was not under any obligation to proceed to Kingstown? Colonel Chichester took the troops over in Dublin, and it was for him to take charge of the embarkation; and if Colonel Vandeleur was held responsible for any irregularities, as being the senior, why was it that Colonel Vandeleur's senior, Lord Clarina, the General commanding the district, was not held responsible? If Colonel Vandeleur was to be held responsible for orders given and orders not given at Kingstown, because he was the Colonel commanding, was Lord Clarina, the General commanding, not even more responsible—was he to go scatheless?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The General commanding would be held responsible for the failure of any arrangement he made. What I have said is this—that no orders to any other officer could absolve the commanding officer of a regiment from responsibility for the good conduct of that regiment where he was in its presence.

MR. CALLAN said, that, with all respect to the noble Marquess, what he wished to know was whether Colonel Vandeleur, having handed over command of the men to Colonel Chichester,

was under any obligation to be present at the embarkation at Kingstown; and, next, if there was any failure of the arrangements—and no one would deny that there was a failure—and it was the fault of the Quartermaster General's Department, whether the General commanding the district was not to be held responsible? There had been no demand made for any explanation from Lord Clarina, though, by the Queen's Regulations, he might be held responsible for any irregularities which might happen in his district. For what more could he be held responsible than the conduct of his troops during an embarkation for foreign service?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I am sorry I did not answer the hon. Member's question. Colonel Vandeleur was under no obligation to go down to see the men off, and I do not say that he would have committed an offence for which he could have been censured or tried by court martial if he had not gone down to see the embarkation. But there are many circumstances in connection with the management of troops which must be decided by the superior officer present. Colonel Vandeleur was not compelled to be present at the embarkation; but, being present, he could not absolve himself from responsibility. As for the Quartermaster General's Department, there was an inquiry, and it was shown that the arrangements made for the embarkation were perfectly well known. Many statements were made by the men as to what took place on the march, and so on.

MR. SMALL said, he had heard no answer given from the Treasury Bench to the complaint made by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), as to the conduct of the Royal Irish Rifles and the men of the Devonshire Regiment at Downpatrick the other day. He (Mr. Small) trusted the Treasury Bench would consider the serious character of the hon. Gentleman's complaint, and the very serious consequences which would ensue if that complaint was not attended to. He (Mr. Small) possessed knowledge in the matter that his hon. Friend had not had. Party feeling ran very high in the town of Downpatrick, and the result was that matters of a Party character sometimes caused breaches of the peace there. He held in his hand a report taken from *The Belfast Morning News* of the 2nd of May, which gave a circumstantial account of what occurred. This report said—

"Last night, shortly after 8 o'clock, a number of the recruits of the 5th Battalion Royal Irish Rifles, at present undergoing their annual training in this town, accompanied by a few privates of the Devonshire Regiment, a detachment of which is stationed here for the purpose of guard duty at the new convict prison, conducted themselves in a most disorderly manner, parading part of the town, shouting, yelling, and making use of Party expressions. On their way through John Street several windows were smashed, and the occupants put in terror of their lives. On arriving at the lower end of Stream Street a halt was made, and, as if by pre-arrangement, a most deliberate and cowardly attack was made on the public-house of Mr. John Gilmore. On entering the premises, with belts in their hands, the rioters commenced a fearful onslaught on the customers, some of whom were severely assaulted. The waiters of the establishment were overpowered, and one of them, a man named Nelson, was knocked down and trampled upon. On a shout of "police" being raised, a stampede was made for the outside, the rioters smashing more large panes of glass in the front of Mr. Gilmore's premises on their way. Word having been sent to the barracks, a large force of police were afterwards on the scene; but, before their arrival, no trace of the rioters was to be seen."

It was evident, therefore, that however gallant these warriors might have been, there was, at any rate, something of prudence left in them; because, directly the cry of "police" was raised, they made off. None of them were caught or discovered. It would be an easy matter, however, for the commanding officer of the military in Downpatrick to ascertain which of the men were in that part of the town in which the disturbance occurred that night. He could scarcely imagine that the Military Authorities would fail to recognize the importance of this matter; because it would be most deplorable if a chronic state of ill-feeling were to arise between the military and the inhabitants of Downpatrick. Downpatrick was a peaceable town; but he thought there could be little doubt that it would not remain so long, unless punishment were meted out to the men guilty of the outrage, and unless they were removed to some other place where they would, perhaps, conduct themselves better. He understood it was alleged that no complaint had been made by any person as to the conduct of the military on the occasion to which he referred; but he held in his hand a copy of a letter from the

Rev. Robert Headley, in which he said—

"Unless the existing arrangements are immediately changed, by which 190 men are scattered through the town at night, I have grave reason to apprehend that serious rioting will be the consequence. A strong feeling of just indignation prevails in the district through which these men passed, which is bound to manifest itself in retaliation, unless a collision is prevented by your men being placed under restraint."

It had been alleged that there was not proper accommodation for the men in the town, and that it had been necessary to billet them by twos and threes in the houses of Catholics; but, as a matter of fact, Downpatrick was a declining place, containing a great many empty houses, and it would have been easy for the Military Authorities to have got accommodation for their men in those buildings. Their men, so situated, could be kept under better control than when scattered in twos and threes in the town. He considered it highly unsatisfactory that no reply had been given to the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) by any occupant of the Treasury Bench. After the hon. Member had brought this matter forward, another case had been mentioned by the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan), and an answer had been vouchsafed to that hon. Member, although as yet the hon. Member for Sligo had received no reply. He hoped that this silence on the part of the Treasury Bench, to whatever it was due, would not be persevered in. He trusted to hear from the noble Marquess, or from some other Member of the Government, that this regiment would be removed from Downpatrick.

MR. BRAND said, that it was through no intentional discourtesy to the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) that he had not answered him before. As a matter of fact, he had been about to answer the hon. Member when the hon. Gentleman the Member for Louth rose to address the Committee. As to the billeting of this regiment, inquiries had been made of the General Officer commanding the district. He had been asked whether the statement made in the question addressed to the Government on this subject was in his knowledge correct; and he had replied that, in the first place, there was not a sufficient number of unoccupied houses in the town in which to billet the men; and, secondly, that the men had been billeted in the usual way. The hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Small) had said that Protestant soldiers were billeted in the houses of Roman Catholics; and his (Mr. Brand's) reply to that was that they were billeted in the usual way. He could not imagine for a moment that any selection of Catholic houses for Protestant soldiers had been made; and he could only hope that religious feeling did not run so high in the town that a Catholic would refuse shelter to a man simply because he was a Protestant. [MR. SEXTON: I made no point of that.] He had stated the other day that the men would be properly encamped on the 1st of May; and he had not understood from the hon. Member who had just spoken (Mr. Small) that that was not the case. At any rate, he (Mr. Brand) had been given to understand by the Military Authorities that the men would be encamped on the 1st of May. It had been said that the clergy had made a complaint to the Military Authorities as to the way in which the men had been billeted; but no such complaint had reached the Military Authorities.

MR. SEXTON said, the rev. gentleman referred to had made a complaint to the Military Authorities in the first instance, and that not only were his suggestions unattended to, but the Military Authorities did not even vouchsafe him a reply.

MR. BRAND said, he would undertake to have the matter inquired into. Then the hon. Gentleman referred to a riot which had taken place on Thursday in last week. He had said that a certain number of men belonging to a battalion stationed in Downpatrick had marched through the town in a disorderly manner, breaking the windows of the houses of the Roman Catholic inhabitants. These were very serious charges, and he had no hesitation in saying that if they were true the proceedings could only be described as disgraceful. Inquiries, however, would have to be made before the statements which had been put forward in regard to the conduct of these soldiers could be absolutely accepted. He could say that within the past few hours some information had reached a branch of the War Office with regard to these proceedings, and that inquiry was to be

made of the General Officer commanding the district. Of course, if it could be shown that this disturbance had taken place, and if the General Officer commanding the district could ascertain the men who were guilty of taking part in it, the authorities would do everything in their power to bring them to punishment.

MR. SEXTON said, that if the allegations he had made to-night were found on inquiry to be correct, he would ask that these men should be sent to some other part of the country; because, even if they were left in encampment in the neighbourhood of the town, their presence must be a source of irritation to those people who had had their windows broken and their houses injured by them. The hon. Member opposite (Mr. Brand) had said that no complaints had been made by the clergy of the district. Here was a letter written by the Rev. Robert Headley—

"Parochial House,
"Downpatrick, May 1st, 1885.

"Sir,—A large number of your men—40, I believe—were guilty of riotous conduct last night. They marched in a body through a district of the town, and wrecked a number of houses on their way. The houses upon which these cowardly assaults were made are occupied by Catholics, and it seems they were specially pointed out for attack by two civilians belonging to the town, who accompanied the Militia. I respectfully ask, have you taken steps to have the offenders duly punished, and also to preserve the peace to-night and the following nights? Unless the existing arrangements are immediately changed, by which 190 men are scattered through the town at night, I have grave reason to apprehend that serious rioting will be the consequence. A strong feeling of just indignation prevails in the district through which these men passed, which is bound to manifest itself in retaliation unless a collision is prevented by your men being placed under restraint.—I am, your obedient servant,

"Robert Headley.

"Major Stewart,
"5th Battalion Royal Irish Rifles,
"Downpatrick."

He (Mr. Sexton) trusted that notice having been taken of this matter in the presence of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War, it would have the double effect of getting these men removed from Downpatrick, where they were a danger to the place, and of bringing about an application of the Civil Law to those guilty of disorder.

MR. SMALL said, he understood from the hon. Gentleman the Surveyor General of the Ordnance (Mr. Brand) that an inquiry would be at once instituted into the alleged outrages. He wished to ask what kind of inquiry would be held? Would it be a purely military inquiry, made in private, or would it be a public inquiry held by civilians? If it was to be a military inquiry sitting with closed doors, he thought it would be of very little use.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, the usual inquiry as to what had taken place would be made by the commanding officer, who was responsible for the conduct of his battalion. The hon. Member opposite (Mr. Small) would see that the question was not purely a military one, and the War Office had no power to hold any inquiry except a military inquiry. In any matter which arose which ought to come before the Civil Authorities, it would not be necessary for the War Office to have a military inquiry; but he apprehended that there would be an investigation conducted before the magistrates.

MR. SEXTON said, that on the Report of the Vote he should expect to find that this officer had been taken away from the district. He hoped that the War Office would facilitate the holding of a civil inquiry, so that the compensation to be awarded to the people of Downpatrick for their broken windows might be awarded.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, he could not promise that.

MR. SEXTON said, that all the facts had been published in the newspapers, and they were of such a character that it was necessary the regiment should be taken away from the town.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, that in justice to the regiment he could not undertake to state what steps would be taken.

MR. CALLAN said, he thought that an inquiry might be made into the conduct of the officer in command, in order to ascertain whether he had misconducted himself. He certainly trusted that the inquiry would be extended not only to the alleged riotous conduct of the men, but also into the conduct of Major Stewart, the commanding officer, who, having received a courteous letter complaining of the conduct of the men, and asking for assistance from the officers, had contemptuously ignored it,

and had not had the courtesy to forward a reply. He (Mr. Callan) wished to know whether, in the opinion of the Secretary of State for War, that was proper conduct on the part of an officer in Her Majesty's Service; and whether the matter was not one which ought to be made the subject of a special inquiry?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, it was impossible for him to say whether Major Stewart might not have some explanation to offer in regard to the course he had pursued. He could not pretend to judge Major Stewart upon a mere *ex parte* statement.

MR. CALLAN said, he could not understand why Major Stewart had not answered the courteous and proper letter he had received. No ingenuity on the part of the Secretary of State for War would justify such conduct, and he must say that if the men were riotous the officers were ungentlemanly; and, under such circumstances, orderly and proper conduct on the part of the men could hardly be expected. It was another verification of the old adage—"Like officer like man."

SIR FREDERICK FITZ-WYGRAM said, that at Aldershot and the Curragh there were great complaints on the part of the men of the arduous nature of the camp fatigue duties and the onerous burdens thrown upon their shoulders. He believed there were something like 200 military prisoners at Aldershot; and he would ask whether it would not be right and fair, in order to lighten the burdens of well-conducted men, to employ these 200 prisoners in camp work?

COLONEL STANLEY said, he thought there was a great deal in the appeal which had been made by his hon. and gallant Friend (Sir Frederick Fitz-Wygram); and he hoped that the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War would cause some inquiry to be made, in order to see whether some arrangement might not be carried out in the direction of the suggestion of the hon. and gallant Gentleman, so that these prisoners might be utilized in the performance of the general camp fatigue duties. Such an arrangement, he was satisfied, would relieve the men generally from the hard duties they had now to perform. He had not risen, however, for the sole purpose of supporting the appeal of his hon. and gallant Friend; but he wished to make an appeal on his own account to the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Judge Advocate General to give him some information as to whether he had satisfied himself of the position in which the Army stood as regarded the employment of Colonial troops in the field, acting in conjunction with our own Regular Forces? He believed there had been some doubt as to what their position was, and as to what their status would be from a military point of view when they came to be under Military Law. He believed it to be the fact that the Military Law was not the same in all of the Colonies, though the Colonies had their own Military Law. With regard to the men now serving in the Soudan, he believed that though they were under their own Colonial law, that law, except in one particular, was the same as the Military Law of the Regular Forces with which they were serving. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had been good enough to say that he would look into the question. It was evident that it was not quite so simple a matter as it was at first supposed to be; but that it would require careful consideration. He would not press for any long statement, or, indeed, for any definite statement now; but he wanted to be sure that the question had not escaped the attention of the Government, because it was one which might become of considerable importance at any moment. There was another point which he also wished to mention. He believed there had been some desire expressed that a Return should be given, as in former years, in regard to the discipline of the Army. The matter had already been the subject of conversation in the House. He did not attach extravagant value to such a Return; but, nevertheless, he thought it would be important in enabling the Committee to make a comparison between the state of the Army now and at former periods. At one time attention was devoted to this matter; but, for some reason or other, the publication of the Return had been discontinued since the time he had had the honour to hold the Office of Secretary of State for War. If the Return could be given without disadvantage to the Public Service, he thought the details would be of considerable value. He hoped the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Judge Advocate General

would be able to make a statement on the subject.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN) said, he would answer the question of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman as far as he was able. He believed that the Colonial Forces now serving with Her Majesty's troops were placed under English Military Law, except in regard to certain matters. They were, for example, not to be subjected to corporal punishment; but that exception was of no consequence now. In the case of some of the Colonies, it was also provided that the men should not be tried by any court martial except one composed of their own officers. It seemed to him of great importance that troops serving under the same flag should be subjected to the same discipline and law; and therefore, in regard to the New South Wales troops, he had suggested that a short Act should be passed to place the men unconditionally under Imperial Military Law. [Colonel STANLEY: A Colonial Act.] Of course, it would be a Colonial Act, and it would place the men under our Military Law. He believed that the suggestion would be accepted by the Colonial Governments, and it was a matter which at present was under consideration. With regard to the suggestion which had been made by the hon. and gallant Member opposite (Sir Frederick Fitz-Wygram) that prisoners should be employed in the discharge of camp duties, he thought it was one that was deserving of careful consideration hereafter, and he was much obliged to the hon. and gallant Gentleman for having called attention to the subject. He believed that there had been one or two small misapprehensions on the part of the Committee in regard to the statement he had made; but he would only say one thing in reference to the distinction between the Army and the Navy. No doubt, the Navy stood on an entirely different footing from the Army. In the case of the Navy all the proceedings of courts martial came under the supervision of the Board of Admiralty, to which the powers of the Crown were delegated; but in the case of the Army it was essential that there should be a separate Minister who should be responsible for these matters, and he believed that it was better to have an officer with a seat in the House of Commons, rather than to have a permanent official. He begged to thank the hon. and gallant Member opposite (General Alexander) for the manner in which he had spoken of him. He would again remind the hon. and gallant Member that Military Law was administered by the Queen herself, and that there must be some Minister in the House responsible for the action of Her Majesty. It would, therefore, be seen that, as a matter of fact, there was a wide difference between the administration of law in the Army and in the Navy.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said, that a very important question indeed had been raised by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), who had brought before the Committee the conduct of the Militia in the North of Ireland, and who had described the troops as acting in a very undisciplined and offensive manner. The remarks of his hon. Friend raised the whole question of billeting. There was no doubt that the billeting of English troops in Catholic districts in Ireland was a very great evil indeed; and he had himself heard many complaints, both from clergymen and from others occupying a position of authority, in regard to this question of billeting. In the South of Ireland, he believed, there was no objection entertained to the billeting of Militia regiments. On the contrary, he knew that in some districts in the South of Ireland the people of the towns where the regiments were assembled were very glad indeed to get what money was to be procured for the housing of soldiers for whom there was no room in the barracks. But the men so billeted were of the same religion and of the same habits as the people with whom they lodged, and, consequently, no disorder or evil arose from the billeting of Militia regiments in the towns of the South of Ireland; but the billeting of English troops fresh from England in the houses of Catholic people, who might entertain Nationalist opinions, was a very great evil indeed. He himself remembered, not very many years ago, a striking incidence of this evil which occurred in the town of New Ross, in the county of Wexford, and which was at the time referred to by the hon. Member for New Ross (Mr. J. Redmond), who brought the matter under the notice of the right hon. Gentleman the present Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Childers), who was then Secretary

of State for War. It was almost a similar instance of disorderly conduct to that which had been related by the hon. Member for Sligo that night. The troops stationed in New Ross got a little drink in the course of the evening, and, not being located in the barracks at the time, they behaved in the most grossly insulting manner to the people. They went round the town shouting—"To Hell with the Pope," and, meeting respectable people coming from church, several of these drunken soldiers ridiculed, in a highly offensive and sacrilegious manner, the observance of the rites of the Catholic Church. One man, outside the gates of a Catholic chapel, pretended to be a priest; and he and his drunken comrades mocked, as far as they could, the sacrament of penance as administered in the Catholic Church. He (Mr. W. Redmond) simply mentioned this circumstance to show that the story told by the hon. Member for Sligo in regard to the billeting of English Protestant troops indiscriminately in Catholic districts was not a solitary instance. Nor did the story told by his hon. Friend, and the one he had just narrated as having happened in the county of Wexford, stand by themselves, because he could enumerate at least a dozen instances in which similar riots had occurred in consequence of the action of the troops. What he would like to have from the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Judge Advocate General—and he was perfectly sincere in making this appeal, having received representations from a great many priests and other persons as to the evils which arose from the quartering of Protestant troops upon the Catholic population of Ireland—was an undertaking that, as far as possible, troops, especially when they were fresh from England, and unaccustomed to the habits of the people of Ireland, should not be billeted out in Catholic towns upon Catholic people. Of course, the barracks in many of the garrison towns of Ireland were extremely small, and were not capable of affording the necessary accommodation for the large number of troops Her Majesty's Government now considered it necessary to maintain in Ireland; but if the barracks were not large enough there was hardly a garrison town in Ireland where it would not be possible to obtain some unoccupied building, which might be used as a substitute for barracks. A great deal of the evil and mischief arose from the indiscriminate billeting of English Protestant soldiers upon a Catholic population. He knew of instances in the South of Ireland where the greatest possible trouble had been occasioned owing to the abuse of the present system of billeting. Soldiers had been lodged in houses where there was a lack of accommodation; and in more than one case, when they had procured more drink than was good for them, they had grossly outraged the feelings of the people on whom they were billeted. He could mention several cases where acts of impropriety had taken place between these drunken soldiers and the people of the houses in which they had been billeted. He could assure the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Judge Advocate General that he was not drawing upon his imagination, but that he was simply narrating the representations which had been made to him. He believed it would give a great deal of satisfaction indeed to the people of Ireland, and especially to the clergy of that country who had charge of the morals of the people, if the Judge Advocate General would be good enough to say that in any case where it was at all possible a Protestant soldier should not be billeted in Ireland upon a family which professed a different religious creed, but that unoccupied buildings should be made available for the purpose of barracks.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, the question of billeting was one which hardly arose on the question of the administration of Military Law. It would more properly be raised on a subsequent Vote; but he might remark that it was extremely unusual to billet troops at all. They were placed in barracks wherever it was possible; but when it was found necessary to resort to billeting, the allocation of the billets was not a matter which was left to the Military Authorities. The Quartermaster General had to make the arrangements with the Civil Authorities. He did not think it would be desirable to draw such distinctions as the hon. Member desired between Catholics and Protestants. He would, however, make inquiries into the matter, and see whether it was

desirable to make any different arrangement.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said, he was obliged to the noble Marquess for his reply. He had not intended to raise the question of billeting upon that Vote; but after the attention which had been directed to certain proceedings in the North of Ireland by his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) he thought that he was in Order in calling attention to this matter. In regard to drawing a distinction between Catholic and Protestant, he had no desire, personally, to do so; and he would point out to the noble Marquess that it was neither himself nor any other Member of the House who had drawn the distinction, but the soldiers themselves, who went about crying out "To Hell with the Pope."

MR. BIGGAR said, he could assure the noble Marquess that this question of billeting was one which gave rise to very general complaint. He had himself heard complaints of the same kind from the county of Cavan.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. Member had better defer any remarks upon the question of billeting until the Vote to which that subject relates is reached. I should have stopped the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. William Redmond), if I had not thought that he was going to connect his observations with the proceedings at Downpatrick. There is a Vote to be taken later on upon which this question can be more conveniently and appropriately raised.

MR. BIGGAR said, he had only wished to corroborate the statement made by his hon. Friend. As to the administration of Military Law, he agreed with the remarks which had been made by his hon. Friends. At Mallow, on a recent occasion, a military officer, who had been in charge of certain troops there, was allowed to give evidence in favour of Mr. Carr, an Inspector of Police, when, in point of fact, the military officer in question was himself open to the same charge as Inspector Carr. He thought that such a proceeding was highly irregular, and that it ought to have been avoided. In regard to the question which had been raised by the hon. and gallant Member for Ayrshire (General Alexander), as to the Office of Judge Advocate General, he had listened with great attention to the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Osborne Morgan) in defence of that Office; and he thought the right hon. and learned Gentleman had been placed in an unfortunate and somewhat unfair position in being required to defend the Office at all. He thought that some of his Colleagues upon the Treasury Bench ought to have defended the Office for him, and that it was not reasonable to ask a Gentleman whose Office was attacked to defend himself. Some of the permanent officials of the Office could have supplied notes to the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War, or some other military official, so that the personal question might not have been allowed to intervene. He thought if the right hon. and learned Gentleman was right in his contention, he had really proved too much, because the personal experience of hon. Members was that they saw the Judge Advocate General about the House from 4 o'clock every afternoon until 1 or 2 in the morning; and it was perfectly impossible, if he had serious duties to perform in connection with a judicial Office, that those duties could be properly discharged. His own opinion was that there were too many polical officials in the House. It was notorious that all the work of the Public Offices was done by the permanent officials. At the present moment, there were four military Representatives in the House, which he (Mr. Biggar) thought, at least, two too many. The War Office ought to be satisfied with two Parliamentary Representatives, who should be able to defend the action of those permanent officials, who, from many points of view, were much preferable to political Representatives in the House of Commons. If a lawyer were permanently employed in the War Office to supervise the legal part of the business, he would, as a matter of course, be a thoroughly competent and efficient official, well versed in all matters connected with Military Law, and his services would be of value to the country. But if they were to have a Judge Advocate General, who was to be a political supporter of the Government, occupying the greater part of his time in the House, and selected, not because he was efficient in Military Law, but because he was a more or less import-

ant political Member of Parliament, it seemed to him that such a Minister had all his business to learn after he went into the Office, and that he was by no means as well qualified to discharge the duties as a permanent official would be. Upon this matter the distinction between the Army and the Navy was very great, although the difference between the nature of the cases that were dealt with in the two branches of the Service was purely of a technical character. The hon. and gallant Member (General Alexander) had complained of the decisions that were sometimes given in Admiralty cases; but he (Mr. Biggar) believed that the decisions given by the Admiralty were much more satisfactory to the sailors than the decisions given in the Army were to the soldiers. His own opinion was that these matters were much better managed in the Navy than in the Army. Whatever might be said as to the importance of the Office of Judge Advocate General, the fact still remained that the country paid a substantial salary to a political Gentleman, who spent three-fourths of his time, not in the performance of the duties of his Office, but in waiting in the House of Commons to give a Party vote. The official duties discharged by the Judge Advocate General in the House of Commons consisted in his attendance for a few hours while the Army Votes were being passed, and while the Army (Annual) Bill was under consideration. He did not think that that was a business-like way of managing any Office connected with a great Public Department, and the sooner the whole matter was revised the better and the more easily would the work be done. Any difficult question arising out of the business of the Office would be much better attended to by a permanent official at the War Office than by a political Representative in the House of Commons, who was usually supplied with written answers to the Questions put to him by permanent officials connected with his Department.

GENERAL ALEXANDER said, that in withdrawing the Motion he wished only to say one word. The right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Osborne Morgan) had misunderstood what he had said. What he had said was that the discussion had given the right hon. and learned Gentleman an opportunity, not of magnifying the Office, but of justifying its retention.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(3.) £320,500, Medical Establishment and Services.

DR. FARQUHARSON said, he must be allowed to express an opinion that the Medical Officers were thoroughly satisfied with the way in which the Department was worked. Dr. Crawford, the Director General, was one of the most able officers who had ever presided over it. He merely wished to point out very shortly one matter in connection with Army medical practice in Egypt and elsewhere upon which it was desirable to have an explanation. He wanted to know what was the precise connection which existed between the National Aid Society and the Army Medical Department? He did not wish to make any suggestion in derogation of the excellent work done by the Society; but he thought some of the misconception which had sprung up might be removed by an explanation as to the precise relations between the National Aid Society and the Army Medical Department. What he wanted to know was, who, in the case of a campaign like that in Egypt, was primarily responsible for the care of the sick and wounded? There was a danger that the idea might get abroad that the soldiers there were starved, and that it was necessary to supply them with necessaries and luxuries by outside aid. He thought that was a total misconception, and that not only were necessaries, but even superfluities, supplied to soldiers in the camp, in the field, and in the hospital. All their wants were carefully and liberally attended to; and what the National Aid Society did was to step in and supplement, by means of their organization, the operations of the actual Medical Departments in the field. All he wished to know was what the precise connection was that existed between the two Departments, and if one was altogether independent of the other?

LORD EUSTACE CECIL asked what provision was made for Militia surgeons in connection with Militia regiments when embodied? Were surgeons found from the Staff of the Army, or had the regiments to depend upon the assistance given by their own officers? It was

rather an important question, and he hoped to receive a reply to it. He would like to have an explanation as to the reduction of £6,000 in the item relating to these officers.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said, he had received several letters from Militia surgeons, complaining of their grievances. At present they were not entitled to pensions, no matter what the attendance was which they gave in the discharge of their duties in connection with the Militia regiments. Now, it was a well-known fact that Militia surgeons had to give up many opportunities for private practice; and he thought it was extremely hard that those gentlemen, after lengthened periods of service, received nothing at all in the shape of pension or other compensation for the time they had devoted to the requirements of their regiments. He knew that Militia surgeons, in some parts of Ireland especially, had very severe duties to perform—that they had to do their work with very great inconvenience to themselves, and that they had to forego all chance of receiving pensions——

SIR ARTHUR HAYTER rose to Order. The hon. Member, he thought, would be more in Order if he brought forward the question of pensions on the Pension Vote.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said, if the hon. Gentleman had heard him to the end of his sentence, he would have found that he was leading up to the point. These Militia surgeons did not receive any pension; no matter how long they served, they should receive a little more pay, and be entitled to a pension. In case he received a reply from the hon. Gentleman that there was no provision made for them, his intention was to produce facts, and move an additional sum for the purpose. If the hon. Gentleman would tell the Committee now whether there was any intention of meeting the grievance of Militia surgeons—because there were many of them who had that grievance and he knew of half-a-dozen cases in his own county—if the hon. Gentleman would say how the matter stood, there might be no necessity for moving an increase of the Vote.

THE CHAIRMAN said, he must point out that it was not within the competence of hon. Members to make Motions for additions to Votes; and he doubted whether it would be in Order for the hon. Gentleman the Financial Secretary to the War Department to reply upon the question of pensions, because they were provided for in a subsequent Vote.

SIR ARTHUR HAYTER said, the National Aid Society was doing very good work in Egypt. With regard to the first question of the hon. Member for West Aberdeenshire (Dr. Farquharson), he had no hesitation in saying that the Army Medical Department was not only primarily, but entirely responsible for the care of the sick and wounded. In saying that, he wished to add that they all recognized the generous and charitable aid rendered by the Society in the form of medical comforts and clothing for the men; and further that this was not regarded as in any way relieving the Army Medical Department of responsibility. Then the hon. Member asked him whether there would be any clashing between the authority of the Army Medical Department and that of the Charitable Aid Society—that was to say, whether the Society would be responsible to the Army Medical Department? He had the authority of the Director General to say that the officers who, at the instance of the National Aid Society, went to Egypt, had received instructions in all cases to defer to the authority of the Army Medical Officer on the spot; he need hardly point out that the officers of the Society would not be allowed in the camp at all, unless they recognized the supremacy of the Military Authorities there. Therefore, in case of any question arising between the doctors of the two Services, there would be a reference to the Military Officer in command. The noble Lord opposite (Lord Eustace Cecil) had asked him for an explanation with regard to the foot note at the bottom of page 4, relating to a decrease of £6,000 in the amount paid for Medical Officers of Militia. The decrease of £6,000 for those officers was accounted for by the fact that there had been no new appointments of surgeons to the Militia since the establishment of the Medical Department in 1877. In case a Militia regiment was sent away from its headquarters, a Medical Officer would be appointed to it by the Department.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND asked if the hon. Gentleman would be good enough to reply on the general question

he had raised? If he would do so, it would obviate the necessity of bringing forward the question on another Vote.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, before the hon. Baronet answered that question, he would like to point out that the item for the pay of Militia Surgeons was only for £10,000, as against £16,000 in last year's Estimate, and £20,000 in the year before. This continuous diminution of the amount of the Vote from £20,000 to £10,000 for the present year, was very remarkable. They were only asked for one-third of what was voted the year before last, and as such an alteration suggested an entire change of the system which had until recently existed with regard to Militia Surgeons, he asked the hon Baronet whether it was proposed to abolish those officers altogether and get their work done by other persons, or whether the extraordinary diminution of the amount of the Vote was merely accidental? As the matter appeared on the face of the Estimates, it was impossible for the Committee without further information to avoid the conclusion that it was the intention of the War Office Authorities to get rid of Militia Surgeons. Then with regard to the question of his hon. Friend the Member for Wexford (Mr. W. Redmond) as to the position of Militia Surgeons, he considered that subject to be very pertinent to the present Vote; and he asked the hon. Baronet if he would explain fully the present system, and indicate such alterations as the War Office Authorities might chose to make in it?

SIR ARTHUR HAYTER said, he had already answered the question of the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor), as to whether the diminution in the item for pay of Militia Surgeons was accidental, to the noble Lord opposite (Lord Eustace Cecil). It was the intention of the War Office that the Militia Surgeons should cease to be appointed. They would be replaced, as he had stated before, by Regimental Surgeons, who took charge of the Militia when they were at the depôts. The decrease was not only in the number of Militia Surgeons, but also in the number of Civilian practitioners, all of whom were superseded by the officers of the Army Medical Department. With regard to the question of the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. W. Redmond) when the Pensions Vote came forward, he should be in a position to reply.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR said, as one who took a great interest in the Medical Department, and particularly with regard to the efficiency of subordinates, he wished to know how many lady nurses, who added so much to the efficiency of the Medical Service in the Army, had been appointed in order to carry out the recommendation of Lord Morley's Committee? He would also be glad to know the number employed in India? Having several times called attention to this on the Army Estimates, when the hon. Member in charge had not been able to give the number, he trusted that the hon. Baronet would now be in a position to take notice of his observations on the subject.

MR. LEAHY said, it was stated that small-pox was present at Manchester, and it would therefore be apparent to the Committee that the removal of troops from that city to the Curragh Camp involved some danger. He asked the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War, whether he had seen a communication from a Board of Guardians remonstrating against the removal of troops from Manchester to the Curragh Camp under the circumstances? He said it would be a serious thing if troops were sent there from a place where there was infection.

MR. BRAND pointed out that this sub-head of the Vote under discussion only provided for medicine and medical comforts for the sick.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, he had no information on the subject alluded to by the hon. Member for Kildare (Mr. Leahy). No doubt, if it were known to the Military Authorities that small-pox was present at Manchester, in a manner likely to affect the health of the troops, it would be mentioned to the Quartermaster General, and the removal would probably not take place.

SIR ARTHUR HAYTER said, in reply to the first question of the hon. and gallant General (Sir George Balfour), £3,000 had been added to provide 40 additional lady nurses in order to carry out the recommendation of Lord Morley's Committee. He did not think that any charge in respect of the other

matter referred to by the hon. and gallant General could appear on the Estimates.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR said, the charge used to appear on the Estimates.

Vote *agreed to.*

(4.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £526,900, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay and Allowances of a Force of Militia, not exceeding 136,175, including 30,000 Militia Reserve, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886."

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, upon this important Vote he should like to ask the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War, what steps had been taken, or what steps were being taken, to fill up the Militia? On looking through the Returns, he found that the number of officers proper for the Militia was 3,754; at the last training, however, there were only 2,484 officers out, the deficiency in respect of absentees being 1,270. He also found that of non-commissioned officers and men the number voted was 132,421, while the number actually out was 95,794. Now, having regard to the aspect of affairs all over the world at the present time, and looking to the Vote of Credit which had been given to the Government, he should be particularly glad to know what steps Her Majesty's Government were going to take, or had taken, to make the Militia as efficient a Force as it ought to be? He thought that no one would deny the great advantage to the country of the Militia. Nor would anyone deny the great services they had rendered in times past, and for his own part he was quite certain that those services would be repeated on future occasions. But he was bound to say that, with all the other Services, the Militia had been badly treated, and he believed that that bad treatment had led to the present state of affairs. Whatever it might cost to put the Militia into a state of efficiency, he held that no expenditure would be too great to put the Militia as well as all the Reserve Forces into an efficient condition, particularly at the present moment. He did not wish to labour this point, because these were plain facts, and he believed that the noble Marquess would see for himself that the state of things which now existed ought not to be allowed to continue, and that he should do everything in his power to raise the Militia from its present condition. With the permission of the Committee, he would refer for one moment to an Order which he saw by *The Times* of that morning had been issued with respect to Militia officers. The Order stated that Militia officers were accepted to serve now in the Line, and that they were to be appointed to regiments, and to fill the vacancies now existing in the Line regiments. He was particularly desirous of ascertaining from the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War what would be the *status* of the Militia officers in the regiments to which they were to be appointed. Was it proposed that they were to join the Line regiments temporarily only, or that they were to be permanently appointed if their services were found to be efficient? He thought the question was one which deserved serious consideration at the hands of the noble Marquess. If they were to be permanently appointed in the way he described, which he could hardly believe, he thought the noble Marquess might go a step further. There were many men which had passed an excellent examination, although, unfortunately for them, they were not amongst those who obtained the highest number of marks, and had been passed by. Now, he thought that there should be some recognition of the trouble and expense those gentlemen had incurred; it should certainly be taken into account, and he thought they might also have some chance of getting appointments at the present time. Another point that he wished to mention in connection with the Militia was the case of a very small number of Militia quartermasters. He referred to those quartermasters who had been promoted from the Line, and who had served 21 years, and had risen to be sergeant majors or to some other high grade of non-commissioned officers. There were but few of those men—they were 16 in number—who would think they would be badly treated if something were not done for them. They were men, who having served 21 years as sergeant majors or quartermaster sergeants, drew their pensions, or be-

came entitled to them, took the appointment of quartermaster under the Royal Warrant of 1878, thereby forfeiting the pensions they had earned for their services in the ranks. Those officers were compulsorily retired at the age of 55, so that if they arrived at that age before they completed 10 years' commissioned service they were obliged to take a retiring pension of 7*s.* a-day, and were debarred from counting the rank service or drawing the pension they had earned. For those 16 men a special case should be made, so that if they attained the age of 55 before they completed 10 years' service as quartermaster, they should be allowed to remain on their appointment, so as to complete the full 10 years, and then retire on the maximum pension of £200 a-year and honorary rank. He would say no more upon the subject than that he considered it was a case deserving of serious consideration at the hands of the noble Marquess, because the persons in question were men of the highest character and with the best testimonials, several of them having seen Crimean and Indian Mutiny service as well. He knew very well promotion was wanted for men of the Line regiments; surely then they ought to take into consideration these old soldiers who had done their duty so well to their country.

Lord EUSTACE CECIL begged to endorse what had fallen from the hon. and gallant Baronet. He (Lord Eustace Cecil) had several times put a question to the noble Marquess on the subject, and he had understood from him that he was going to make an explanation on this Vote, and tell the Committee what steps he proposed to take to increase the men up to the establishment, which was 24,000 below the number voted by Parliament, and also, what was still more important, that he would tell them something about the subject his hon. and gallant Friend had touched upon—namely, the number of officers, which was still below what it ought to be. But there was another point. He was sure the Committee and the country would be of opinion that the Militia, the old Constitutional Force of the country, should be in a state of the highest efficiency; but he was bound to confess, from what he had seen in the papers and had heard from some commanding officers, that the state of the equipment of the men was far from what it should be. He had been told by the commanding officer of one of the Bedfordshire regiments, that most of the belts were rotten, the knapsacks were worn out, and that they had no pouches or water bottles. All these matters should be attended to. The Government had an opportunity now which did not fall to every Government. They were going to get a large amount of money in the shape of a Vote of Credit, and that would afford a good opportunity for putting the Militia into a thoroughly efficient condition. The complaints which were made with regard to this Force were most time honoured; they had been made time after time, year after year. He (Lord Eustace Cecil) had sat in this House a great many years, and he declared that every time the Army Estimates had been discussed the same complaints had been made. That was the case, notwithstanding that the Militia was the Force which ought to receive the very first attention, for the reason that before the Regular Army was thought of, the Militia, or what served for a Militia in old times, was the Force that the country had to depend upon in case of an invasion. That subject spoke for itself, and, therefore, there was no reason for him to enlarge upon it. If the noble Marquess would be good enough, in the explanation he was about to give them on this Vote, to tell them what conditions he was going to offer, and what he proposed to do to fill up the ranks of both the men and the officers, now that he had armed the Militia with the Martini-Henry rifle, to put the Force in an efficient state to take the field if necessary, he should be glad, and he was sure such a statement would be received by both the Committee and the country with satisfaction.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: The hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) made some observations as to the number of Militia officers; other attention was also called to this subject, and I am very glad that it has been raised, because it gives me an opportunity of stating what are the facilities and what steps we are taking to enable Militia officers to obtain commissions in the Line. That opportunity is, I believe, one of the greatest inducements

to young men to enter the Militia. I gave an answer on this subject on the 28th February; and since that time there has been a considerable increase in the number of Militia officers. On the 2nd May, the actual increase in the number of Militia officers was 88, besides 32 who had obtained commissions in the Line at that time; so that the actual increase in the number of Militia officers who had entered the Line was 120. The number of vacant commissions on the 28th February in the Militia was 797, and now it is only 685. That, I think, is satisfactory, and shows the efficiency of the men, and also that the inducements to join the Militia are now better understood, and that there is a better prospect, without violent measures, of the commissions in the Militia being filled up. The hon. and gallant Member also asked me about a Circular, which I have seen, as to the service of Militia officers being accepted for duty in the Line battalions. Of course, that was owing to a mere displacement during a period of pressure—to the great and unusual call upon the services of commissioned officers. Militia officers so joining would, of course, serve in the rank which they now hold; but the hon. and gallant Member will observe that no officer would obtain permanent promotion except through the ordinary channels, and that he would have to enter as lieutenant. Well, the hon. and gallant Member also referred to certain old Militia quartermasters. He cannot expect me to follow the technical grievance he expressed to the Committee, and I must confess I am not prepared to enter into details upon this matter. I have some recollection, however, that the case has been repeatedly brought forward—I think it has been repeatedly brought forward by memorial and representation to more than one Secretary of State for War, and that it has been referred to more than once in this Committee—and though I cannot refuse to look into the matter again, I must tell the hon. and gallant Gentleman that I think the case of these officers has been minutely inquired into, and that I cannot hold out any hope of arriving at any other conclusion, substantial justice having been done to them. The noble Lord the Member for West Essex (Lord Eustace Cecil) said he expected I would make some statement on the subject of the Militia. I am not aware that I held out any prospect that I would make a statement on this subject. I have informed the Committee of what has been done as to the officers of the Militia, and as to the special measures taken for increasing the numbers under the establishment. I am not aware that it is in our power to take any special measures, except to impress upon officers commanding districts to do everything in their power to obtain Militia recruits—to impress upon the officers to make the Service as popular as it can be made. The noble Lord speaks of the deficiencies in the ranks of the Militia as of something about which complaint has to be made.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL: What I said was that I had heard it mentioned year after year.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The noble Lord is aware that, under the present arrangements, the establishment of many Militia regiments are larger than the districts are able to supply. However, with all the means now at work, and which cannot be said to be in complete order yet—with these means, when they have been thoroughly tested and tried, it will be found unnecessary and inadvisable to make any alteration in the establishment. I think I cannot do more than assure the Committee that the importance of this Force is fully appreciated by the Military Authorities, and that every effort is being made to raise the Militia and keep them up to a proper state of efficiency.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL: The noble Marquess has not referred to the equipments of the Militia, with regard to which I made some observations.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I hope on that point the noble Lord will address his observations to the Surveyor General of Ordnance.

COLONEL GUNTER said, that after the remarks of the noble Marquess and his expression of a desire to put the Militia into as good a position as possible, he (Colonel Gunter) would venture to put before him a matter which he thought it important to consider at this time. The point he wished to raise was as to the Army Reserve. Army Reserve men, as a rule, enlisted at the age of 18, and left the Army at 30. When they had done their service in the Line and Army

Reserve they were dismissed altogether. Would it not be well to adopt some plan whereby these men could be brought into the Militia, where their presence would be of the greatest value? They would be of the greatest service in forming a nucleus of steady soldiers, and adding stability to the Militia regiments. Such an arrangement would be extremely valuable for this reason—and he spoke upon this point with considerable knowledge—that when a Militia regiment was called on for its Reserve men, as it was in the case of the last Russian scare, it took the best men away, at any rate the best non-commissioned officers. In most Militia regiments the commanding officers made it a point of giving their best men the option of belonging to the Militia Reserve. If they did not do so, non-commissioned officers would give up their stripes and return to the ranks rather than lose the extra bounty given to them for being in the Reserve. Sometimes the fourth of a regiment belonged to the Militia Reserve, and when that fourth was taken away the commanding officers were deprived of their oldest and ablest and best men, and most of the ablest non-commissioned officers. If the noble Marquess could see his way to induce the men of 30 years of age, when they had done with the Army Reserve, to join the Militia, by giving them a larger bounty—say, an annual extra bounty of £1 a-year—when the Militia Reserve was called out the effect would be that, instead of the Line regiments denuding the Militia of all its best men, there would be in the Militia a large number of men who had served in the ranks of the Regular Army to give stability and steadiness to the regiments. The men in the Militia Reserve were not expected to remain there after the age of 34 years; but then, on joining the Line regiment, they could be sent to any part of the world. On the other hand, if they could get back into the Militia Reserve, by a trifling increase of bounty, Linesmen who had done their service in the Line, they would be forming an excellent nucleus of steady soldiers. He ventured to bring this matter before the noble Marquess, because the last time the Militia Reserve was called out the best of his men and the best of his non-commissioned officers were taken away from him; and if his regiment had been called out and sent to the Mediterranean, he should have been unable satisfactorily to fill the places of those men. There was no means of getting at these men otherwise than by re-enlistment. He would ask the noble Marquess whether he could not see his way to increasing the bounty? Supposing £2 were given when the men came in, and an extra £1 a-year bounty whilst they served, a valuable class of men would be got into the Militia. At the present moment these men were thrown away, for after they had served about 12 years in the Line, notwithstanding they had become excellent and good soldiers, they ceased to have connection with the Army. He ventured to bring this matter under the notice of the War Office, because he believed it was a subject capable of being dealt with to the great advantage of the Army and to the country generally. There was another point upon which he ventured to touch. The noble Marquess had said he was anxious for the efficiency of the Militia, and he (Colonel Gunter) would therefore recommend that when the men came up on their enlistment, and for training in the barracks, they should be put under their own officers. At the present moment they were put with the soldiers of the Line. He knew very well the object of the arrangement at present adopted; it was to get the men who came into the Militia to go into the Line. That object was a good one, and he did not object to it; but what he asked was that the men, when they came up, should be put under their own adjutant, and in their own barrack-rooms. He wished to bring these matters under the notice of the noble Marquess, because probably they had not struck him before. He wished to recommend the plan, by which they could induce the Army Reserve men to serve in the Militia up to 45 years of age. If they could do that, they would be bestowing a great boon upon the country. The hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), he thought, had said he was very anxious to do everything he could for the good of the Service—everything in reason. Well, if he could venture to put it before the Government in a very humble way, he would suggest a means by which they could add greatly to the satisfaction of the men. They enlisted men, and told them they were to have free

rations. Well, "free rations" was known in this country now—it used not to be in the olden time—to consist of three meals—namely, breakfast, dinner, and tea. Now, a man could not have breakfast and could not have tea unless coffee and sugar or tea was supplied to him. He (Colonel Gunter) had gone into this question, and he found that if they wanted to carry out the wording of the enactment which provided for "free rations," they must not make the charge at present imposed on the men of ½*d.* a-day, but should find them breakfast, dinner, and tea without any charge. It was impossible to say that a man had "free rations," when he had to put his hand into his pocket and pay for any of these things out of his own money. It would be a source of great satisfaction to the men, if they found their breakfast, dinner, and tea supplied to them, instead of having to put their hands in their pockets to pay this ½*d.* It might be said that ½*d.* was a very small amount; still, it was a consideration with the men, and it was only right that the Government should carry out the undertaking it entered into when the men enlisted, and give them free rations. He brought these matters before the War Office because he thought it was his duty to do so.

GENERAL ALEXANDER said, that a few years ago the scheme of compulsory retirement on account of age was fixed for officers commanding Militia regiments, and it was found afterwards that the compulsory retirement was not applicable to officers commanding regiments of the Channel Islands Militia. He thought the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War had said he had no power whatever over this Militia, and that he had nothing whatever to do with the Channel Islands Forces, and that the ages of the commanding officers were not known. In order to test the case, he (General Alexander) had asked the noble Marquess to give him a Return of the ages of the officers commanding the Channel Islands Militia. That Return had been supplied, and he (General Alexander) now held it in his hand. He found that out of nine officers commanding regiments in the Channel Islands, three, if they had been commanding in England or Scotland, would have been disqualified by age; one of them was actually 77 years old. Surely that was too great an age for any officer commanding a regiment. He thought himself that the Secretary of State for War had gone too far in fixing compulsory retirement on account of age where it had been fixed in the case of the British and Irish Militia, because in that way they lost a great many officers who were still in the prime of life, and great difficulty was felt in filling their places. But he thought that whatever rule was applicable to the British Militia and the Irish Militia, it ought certainly to be applicable to the Channel Islands Militia. The object of the rule which had been adopted in the case of Great Britain and Ireland was, no doubt, to increase the efficiency of the Militia. He did not know whether or not that result was attained; and, therefore, to give an opportunity to the noble Marquess to reply to the question, and, if necessary, to raise a discussion upon the matter, he begged, as a matter of form, to move to reduce the Vote by £7,000, being the amount put down for the Channel Islands Militia.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £519,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay and Allowances of a Force of Militia, not exceeding 136,175, including 30,000 Militia Reserve, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886."—(*General Alexander.*)

SIR ARTHUR HAYTER said, that in reply to the hon. and gallant Member (General Alexander), all he had to say was that the Secretary of State for War had nothing to do with this matter. It was not in the power of the Secretary of State for War to fix the limit of age of commanding officers in the Channel Islands Militia. Service in that Force was compulsory, and the age of retirement for commanding officers, and everything else connected with the Force, was regulated by the laws of the Islands, and could not be altered by the Secretary of State for War.

GENERAL ALEXANDER said, that nothing to that effect was stated last year, and the Return which he had moved for had been granted. However, he did not wish to press the Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, that with regard to the point

raised by the hon. and gallant Member opposite (Colonel Gunter), the hon. and gallant Member would see that the subject had been brought forward in the Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting this year. The Inspector General, in the figures he presented, showed that the number of men who had served 12 years in the Army, and had gone to the Reserves, had increased since 1883 from 893 to 1,652. He showed that the number of men whom the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite thought it desirable to obtain for the Militia, was increasing. The Inspector General had suggested that more liberal terms should be offered them.

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(5.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £72,500, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for Yeomanry Cavalry Pay and Allowances, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886."

MR. A. F. EGERTON said, he wished to draw attention to a small grievance, which he thought was of some importance in connection with this Vote; it was a small one, but it militated against the whole Force. It had reference to a Regulation of 1862. He would refer the noble Marquess to page 66 of the Regulations, to the subject of grants for compensation, and it would be seen that a yeoman was entitled to compensation if his horse was killed in the field during drill. If, however, in attending troop drill, or permanent duty, his horse happened to meet with an accident on his way to or from the field, he was entitled to no compensation. He would like to quote a case in which some hardship had been inflicted on an unfortunate farmer in consequence of this Regulation. There was a trooper belonging to a Yeomanry regiment in Lancashire going to drill in the town of Rochdale—either going to it, or coming from it, he did not know which. That trooper happened, unfortunately, to meet with a detachment of the Salvation Army with its drums, trumpets, and tambourines. The consequence was that his horse, which was perfectly accustomed to military operations, not being accustomed to the operations of the Salvation Army, reared up and fell over, breaking its back. It was killed in the streets of Rochdale. A claim was made on the War Office for the small grant of £20—an amount which, of course, did not by any means cover the value of the horse. There had been a great deal of correspondence on the subject, and the claim had eventually been refused, in consequence of the Regulation to which he had referred. Well, he ventured to think that the Regulations pressed very hardly on the yeomen. He could quote another case which was brought under his notice in connection with a regiment of Yeomanry with which he had been for some time connected, and in which he himself had served. In this case, a horse was attacked with pneumonia during permanent duty, and died a day or two after. No compensation was given by the Government, and in the result compensation had to come out of the troop officer's pocket. He had to pay £20, or whatever the sum was, the value of the horse, otherwise it would have been impossible for him to have kept his troop together. It might be said that the alteration of these Regulations might lead to abuse; but he believed it would be very easy to adopt safeguards to prevent the Regulations being abused, and to provide only for accidents to horses going to or coming from the field, as well as those engaged in field operations. Claims of this kind should be certified by the commanding officer or adjutant, or, if necessary, by the General Officer commanding the district. This was a small grievance, but it was one of the small grievances which conduced to the inefficiency rather than the efficiency of the Force. He commended it to the consideration of the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington).

MR. RYLANDS said, that he had almost allowed the Chairman to put the Question before rising, because he was waiting for the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Berkshire (Sir Robert Loyd Lindsay) to rise. He fully expected the hon. and gallant Gentleman to express some opinion upon this Vote. He believed he was correct in saying that the hon. and gallant Gentleman, who was an acknowledged authority upon questions of this kind, was not prepared to justify the present administration of this Vote, and he should have been very glad indeed if the hon.

and gallant Gentleman had given the Committee the benefit—he hoped he would still give them the benefit—of his experience. He (Mr. Rylands) recollected perfectly well that for a great many years past this Vote had been received with a considerable amount of objection and criticism on the part of hon. Members. He recollected reading, before he was a Member of the House, the admirable speeches of the late Mr. Henry Berkeley, in which that gentleman ridiculed the various branches of the Yeomanry Service in different parts of the Kingdom, and in which he showed the Committee that the Yeomanry was an altogether absurd and inefficient Force. Of course, he (Mr. Rylands) could not speak with the authority of the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite (Colonel Sir Robert Loyd Lindsay); but he could say that, in regard to the corps with which he was personally acquainted, and of which, in his early years, he was in the habit of seeing something—he meant the Cheshire Yeomanry, or, as they were popularly called, the "Cheshire Cabbage Cutters"—there was a general impression that that corps would not prove very efficient unless it was in cutting down cabbages. His objection to the Yeomanry Force was that it was altogether a sham Force. If there was any necessity to make any demand upon the Reserve Forces of the country, the Yeomanry Force would be found absolutely useless for fighting purposes. He did not doubt for a moment that some of the yeomen with their horses could limber up waggons, and do work of that kind; but that could be done without keeping up an establishment of this kind. If ever they were, unfortunately, in a position to require assistance in the Commissariat Department, there would be no difficulty whatever in getting the number of waggons and horses wanted. Military men, and, in fact, the Inspecting Officer of Yeomany himself, were distinctly of opinion that the Yeomanry in its present state was an unsatisfactory and inefficient Force. It did seem to him (Mr. Rylands), that at a time when they were called upon to pay large sums of money for the Military Services of the Crown, it was most ill-advised that they should persist in voting, year after year, a sum of £60,000 or £70,000 for a Force which was condemned by the very highest authorities. He did not grudge the Vote which was given to the Volunteers; he thought that, probably, in some respects that Vote might with propriety be increased. The Volunteers formed a Force of the most valuable description, and the money given to them was money well laid out. Not so with the Yeomanry; they were not worth the money the country spent upon them, and therefore he should certainly say "No" when the Vote was put.

COLONEL O'BEIRNE said, that this Vote did not concern Ireland either directly or indirectly; indeed, it was very unjust that Ireland should have to pay even the smallest fraction of this Vote, or of any Vote for Volunteers, when it was not allowed to have Volunteer corps. He quite agreed with the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) that £70,000 was a most extravagant sum to give to a Force like the Yeomany, which did not even supply recruits to the Regular Cavalry. The country ought not to be called upon to supply the money, especially when they were required to meet large bills for military operations in all parts of the world, which up to this had not been very successful.

SIR FREDERICK FITZ-WYGRAM said, the Reports of late years with regard to the Yeomanry regiments had been very favourable. There were, as the Committee were aware, two Inspecting Generals of Auxiliary Forces. All the Reports of these officers passed through his hands during his late period of office, and he found that the Reports made with regard to the Yeomanry were to the effect that that Force of late years had improved, and that they were still improving. That improvement was due to the establishment of a School for Auxiliary Cavalry at Aldershot; and up to 1882 that School was a great success. The Commandantship of the School was, up to that year, a five years' appointment. In 1882, for certain reasons, he believed connected with economy, it was decided to make it an annual appointment, and to give £100 to a captain who would take the place for a year. It was impossible that the School could be a success when the Commandant was changed every year. He believed that the appointment of a Commandant for five years was absolutely necessary for the success of the

School. As a matter of fact, of late the Commandantship had been changed even more than once every year; he believed there had been three changes in the office during the last 12 months. A Yeomanry School was required as much, if not more, for non-commissioned officers as for commissioned officers, and for the very reason that of late years Cavalry had been largely engaged in scouting and reconnoissance duties; indeed, latterly, such duties had become almost the primary duties of Cavalry. Now, the Yeomanry sergeants were, for the most part, men who had been in the Cavalry for years, men who belonged to the Cavalry before the days when the new duties were much considered or taught. He, therefore, believed it was of the utmost necessity that a School should be open, say, six months in each year, for Yeomanry sergeants. For three months of the year, the School, under the same Commandant, could be open to officers. Now, the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) had attacked the use of the Yeomanry. He (Sir Frederick Fitz-Wygram) had seen a good deal of the Yeomanry and of the Cavalry too, and his own impression was that the Yeomanry formed a very useful portion of the Auxiliary Forces; and he believed from what he saw of them that, in the intelligence and zeal which they brought to bear on their duties, they would compare very favourably with any of the Volunteers of the country. He believed that if the necessities of the Empire required the employment abroad of a large portion of the Cavalry, the Yeomanry would be found very useful. Nearly all of them were men who could ride, men who knew how to get about, men very well suited for outpost and scouting duties, and he believed they formed as valuable a portion, if not the most valuable, as any of the Auxiliary Forces. He hoped this Vote would be given willingly, and that the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) would see that the School for Auxiliary Cavalry, which was absolutely necessary for the efficiency of the Yeomanry, should be placed on a proper footing, with a Commandant appointed for at least five years. He never wished to throw any burdens on the Estimates. If it was necessary that the Estimates should be kept down, he would suggest that one or two of the smaller and least efficient corps should be disbanded, so that they would be able to have all that was requisite for the efficiency of the Force. He felt that a smaller number of Yeomanry thoroughly drilled and taught, both with regard to officers and non-commissioned officers, would be far more useful than a slightly larger but less efficient body. He would willingly assent to a reduction of strength, in order to make the remainder as efficient as they could be made.

MR. DIGBY said, he could not approach the experience of the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Sir Frederick Fitz-Wygram) who had just addressed the Committee; but he thought it would not be out of place if he, as a humble member of the Yeomanry, said a word or two in favour of that body. The Yeomanry had before now proved its usefulness, and he submitted that it was fully entitled to the small amount of money which the country allowed it. It had been said that it was not an efficient Force. Now, while a man in the Regular Cavalry regiments cost eight times what an Infantry man cost, a Yeoman cost only four times what a Volunteer cost. In the Yeomanry, therefore, the country obtained the services of a man and his horse for only four times the amount which a Volunteer cost the country, and, therefore, in proportion, the Yeomanry were only half as expensive to the country, per man, as the Cavalry were. It was quite news to him to hear the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) say that the Yeomanry were expected to do Commissariat work. He did think that farmers could be very usefully employed in their own counties as scouts, as eyes to the Army, if the Navy proved inefficient. It ought to be remembered that, at the present time, there were Yeomanry officers doing duty in the Regular Cavalry regiments.

SIR ROBERT LOYD LINDSAY said, he must confess that there was nothing more invidious than for any hon. Member of the House to point out the shortcomings, or what any Member might suppose to be shortcomings, of any Force, and therefore far be it from him to say anything against the individuals who composed that old and much respected Constitutional Force, the Yeomanry. But, as his hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) had somewhat challenged him in a pointed way, he

felt he could not do otherwise than express the opinions he held with regard to the Yeomanry Force. Now, he was of opinion that in England they might have the very finest Irregular Cavalry in the word. Englishmen were devoted to horsemanship, and they were shown to excel in rifle shooting, and it was this latter consideration which kept the Volunteers together. Rifle shooting and horsemanship might be said to be the genius of the English people, and the two combined were what, in his judgment, would make the finest Irregular Cavalry in the world, if, by any piece of good fortune, they could persuade their friends, the Yeomanry, to turn their attention to that mode of military training. Those hon. Members who could go back as long as the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Rylands) and others, would remember that Mr. Cardwell deliberately stated in the House of Commons that it was intended to train in future the Yeomanry as mounted riflemen. From time to time, the desirability of doing what Mr. Cardwell wished to do had been shown in the House; Committees had sat to consider the question, and they had almost invariably recommended it should be done; but the Yeomanry had presented the most determined opposition to being trained in that way. He was not altogether astonished at that opposition, because the men who taught the Yeomanry their work were, in the first place, old men; they were captains or adjutants of Cavalry regiments, or old Dragoon sergeants, who had been trained under the old conditions of Cavalry services—tight trousers and spurs, entirely unsuited for the purposes of mounted rifles. They would rather perish than take up the teaching of rifle shooting. Their thoughts were bent in the one direction; and it was impossible to get these old Cavalry sergeants to take up Infantry duties which many of them regarded as less noble than Cavalry duties. It was vain, therefore, to hope that the Yeomanry could ever be turned into anything like efficient mounted riflemen. Some of the Yeomanry officers themselves—he might mention one, Colonel Edwards — were particularly anxious that the change should be made. Colonel Edwards gave evidence before a Committee of the House, and he had delivered lectures on the subject at the United Service Institution. General Hamley, writing on the subject, said he was only delighted to find it was recommended that the Yeomanry should be trained as mounted riflemen; he was pleased the recommendation came from the Yeomanry themselves, and he hoped that was a good augury that something would be done in that direction. But year after year had gone by, so it was evident that the change was not to be made. If, therefore, the Yeomanry were to be maintained, they must be used to the sword and not to the rifle. He was sorry that so many county gentlemen went into the Yeomanry, because he wanted to see them joining the Volunteers. He wished county gentlemen supported the Volunteers more than they did. As it was, they went into another Force, and did not give the Volunteers the assistance which it was so very desirable they should give. He should be very glad indeed if the Yeomanry were to become Mounted Rifles. An hon. and gallant Friend who sat near him said—"We should be very pleased if we could bring our Yeomanry to the butts; but we have not got rifle ranges." The Volunteers had rifle ranges, which were at the service of Mounted Rifles. The Volunteers had drill halls as well; therefore Mounted Rifles could be trained with the greatest facility, and very economically. If the proposed change were made, he (Sir Robert Loyd Lindsay) felt sure they would have the finest Irregular Cavalry in the world, instead of having an Auxiliary Cavalry Force which he believed was the worst trained—he meant for useful purposes—and the worst armed in the world. The Yeomanry were not even armed. He believed it was intended to give them shortly a better arm; but at the present time they had not even got the carbine. Formerly there was at Wimbledon a competition for Mounted Rifles. It was a very interesting competition; but the Yeomanry now said that they could no longer come to Wimbledon, because they were beaten out of the field by the Mounted Infantry. Consequently, the competition had ceased—a fact very much to be regretted.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, the hon. Gentleman the Member for Wigan (Mr. A. F. Egerton) had called attention to a grievance with

respect to the compensation for the loss of horses. The hon. Member was quite right in saying that the grievance had been the subject of very prolonged correspondence between the War Department and the corps concerned. It seemed to him (the Marquess of Hartington) that the line must be drawn somewhere, and he believed that such claims were dealt with in a liberal spirit. But it was an altogether different thing if a horse was lost while it was going to or coming from duty. There must be a line drawn between the time when a horse was on duty and when it was off duty. The accident to which the hon. Member referred was one which might have happened to the horse when it was not in the service of the State at all; and, therefore, he did not think that any great grievance was made out. The hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for South Hampshire (Sir Frederick Fitz-Wygram) had called attention to the good service done by the School of Auxiliary Cavalry, and he had pointed out that more good service would be rendered by the School if the Commandant held his office for a longer period. He understood from his hon. Friend the Financial Secretary to the War Office (Sir Arthur Hayter) that under the present system there was considerable difficulty in obtaining competent officers to accept the appointment. The subject would be brought up again, and when that was done he would give it his best consideration. He did not think he need take up much time of the Committee by replying to the observations of the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands). He could not altogether congratulate his hon. Friend upon the opportunity he had taken to display his economical leanings. For many years past this Vote had been the chief object of attack from the economical Party, and, so far as he could see, his hon. Friend had not brought forward any novel argument against the Yeomanry. No doubt the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Berkshire (Sir Robert Loyd Lindsay) was a great authority upon Cavalry questions; but so was the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for South Hampshire, who had borne testimony to the substantial value, under certain circumstances, of the Yeomanry Force. There might be a good deal of advantage in the Yeomanry Force being converted into Mounted Infantry as the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Sir Robert Loyd Lindsay) suggested. It was a fact that this Force was capable of producing the finest Irregular Cavalry in the world. There was a great passion for equestrian exercise, and for rifle shooting, and those conditions were extremely favourable for the formation of a Mounted Infantry Force. However, for one reason or another, which he could not now undertake to explain, Mounted Infantry had not been successful. At the present time, there was only one company of Light Horse Volunteers, numbering about 60 men. That fact alone showed that there was one reason or another which prevented the formation of Mounted Infantry. Parliament ought to be very careful before they attempted to get rid of the present Yeomanry Force, which, as had been said in the course of the debate, was of very considerable value—they ought to pause before they attempted to convert the Force into something which did not appear to be equally popular. If there was a disposition voluntarily shown to convert the Yeomanry into Mounted Infantry, the matter would be worth consideration. At the present time, the Yeomanry was extremely popular, while the popularity of Mounted Infantry was not great. He did not think it was wise that he should do anything to disturb the popularity of the Force, which, under certain circumstances, was calculated to be very valuable.

MR. BIGGAR said, he was disposed to follow the recommendation of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) and not allow this Vote to pass without a division, unless they got a proper opportunity of getting some information in regard to the Antrim Militia. From the opinion he got from a good many military gentlemen, it appeared to him to be a waste of money to spend it upon the maintenance of Yeomanry Cavalry. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) had said that the Vote was criticized each year, but that there was nothing new said about it; but he (Mr. Biggar) did not think that was a strong argument in favour of the Vote. He heard, last Session, from an hon. Member who had come from a very

remote part of England—the county of Chester—that the Yeomanry Cavalry were a very dangerous body of men, because they were so unhandy with their swords that there was considerable risk of their cutting each other's heads off. If that was an example of their skill, he thought it would be much better to give a grant of money to get rid of them altogether. The Yeomanry were supposed to be a Military Force, but they had no miltary training whatever, and if they were called upon to vote on the question, he should certainly vote against the Estimate. If the Yeomanry were properly trained they might become proper soldiers; but, in point of fact, the Force was so mismanaged at present that it would be better to get rid of it altogether. They never went on foreign service, or did any good whatever, and therefore it would be better to get rid of them.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said, that notwithstanding the disparaging remarks of the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington), he would venture to say a word in support of the argument of his hon. Friend (Mr. Rylands). Now, the noble Marquess had said this question was brought forward year after year without result; but he (Mr. Illingworth) was inclined to think that, by returning to the Vote, again and again, they would eventually bring conviction that this Force was altogether a useless one. He did not pretend to be a military man, but he was the Representative of taxpayers. Now, what had they heard from the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite the Member for South Hampshire (Sir Frederick Fitz-Wygram) and the hon. Member for Berkshire (Sir Robert Loyd Lindsay)? They had assured them that if this Force was made into something entirely different from what it was at present, it might be of some use to the country. That was the argument which had been brought forward year after year. There was a time when it had a use; when the Government of the day thought it might be badly treated at home; but, happily, such times had gone by now, and if it was to be made of any use at all, it would have to be made a part of our ordinary Military Service. But he would ask this question. Would any military authority in that House say that this Force, for a century past, or as it was likely to be in the future, could have been, or could be now, utilized for any kind of modern warfare? He ventured to say it could not; and, therefore, its existence was a sham, and the sooner it was wiped away the better. How was it possible that there could be anything like discipline or military knowledge acquired in one week's training a-year? It was true that young officers who had acquired a good deal of technical knowledge at training schools might obtain a little practical experience by means of this Force; but it was impossible that they could impart any efficiency or knowledge on military matters to the men. The whole Force was a bye-word and a laughing-stock from one end of the country to the other. Although the noble Marquess had defended the Force, he had not indicated how it could be made useful; and his (Mr. Illingworth's) conviction remained as strong as ever, notwithstanding what had been said—namely, that this was a wasteful and useless expenditure.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 80; Noes 27: Majority 53.—(Div. List, No. 159.)

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

REGISTRATION (OCCUPATION VOTERS) (*re-committed*) BILL.—[BILL 140.]

(*Mr. Attorney General, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Hibbert, Mr. H. H. Fowler.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 6th May.*]

[THIRD NIGHT.]

MR. GLADSTONE: It may be for the convenience of the House if I state at once that, in consequence of a communication with the right hon. Gentleman opposite the Leader of the Opposition (Sir Stafford Northcote), Her Majesty's Government propose to make a certain alteration in the course of procedure on Monday and Tuesday, by exchanging the places of the Bills that were intended for those days. It is now proposed, therefore, to take the Consolidated Fund Bill for the purpose of the debate connected with the Vote of Credit on Monday, and to take the Registration of Voters (England) Bill on Tuesday.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

MR. TOMLINSON said, he had an Amendment on the Paper to move a new clause. He did not propose to move it as it appeared on the Paper, as he had placed it there somewhat hurriedly. He was more anxious to mention the difficulty, and if the Government were not satisfied with the wording of his Amendment he would be glad to alter it in any way they liked, so long as his object was attained. The difficulty which he sought to meet arose from Section 9 of the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882, which was as follows:—

"A person shall not be entitled to be enrolled as a burgess unless he is qualified as follows:—

"(a.) Has been rated in respect of the qualifying property to all poor rates made during those twelve months for the parish wherein the property is situate."

Some difficulties with regard to the construction of that clause having arisen in the minds of Revising Barristers, he thought the Government might take advantage of this Act to make it perfectly clear, and he therefore begged to move the clause he had referred to.

New Clause:—

"Section nine of 'The Municipal Corporation Act, 1882,' shall be read and construed as if Section nineteen of 'The Poor Rate Assessment and Collection Act, 1869,' and Section fourteen of 'The Parliamentary and Municipal Registration Act, 1878,' were incorporated with the former part of that Act,"—(*Mr. Tomlinson,*)

—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read the second time."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) trusted the hon. Member would not press his clause. The law was perfectly clear, and they could not legislate against every mistake which a Revising Barrister was liable to make. He had looked carefully into the matter, and was satisfied that the law as it stood was perfectly clear, and therefore he trusted the hon. Member would not press his Amendment.

MR. TOMLINSON said, he would comply with the request of the hon. and learned Gentleman, and not press his Amendment.

Motion and Clause, by leave, *withdrawn.*

SCHEDULES.

FIRST SCHEDULE.

Enactments repealed.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES), in moving an Amendment, in page 12, line 4, to leave out "suspended," and insert "repealed," said, the Amendment was necessary in order to meet a mere clerical error in the Schedule. He saw that the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Tomlinson) was struck with the same fact. The words should be "part repealed."

Amendment *agreed to;* word *substituted* accordingly.

Schedule, as amended, *agreed to.*

SECOND SCHEDULE.

INSTRUCTIONS AND FORMS FOR COUNTIES.

INSTRUCTIONS TO CLERKS OF THE PEACE.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES), in moving an Amendment, in page 13, line 15, after "1," to insert "33," said, that it was simply an addition which was necessary to carry out the object which the clause had in view.

Amendment *agreed to.*

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) moved an Amendment, in page 13, line 18, at end, insert as a fresh paragraph—

"In the year 1885 the clerk of the peace will omit so much of the precept as relates to the old lodgers list and the forms relating to that list."

Amendment *agreed to;* paragraph *inserted* accordingly.

Mode of making out Lists.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he was in receipt of a large number of resolutions from election agents and others in regard to this Schedule, as it appeared that the compilation of the lists of voters in alphabetical order gave rise to great difficulties. The overseers were compelled to pick out all the A's and B's from the street list, in the first instance, and put them in ordinary alphabetical order; and when a General Election came, the election agents were obliged to go through the lists again, and turn them back again into street order. The overseers' grievance, therefore, was that they were put to a great deal of unne-

cessary trouble. It appeared to him that the arrangement at present involved double trouble. He was quite aware that Clerks of the Peace were in favour of the Bill as it stood; but he thought the Committee had also to consider the convenience of candidates and of their election agents in matters of this sort. The present system involved both expense and trouble; and he thought it would be well if they gave the Local Authorities power to dispense with the alphabetical list altogether, if they thought the existing street list would meet all the requirements. It was desirable they should have a decision on the question as to whether the list should be made out, as was proposed in this part of the Second Schedule, in undoubtedly alphabetical order, or whether, as would be more convenient in many districts, it should be made out in the order, numerical or otherwise, of the streets. His proposal, however, was to get rid of the hard-and-fast line in the Schedule, and leave it to the Local Authorities of the districts to adopt the most convenient course with regard to the list; and the Amendment he was about to move would raise the question whether there might not be districts in which it would be necessary to keep to the street order, and not break up the present arrangements by having the list of voters put alphabetically.

Amendment proposed,

In page 18, line 18, before the word "each," insert the words "unless the local authorities otherwise determine."—(*Sir R. Assheton Cross.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) had touched upon a question, the determination of which was a matter of some difficulty, and upon both sides of which there was a good deal to be said. He would point out to the right hon. Gentleman that the Select Committee which considered the Bill had had before them all the evidence they could get on this subject, including that of Clerks of the Peace, and upon that evidence they had arrived at the conclusion that the lists of voters should be made out in alphabetical order. It was felt that there were insuperable difficulties in the way of using street lists. The Committee were told that the overseers had been accustomed to the alphabetical method, and that if they were to be required to change their system and make out street lists, it would add very considerably to the onerous duties which they had to perform. The right hon. Gentleman had admitted that the representations made to him on this subject had not come from overseers. It was an election agent's question. The overseers had to do that which other people had to do—they had to do their duty, and part of that duty consisted in making out their own lists, which they had always done in alphabetical order; and, as he had said, after careful consideration, the Committee were satisfied that it would be better to have the alphabetical list. Then the right hon. Gentleman proposed to make the rule elastic—that was to say, to apply it to some districts and not to others, as the Local Authorities should decide. But they were met by this difficulty—that it would be impracticable to have two different systems working at once which would be necessary in the case of a district in which there were, say, 1,500 voters subject to the Local Authority and 500 county voters who were not. Therefore, he said it would be impossible to use different lists for different parts of the same districts which included both urban and rural voters. The question was how far the duties of the overseers could be fulfilled; and upon the evidence of those persons of practical experience who came before them, the Committee unanimously came to the conclusion that the balance of convenience was in favour of not disturbing the existing practice of having an alphabetical list.

MR. BIGGAR said, the only fault he had to find with the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) was that it did not go far enough. He could not agree with the argument of the hon. and learned Attorney General that it would be impossible to adopt anything but the alphabetical system in counties. As a matter of fact, in Ireland they had printed lists of electors that were in alphabetical order for every polling district in the counties. Those lists related to a great many different townlands, and the names of the

voters were given in consecutive order as in the streets of towns. He might remind the Committee that the term parish represented in England an area similar in character to that of a townland in Ireland. What occurred in Ireland was this—the rate collector or overseer in the rural districts had the names in consecutive order; but he had to go through the labour of putting them in alphabetical order, although it was much more convenient that they should be kept in the order in which they appeared in his book. It had been pointed out that it would be for the convenience of candidates if the overseers had a second list of names in the parishes, in rural districts, and in streets of towns and villages. But that was a plea which they could not admit at all; because, in their opinion, it would be much more convenient for the overseers, and also much more convenient for the candidates, to have the list made out at first in the order proposed. The argument of the hon. and learned Attorney General that the names should be copied out from the rate book in consecutive order appeared to him to be erroneous. If the Government wished to facilitate the work of the overseers and the candidates, they would do as the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman proposed—namely, make it a rule that the lists should be according to streets in rural districts, parishes, and townlands.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he regretted his inability to follow the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) with regard to the practice in Ireland, although he could speak as to what occurred in England in connection with the lists of voters. For his own part, he thought the Committee would do well to follow the decision of the Select Committee, who, as they all knew, had considered this point very carefully. He had been much struck with the evidence given by one witness before the Committee; he was a gentleman able to speak on the matter; he had for many years acted as registration agent, and knew thoroughly well the practice in respect of overseers and Clerks of the Peace. In answer to a question put to him as to the best way of having the lists of voters made out by the overseers, he said, in effect, that if he spoke from the point of view of his own convenience he should say—"Give me the street list;" but that having regard to the convenience of overseers and Returning Officers he should say—"Take the names in alphabetical order." He (Mr. Stanhope) held that the Committee ought to consult the convenience of the overseers and Returning Officers rather than the convenience of the election agents. Another reason for adopting the alphabetical system was that it enabled them to get rid of double entries, which it was much more easy to detect in an alphabetical list of names than in a list made out on the street system suggested by his right hon. Friend. For these reasons it appeared to the Select Committee that the list of voters would be best arranged alphabetically, and they accordingly came to the conclusion that the alphabetical system should be adopted for the purpose of the Bill. Therefore, knowing that the decision of the Select Committee was arrived at after careful consideration of the facts of the case, he trusted his right hon. Friend would not feel it his duty to press the Amendment to a division.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, when the Irish Bill came back, he should feel very strongly inclined to state his view of this matter in relation to Ireland. As far as the English Bill was concerned, he was bound to say that he was of the same opinion at that moment as he was before he moved the Amendment. It appeared to him that, in this question, three classes of persons were concerned. They had to consider the position of the overseers, the Clerks of the Peace, and the candidates; the latter especially under an Act which limited expenditure at elections, and he was sure that no one would join more readily than the hon. and learned Attorney General in a proposal which would have the effect of doing away with expenditure that was not absolutely necessary. So far as the overseers were concerned, he could not imagine that what his hon. Friend (Mr. Stanhope) had stated represented in practice the real state of the case; because, if he were rightly informed, the returns in populous places were usually made out in the order of streets. It would, therefore, be imposing a large amount of work on the overseer to make him cut up his lists and re-arrange them alphabetically; and he should think, under

the circumstances, that it would be better for the overseer to take the lists of voters according to streets and hand them over to the Clerk of the Peace. He could understand that it would be more convenient for the Clerks of the Peace to have the lists printed alphabetically, and therefore he could not resist the opinion that the evidence given before the Select Committee was for the benefit of the Clerks of the Peace and not for the election agents. [The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): No; the election agents.] There were a number of Clerks of the Peace called before the Committee, and amongst them the Clerk of the Peace in his own district, a most excellent officer, whose evidence, he must say, had caused him some surprise. The cost of converting the street lists, now in use in many places, into alphabetical lists would be considerable; but the expense of cutting them up again and reconverting them would be very much greater. It seemed to him absurd first to have street lists made out, then to put then into alphabetical order for the purpose of elections, and then for the practical purposes of the locality to put them back again into street order. He would take the town of Macclesfield —not the borough—and he did so because it was a large place, and because the name represented a number of towns which, as boroughs, used to return Members of Parliament, but which were now merged in the county. Now, the overseers of those towns would have first to make out street lists, then the moment an election came they would have to cut them up and put them in alphabetical order, and afterwards bring them back into street order. He did not wish to detain the Committee any longer; but he was obliged to express his opinion that the machinery that would be put in motion by the Bill was extremely cumbrous and, at the same time, perfectly useless.

MR. HEALY said, he trusted that the convenience of other persons than Clerks of the Peace would be considered in this matter. Members of that House had been for years under the direction of the hon. and learned Attorney General endeavouring to cut down election expenses. But here was an Amendment proposed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) which would tend in that direction, and they found the hon. and learned Attorney General opposing it—and on what ground? Because of the convenience of Clerks of the Peace. Not a word was said about the convenience of the 650 Members of that House, whose purses ought to be considered—and they, the Members of the House, had to deal with the Bill. He said that they ought to consider this question a little more from their own point of view, and not so much from the point of view of the Clerks of the Peace. For his own part, he was not in favour of allowing his own pocket to be mulcted for the purpose of making an arrangement that would save Clerks of the Peace a little trouble. He contended that nothing had actually been said against the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire, or in answer to the arguments with which he supported that Amendment. It was admitted, in the first place, that the rate collector had to deal with the list of parishioners in the order of streets and by areas; that the list had, so to speak, then to be boiled down into alphabetical order, and when that was done, that it had to be reconverted into a street list. Thus it would be seen that the operation had to be performed twice—once at the expense of the candidates, and then again at their expense. They contended that when this had been done once at the expense of the candidate, no further expense should fall upon them. Now, the hon. Gentleman on the Front Opposition Bench (Mr. E. Stanhope), in opposing the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire, had said that the alphabetical list would tend to prevent double entries. He (Mr. Healy) admitted that as the only argument in favour of the arrangement proposed in the Bill; he admitted that double entries were more possible under the street order system than they were under an alphabetical list. No doubt, it was a much easier process for Clerks of the Peace to detect double entries by that means. But when a man presented himself at the polling station, he could be asked the question—"Have you voted before?" And in his opinion the law against double voting was sufficiently stringent to deter people from committing the act, and

besides, the agents of the candidates would be sure to look after the people who were likely to be guilty of double voting. As a matter of fact, in the Irish boroughs, they were not allowed the option of the street arrangement, as against the alphabetical arrangement, so that England had one reform which had not been made in Ireland; and for that reason, if the right hon. Gentleman went to a division, he should support him.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he hoped the hon. and learned Attorney General would take this matter into consideration before the Report, when he (Sir R. Assheton Cross) would again refer to it. It was a matter that ought not to be lost sight of, and, in the meantime, he would make further inquiries and communicate with the hon. and learned Gentleman. As he did not wish to put the Committee to the trouble of dividing, he would ask leave to withdraw his Amendment.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, the point raised by the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) had been brought very seriously under his notice within the last few hours. He found that the right hon. Gentleman had pointed out a blot on the registration system, and one could hardly suggest the amount of cost and trouble that the arrangement proposed in the Bill would cause. In the first place, the various organizations would have to provide copies of the Registers, and pay 10*s.* 6*d.* for them, a sum which would no doubt appear small in the eyes of highly salaried officials, but the cost appeared a heavy one to persons of a different class; and then the committees would have to go carefully through the Registers, and divide them according to streets, a work that would occupy a week or a fortnight at least. This was a Bill intended to facilitate the registration of voters, and yet the hon. and learned Attorney General proposed for that purpose the very worst arrangement possible—namely, that they should be put on the Register alphabetically. At that moment he could only express his regret that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire had allowed this matter to drop so suddenly; it was one of the points on which the Government would be expected to yield, and he could promise the right hon. Gentleman that it was a point to be considered before the final stage of the Bill was taken; and, for his own part, he should certainly call attention to it again.

MR. HEALY: Will the hon. and learned Attorney General give us the alternative system which prevails in England?

MR. BIGGAR said, he was sorry that the right hon. Gentleman (Sir R. Assheton Cross) had not carried this matter a little further, because, although the point was small, it was of great importance to candidates of moderate means, whose expenditure at elections would be considerably increased by the arrangement proposed in the Bill. But he supposed the right hon. Gentleman had an election agent who looked after his political interests, and thus he did not trouble himself about details. His (Mr. Biggar's) own experience, however, was that when a person became a candidate, and did not want to spend much money, he wrote out a list; in one case the candidate came and asked him to get people to vote for him, and what happened? When he set to work to ask the people for their votes, he found those he wanted scattered over all parts of the borough, and it was very difficult to get at them; but having got the list arranged according to streets, he found himself able to get through the list with the greatest ease and call on the electors one after the other in regular order. It seemed to him that not only was there a large extension of the franchise, but an extension of the difficulties in the way of candidates of moderate means in the form of expenses which only persons of large means could afford. The matter would not, on the whole, be felt so much in Ireland, because candidates of the Party to which he belonged would for the most part be returned without opposition; but where there was a contest the expenses would press very heavily on candidates of moderate means, because the number of electors being greatly increased, there must be a corresponding increase in all mechanical work connected with candidatures.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he had promised to look very carefully into this matter before the Report, and he therefore trusted hon. Gentlemen would save the time of the Committee

by agreeing to the withdrawal of the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he should like to call attention to the reason for moving the first of the Amendments next standing in his name. The Committee would see that the Government were in error as to the provision contained in Sub-section (c) of Clause 13 of the Schedule, which was that the overseer should state the nature of lodger qualifications in the manner prescribed. It was not the duty of the overseers, but of the Clerks of the Peace to do this, and therefore he proposed to omit the sub-section in question.

Amendment proposed, in page 19, lines 14 to 17, leave out Sub-section (c).—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Amendment *agreed to;* words *left out* accordingly.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the same remarks as he had made on the Amendment just agreed to applied to the Amendment he was about to move. Clause 14 instructed the overseer as to the description he was to give of the property or source from which tithe rent charges and other rent charges issued, which constituted a voting qualification. In the same way, as with the lodger qualification, the overseer had nothing to do with this; it was not within his duty; and he therefore proposed to omit the instruction.

Amendment proposed, in page 19, line 24, leave out from "tenant" to the second "and" in line 31.—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Amendment *agreed to;* words *left out* accordingly.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he had an Amendment which he had intended to propose at paragraph 31, page 24, of the Bill, the object of which was to enable people to obtain the lists of persons disqualified. It having been pointed out to him, however, that page 24 would not be the proper place at which to introduce the Amendment, inasmuch as no point as to date was involved, and that his proposal was not in the nature of a precept, but of an amendment of the law, he would not move it now, but bring it forward on the Report.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): I think it should be done.

On the Motion of Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL, the following Amendments made:—In page 25, lines 37 and 38, leave out "lists of occupation voters," and insert "occupiers and old lodgers lists;" in page 27, line 2, after "August," insert "next;" and in page 30, line 17, leave out "on the 6th of December, 1884," and insert "in the register in force in the year 1884."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, there was often an unnecessary amount of expenditure for printing bills, and the next Amendment which he had to propose was for the purpose of saving the cost of printing in the present case. The words he proposed to leave out were already in the form, and it would, therefore, be quite unnecessary to retain them here.

Amendment proposed,

In page 30, lines 20 to 23, leave out "or division of the county of or as the case may be."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Amendment *agreed to;* words *left out* accordingly.

On the Motion of Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL, the following Amendment made:—

In page 31, after line 9, insert "overseers must insert in the foregoing list the name of the Parliamentary division in which their parish is situate."

Amendment proposed, in page 33, line 20, add:—"Note.—In this form copy particulars from Register of Voters."—(*Mr. Tomlinson.*)

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he thought the suggestion of the hon. Member for Preston a very good one, and he was prepared to agree to it with a slight alteration of wording.

Amendment *amended,* and *agreed to.*

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he wished to draw attention to page 33, lines 25 and 26; surely the words should be "in July last?" Perhaps the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General would take note of it?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, his Amendment on

the Paper was at page 34, line 5, in the margin, to insert—

"This form must be omitted in 1885 if the paragraphs of the precept referring to it are not sent."

The Local Government Board had issued the form to the overseers this year too late for it to be acted upon.

Amendment *agreed to.*

MR. TOMLINSON said, he wished to move an Amendment in page 35, line 9, after "premises," to insert "wholly or partly." He thought that payment of the poor rate should apply to the whole of the property, and not to a part of it. He thought a difficulty might arise in this case unless his Amendment were agreed to.

Amendment proposed, in page 35, line 9, after "premises," insert "wholly or partly."—(*Mr. Tomlinson.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he quite saw what was in the hon. Gentleman's mind; but he would point out that for voting purposes, with which alone they were dealing, they required that the premises should be wholly in the possession of a person; for instance, supposing 10 or 12 cottages belonged to a person, they must be wholly in his possession.

MR. TOMLINSON said, he would withdraw the Amendment, and see if he could not, at a later stage, bring it up in a better form.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. TOMLINSON said, he wished with the Amendment he was now going to move, and with the next Amendment on the Paper, to alter the margin from the right to the left hand side.

Amendment proposed, in page 35, line 33, insert at left hand side of column, "Margin for Objections by Overseers."—(*Mr. Tomlinson.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he had been very anxious about the particular drafting of these forms; but it did not appear very important whether this were put in the right hand column or the left hand column. However, if there was an advantage one way over another, it would be in having the form drawn as it was in the Bill, for the reason that it was in accordance with the old form, to which the overseers were accustomed. To change it now would be to place unnecessary difficulty in the way of the overseers.

MR. H. G. ALLEN thought it would be very convenient to have the form in the way the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Tomlinson) proposed, because the name of the voter was always on the left hand of the description, and it was a great saving of trouble to have the objection entered close to the name. The Attorney General was quite mistaken in supposing the overseers' objections to be usually on the right side.

MR. TOMLINSON said, he would urge upon the hon. and learned Gentleman the desirability of accepting the Amendment.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the Committee would agree with him that it was desirable to give the overseers as little trouble as possible during the present year, seeing the vast amount of work they would have to do. He would rather, if he could, adhere to the old form, with which the overseers were familiar.

MR. TOMLINSON said, in that case, he would ask leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. TOMLINSON said, his next Amendment was to strike out the words "Cottage in," in line 15, these words being mere surplusage.

Amendment proposed, in page 36, line 15, leave out "Cottage in."—(*Mr. Tomlinson.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Schedule."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that if the hon. Member opposite looked carefully at the matter, he would see how necessary it was that the words should be kept in. The object of the 4th clause was to distinguish the property qualification, and what they wanted to do was to show where a person was living. In this form, under the head of "descrip-

tion of qualifying property" there was no street named, and there was nothing to guide them unless they adhered to such plan as this "Cottage in Lewes Road," or "Green Lane," or "Church Farm," or as the case might be. It was here necessary to have the words "Cottage in."

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. TOMLINSON said, his next Amendment was to insert in the form to which the Amendment referred, after "Brick Street," the word "Brighton." His object was to let people understand that they had to put in the whole address. He understood that in some cases letters got addressed without the name of the post town, so that they came back through the Dead Letter Office; if the post town name were put on there would be no fear of that.

Amendment proposed, in page 37, line 20, after "Brick Street," insert "Brighton."—(*Mr. Tomlinson.*)

Question proposed, "That that word be there inserted."

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, that it would be inconvenient to adopt the Amendment, as it would necessitate a great deal of printing and altering in the Bill; they would have to reprint the word "Brighton," or similar words, some thousands of times.

MR. TOMLINSON said, he presumed the question had been considered since his Amendment had been put upon the Paper, so that it was not necessary for him to insist upon his proposal. He presumed, also, the propriety of inserting this word in other cases had also been considered, and that it would not be necessary for him to raise the point again.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he was anxious to move an Amendment in this Form, "the Occupiers List—No. 2, Lodgers," and hon. Members, if they would look carefully at the matter, would see that what he proposed was necessary; it had been proposed to him by a gentleman intimately connected with these matters. They had in the 5th column, under the head "Name and Address of Landlord or other Person to whom Rent is paid," the name "William Johnson, High Street." William Johnson would have a different residence from the place where the lodger lived under the form as it stood; and he would, therefore, alter the words "High Street," to the words "51, Brick Street," which came in the 3rd column under the heading "Street, Lane, or other Place, and Number (if any) of House in which Lodgings situate." The Amendment would show that the landlord was living in the same place as the lodger; because the lodger franchise was given to persons living in the same place as the landlord.

Amendment proposed,

In page 37, line 20, leave out "High Street," and insert "51, Brick Street."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Question, "That the words 'High Street' stand part of the Schedule," put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That the words '51, Brick Street' be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

MR. TOMLINSON said, he wished to move an Amendment in line 32, in order to prevent a difficulty arising as to persons not knowing what they signed. It often happened that people signed forms without knowing what they were doing. There were two distinct things to be done. In the first place, the claimant's signature had to be witnessed, and there was then the necessity of having someone to testify to the person who was put on the Register being a proper person to be so put on. He was told that a practical difficulty did arise on this matter, and that was why he brought forward the proposal. If the addition he suggested was accepted, he thought the difficulty would be got rid of. He proposed, in line 32, to leave out "at the date," to "correct" in line 33, a consequential Amendment being to insert in line 37—

"Declaration of correctness of Claim. I am acquainted with A. B. of . I have read his claim, and believe it to be correct. My means of knowledge are derived from my being (landlord, brother, &c.) of the Claimant. E. F. (State residence and calling of deponent.) Witness G. H. (State residence and calling of witness)."

Amendment proposed,

In page 37, line 32, to leave out from "at the date," to "correct," in line 33.—(*Mr. Tomlinson.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Schedule."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that the Form in the Bill was the old one to which the overseers were accustomed. It had been found to work very well, and he did not see any necessity for changing it.

MR. TOMLINSON said, that if it was difficult for a man to define his place of lodging it showed that he was not a proper man to sign the deposition. If a man came forward and said that he was entitled to be on the Register, he should be able to explain where his cottage was. The subject had been brought under his (Mr. Tomlinson's) notice not now for the first time. It had often been mentioned to him that there was great ambiguity in the matter of this form, and that it frequently led to grave mistakes. He thought the sense of the Committee was in favour of his clause.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked whether the two signatures were obliged to take place on the same day?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): No.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

THIRD SCHEDULE.

INSTRUCTIONS AND FORMS FOR BOROUGHS.

INSTRUCTIONS TO TOWN CLERKS.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, there were a number of Amendments on the Paper with regard to Forms C and E, and certain numerical distinctions. These Amendments were proposed in consequence of what had been done in the Select Committee. When the Bill was before the Select Committee the Forms were altered so as to make them more clear; and as they could not go back and alter them in the precept he now desired to do it.

Amendments, as proposed, *agreed to.*

MR. PICTON said, he wished to move an Amendment in page 46, lines 9 and 10, to leave out all after "be," in order to insert—

"Omitted in copying and printing the revised lists for the Parliamentary Register and Burgess Roll."

The object of the Amendment was to remove a practical inconvenience of which he had heard a great many complaints by those who had to prepare the lists for voting purposes. It would be observed that there was a great difference between Parliamentary counties and Parliamentary boroughs. In Parliamentary counties all useless entries were to be erased, but in the boroughs they were to be retained; and not only were they erased in the Parliamentary counties in England, but in Scotland likewise they were erased; and in Burgess Rolls it was the same, according to the Municipal Act of 1882. He did not see why these useless entries should be retained in printing the lists of borough electors, as it certainly occasioned a great deal of unnecessary printing, which would involve unnecessary expense. The unnecessary printing would make the lists more bulky than was necessary, and, at the same time, would entail some danger of confusion.

Amendment proposed,

In page 46, lines 9 and 10, to leave out all after "be," and insert "omitted in copying and printing the revised lists for the Parliamentary Register and Burgess Roll."—(*Mr. Picton.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Schedule."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that this was a matter of a very practical character; and if the Committee would consider what the proposition was they would see the hon. Member (Mr. Picton) was justified, to a certain extent, in making it. The hon. Gentleman was right in saying that two systems prevailed—one in counties and one in boroughs. But the hon. Member did not suggest that they should get rid altogether of the asterisk in boroughs, and revert to the system of erasure in counties; but he proposed that the Revising Barrister in a borough should keep to the old system of the asterisk, and the Revising Barrister having made the asterisk against the double entry, and having returned the Register to the Returning Officer, the Town Clerk should have the right of erasing names. That could not, for one moment, be allowed. He (the Attorney General) would not enter now upon the merits of the two systems; but he

thought the present was a very objectionable time to alter either system. All he could say was that the Government could not consent to give to a Town Clerk the power of striking out what names he pleased. He knew the Town Clerk of Leicester was a most intelligent man; but he did not think he would like to possess the power suggested. He trusted his hon. Friend would not press the Amendment.

MR. A. M'ARTHUR said, he hoped the Amendment of his hon. Colleague (Mr. Picton) would be accepted. The system by which double entries were made involved great trouble and expense, and was, at the same time, quite unnecessary. The hon and learned Gentleman the Attorney General had just stated that the adoption of the Amendment would place the power of erasing names in the hands of the Town Clerk. He (Mr. A. M'Arthur) was informed that that was not exactly the case. The Town Clerk of Leicester, writing upon the subject, said the Revising Barrister saw the great convenience of the proposed plan, and did not, therefore, press his objection to it. The matter was one in which a good many boroughs were interested, and he hoped that the Government would take it into consideration, and, if it was possible, make some alteration in the manner suggested.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment *negatived.*

On the Motion of Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL, the following Amendments made:—In page 46, line 37, after "voters," insert "for the said parliamentary borough;" in line 38, after "said," insert "municipal;" in line 41, after "said," insert "parliamentary;" and in page 47, line 7, in the margin, insert "Omit (d.) where any reserved right does not exist."

MR. TOMLINSON proposed, as an Amendment, to insert after "as a," in page 47, line 16, the word "parliamentary."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) assented to the Amendment.

Amendment *agreed to;* word *inserted* accordingly.

On the Motion of Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL, the following Amendment made:—In page 47, line 36, in margin, leave out "but no more are entitled to be registered as voters," and insert "are entitled to be registered as voters, but no more are so entitled."

On the Motion of Mr. TOMLINSON, the following Amendments made:—In page 48, line 1, after "as a" insert "Parliamentary," and insert the same word in line 32 of the same page.

On the Motion of Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL, the following Amendments made:—In page 49, line 14, in margin, leave out "those rights do not," and insert "no reserved rights;" in line 36, after "months," insert "and during that time has not resided as above mentioned;" and in page 51, lines 17 to 20, leave out sub-section (e.).

Amendment proposed, in page 57, line 23, to leave out "after the last day of July."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Schedule."

MR. H. J. TOLLEMACHE said, he noticed that the list of the scheduled people were to be omitted from the list of Parliamentary voters and from the list of burgesses. He understood, however, there was no intention whatever to disqualify these people from voting in municipal elections.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the Amendment was proposed to make it clear to the overseers that they must provide against confusion.

MR. H. J. TOLLEMACHE asked why the information was only to be given to the overseers in the year 1885?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) pointed out that there might be, in 1885, disqualifications under the Corrupt Practices Act.

MR. H. J. TOLLEMACHE said, that supposing there was a municipal election in 1886, the names of the individuals who had been scheduled by the Commissioners in 1880 would not appear.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): Clearly not; but, in the meantime, we cannot tell whether there will be other corrupt practices committed.

Question put, and *negatived;* words *left out* accordingly.

On the Motion of Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL, the following Amendments made:—In page 58, line 2, insert in margin "Omit 'or is on the reserved rights list' where no reserved rights exist;" in line 4, leave out "the occupiers," and insert "any;" in line 4, after "burgess," insert "only;" in line 20, after "occupiers," insert "reserved rights;" in line 20, insert in the margin "Omit 'reserved rights' where no reserved rights exist;" in page 60, line 5, after "occupation," insert "as a ten pounds occupier;" in line 6, leave out "of the clear yearly value of ten pounds;" in page 63, line 15, leave out the second "borough;" and in page 65, in the margin, after "merged," insert "or altered."

On the Motion of Mr. TOMLINSON, the following Amendments made:—In page 66, line 24, after "voters," insert "and burgesses;" in page 67, line 14, after "voters," insert "and burgesses;" in line 17, after "should," insert "if there is more than one list;" and in page 68, line 2, after "should," insert "if there is more than one list."

On the Motion of Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL, the following Amendments made:—In page 69, line 27, at end of page, insert—

"In this form the particulars should be copied from the claims sent in;"

and in page 70, after line 10, insert—

"This list need not include the names of persons who claim, where the occupiers' list is made out in divisions, to be entered in division one of that list."

MR. HOULDSWORTH proposed, as an Amendment, the insertion of a new Form, entitled—

"Notice of Objection to be given to a person who is a Duplicate Voter."

Question, "That that Form be inserted in the Bill," put, and *agreed to.*

MR. BULWER said, that, before the Bill was finally disposed of, he would like to call the hon. and learned Attorney General's attention to a matter he had pressed on the attention of the House in Committee—namely, the position which the Isle of Ely bore to the county of Cambridge. Through the courtesy of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) he had been placed in possession of the view of the draftsman of the Bill. He had looked at the Statutes which regulated the jurisdiction of the Isle of Ely, and he was not at all satisfied that the object contemplated by the promoters of the Bill had been carried out. Perhaps the hon. and learned Attorney General would take a list of the Statutes. There was the 7 *Will.* IV., which dealt with the Isle of Ely expressly, and stipulated that the Isle should be deemed and taken to be a division of a county. There was the 30 & 31 *Vict.* c. 52, which provided that the Justices of the Isle of Ely were to carry into effect the provisions of the sections of that Act of Parliament, so far as regarded the Isle of Ely—that was as regarded the settlement of polling places, and so forth. Then there was an early Statute of Victoria, which required that the Justices might pay all the expenses of registration incurred, not by the overseers, but by the Clerks of the Peace, so that, possibly, this difficulty might arise. They would have the Justices of Cambridgeshire requiring the Clerk of the Peace of Cambridgeshire to make out a list of voters in the Isle, where they had no jurisdiction, and the Justices of the Isle would have no voice in the matter, but would have to pay the expenses. Also, if the Justices of Cambridgeshire were empowered to do this, a portion of the business of the Clerk of the Peace of the Isle of Ely, and, therefore, a portion of his remuneration, would be taken away. He (Mr. Bulwer) did not know whether he was in Order in mentioning these matters; but he did so to avoid future complications. He trusted the hon. and learned Attorney General or the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department would consider the point.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, he was obliged to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Cambridgeshire (Mr. Bulwer) for calling attention to the Statutes he had cited, and he (Mr. H. H. Fowler) would take care they were properly inquired into. There was no doubt that under the Bill, as it stood, the Isle of Ely became a part of Cambridgeshire. The matter should be attended to before Report.

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered upon *Monday* next, and to be *printed.* [Bill 163.]

[*Third Night.*]

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—[Bill 151.]

(*The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland.*)

CONSIDERATION.

Bill, as amended, *considered.*

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour) moved the following new clause to be inserted in place of Clause 12:—

(Separate valuations to be made by Assessor of Railways and Canals in Police Burghs.)

"The Assessor of Railways and Canals shall value the lands and heritages belonging to Railway and Canal Companies, and to Water Companies, Gas Companies, and other Companies within Burghs having Commissioners of Police under any General or Local Police Act, in the same manner, and subject to the same conditions, as in Royal and Parliamentary Burghs, and the word 'burgh,' wherever it occurs in sections twenty to twenty-nine inclusive of the Act passed in the Session of the seventeenth and eighteenth years of the reign of Her present Majesty, chapter ninety-one, intituled 'An Act for the Valuation of Lands and Heritages in Scotland,' shall include any burgh having Commissioners of Police as aforesaid."

"And section five of 'The Valuation of Lands (Scotland) Amendment Act, 1867,' is hereby repealed."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

Clause *brought up,* and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Clause be now read a second time," put, and *agreed to.*

Clause read a second time accordingly, and *added* to the Bill.

Clause 3 (Power of Her Majesty in Council to prescribe forms. Publication, Variation, and effect of Order. Form of valuation roll).

On the Motion of The Lord Advocate, the following Amendments made:—In page 1, line 23, leave out "sections," and insert "section;" leave out "four and;" in line 24, after "1861," insert "is hereby repealed, and section four of the said Act;" and in line 26, leave out from "repealed," to end of section, and insert—

"In so far as those sections provide that the name of the person to whom the amount of feu duty, ground, annual, or other yearly consideration payable as a condition of his right by any proprietor, is to be entered in the valuation roll."

On the Motion of The Lord Advocate, the following Amendment made:—At the end of the Clause add—

"Provided, That the second column of the Valuation Roll, headed 'Description and situation of subject,' may be printed for any county without sub-division if the Commissioners of Supply of such county shall so determine."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 5 (Special provision as to voters in 1885).

On the Motion of The Lord Advocate, the following Amendment made:—In page 2, line 22, after "occupier," insert "tenant."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 8 (Register in Parliamentary burghs merged in counties).

On the Motion of The Lord Advocate, the following Amendment made:—In page 2, line 36, leave out "as heretofore except," and insert "separately but."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

On the Motion of The Lord Advocate, Clause 12 *struck out* of the Bill.

Clause 16 (Remuneration of collectors of poor rates).

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour) moved, as an Amendment, the omission, in page 4, line 19, of the word "thousand," and the insertion of the word "hundred," instead thereof.

Mr. DICK-PEDDIE asked what was the object of the Amendment?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour) said, that under the various Acts the collectors of the poor rate were obliged to make certain returns; and as this was not a part of the regular duties of their office they were paid for it. The practice had been to pay the collectors for the making out of those returns at the rate of 6*s.* per 100. The work involved filling in three separate columns and a good deal of labour; and he certainly thought, from the examples which had been furnished to him, that the payment proposed was a very moderate one.

Amendment *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 18 (Double entries of voters).

On the Motion of The Lord Advocate, the following Amendments made:—In

page 4, line 37, after "same," insert "Parliamentary;" leave out line 38; in line 39, leave out "county or;" in same line, leave out from "burgh," to the second "the," in line 40; in page 5, line 12, after "one," insert "only;" in line 13, after "proprietor," leave out "and unobjected to;" in line 15, leave out "none of the entries is," and insert "all or none of the entries are;" in line 17, leave out "and unobjected to;" and in line 27, after "and," insert "both in counties and in burghs."

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) moved, as an Amendment, to add at the end of clause, in page 5, certain new paragraphs, which, he said, required a few words of explanation. Hon. Members would have observed that there were many cases in which the first option was given under the Bill to the voter to make his selection; and if the voter failed to make a selection of the place he wished to vote in respect of, in the case of a double entry, there were directions given to the Sheriff, acting as Revising Barrister, as to which place he should retain and which he should strike out. It might happen that from error or other cause the Sheriff might fail to strike out the second entry, and the paragraph he now proposed to add to the clause was to provide for what should be done in that case.

MR. TOMLINSON said, he wished to point out that the clause was a Definition Clause, and to remind the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate that during a discussion on the English Registration Bill as to whether a definition should be entertained, it was understood that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General would take into consideration the question whether all the definitions could not be brought into one clause, or one particular place in the Bill. In this case, they had a definition something like one that was given in the English Bill; and he should be glad if the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate would state whether any conclusion had been come to on the matter.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR), in reply, said, it was proposed to insert the definition he had moved at the end of the present clause, because it would come in more conveniently there.

Amendment proposed,

In page 5, at end, add as new paragraphs:—"(4.) Where a borough is divided into divisions and, notwithstanding the provisions of this section, the name of a person is entered in the register of Parliamentary Voters of more than one division of the said burgh, and one of these entries is his place of residence, he shall be entitled to vote only in that division in which he is registered as a voter in respect of his place of residence, and shall not vote in respect of any other entry;

"(5.) In this section the expression 'Parliamentary county' means a county returning or contributing to return a Member or Members to serve in Parliament; and, where a county is divided for the purpose of such return, means a division of such county."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

SCHEDULE.

On the Motion of THE LORD ADVOCATE, the following Amendments made:—In second column, omit the word "and," insert the word "or," instead thereof; and in last column, omit the words "as adjusted on application or appeal."

Schedule, as amended, *agreed to.*

MR. PRESTON BRUCE said, he had a Notice on the Paper for the introduction of a new Schedule which had been passed over; and he wished to ask whether he should be in Order in bringing it on at that moment?

MR. SPEAKER said, the hon. Member had not risen at the time his name was called.

MR. PRESTON BRUCE said, he had not heard his name called.

MR. SPEAKER: I am afraid the hon. Member would not be in Order in moving it now.

Bill to be read the third time upon *Monday* next.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886, the sum of £13,315,334, be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

BURIAL GROUNDS BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That the Chairman be directed to move the House, That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Law relating to Burial Grounds.

Resolution *reported*: — Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN, Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, and Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 164.]

House adjourned at a quarter after One o'clock.

LONDON: CORNELIUS BUCK, 22, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

INDEX

TO

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

VOLUME CCXCVII.

FIFTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1884 - 5.

EXPLANATION OF THE ABBREVIATIONS.

Bills, Read 1°, 2°, 3°, or 1ª, 2ª, 3ª, Read the First, Second, or Third Time.—In Speeches, 1R., 2R., 3R., Speech delivered on the First, Second, or Third Reading.—*Amendt.*, Amendment.—*Res.*, Resolution.—*Comm.*, Committee.—*Re-Comm.*, Re-Committal.—*Rep.*, Report.—*Consid.*, Consideration.—*Adj.*, Adjournment or Adjourned.—*cl.*, Clause.—*add. cl.*, Additional Clause.—*neg.*, Negatived.—*M. Q.*, Main Question.—*O. Q.*, Original Question.—*O. M.*, Original Motion.—*P. Q.*, Previous Question.—R. P., Report Progress.—*A.*, Ayes.—*N.*, Noes.—*M.*, Majority.—*1st. Div.*, *2nd. Div.*, First or Second Division.—*l.*, Lords.—*c.*, Commons.

When in this Index a * is added to the Reading of a Bill, it indicates that no Debate took place upon that stage of the measure.

When in the Text or in the Index a Speech is marked thus *, it indicates that the Speech is reprinted from a Pamphlet or some authorized Report.

When in the Index a † is prefixed to a Name or an Office (the Member having accepted or vacated office during the Session) and to Subjects of Debate thereunder, it indicates that the Speeches on those Subjects were delivered in the speaker's private or official character, as the case may be.

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l. Read 2ª, and referred to a Select Committee, after short debate *April* 24, 608 (No. 57)
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l. Read 1ª * (*Lord Norton*) *May* 7 (No. 105)

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Amendt. "That the Order be postponed until Tuesday the 12th instant" (*Mr. Webster*); after short debate, 2R. deferred till Tuesday next

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(*The Lord President*)
l. Read 2ª * *April* 23 (No. 70)
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(*Sir Arthur Otway, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Hibbert*)
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l. Read 1ª * (*E. Granville*) *April* 20 (No. 74)
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Committee *; Report *April* 24
Read 3ª *April* 28, 953; after short debate, Bill passed

Elections in Counties (Hours of Poll) Bill
(*Lord Carrington*)
l. Read 3ª * *April* 17 (No. 43)
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Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (Birmingham, &c) Bill
[H.L.] (*The Lord President*)
l. Presented; read 1ª * *April* 23 (No. 80)
Read 2ª * *May* 7

Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (London) Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord President*)
l. Presented; read 1ª * *April* 23 (No. 79)
Read 2ª * *May* 7

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Elton, Mr. C. I., *Somerset, W.*
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Ewing, Mr. A. Orr-, *Dumbarton*
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(*The Earl of Derby*)
l. Read 2ª, after debate *April* 23, 434 (No. 69)
Committee; Report, after short debate *April* 30, 1083
Read 3ª * *May* 1
c. Read 1° * *May* 7 [Bill 165]

Felixstow, Ipswich, and Midlands Railway Bill (*by Order*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" (*Sir Charles Forster*) *April* 17, 5
Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Hicks*); Question proposed, "That 'now' &c.;" after short debate, Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2°
Moved, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee to limit the powers of the Company to the construction of a Railway between Ipswich and Six Mile Bottom, and provide that the inclinations of roads shall in no case be steeper than 1 in 20, and that no bridge carrying a Railway over a road shall be of a less span than twenty-five feet" (*Mr. Hicks*); after short debate, Motion withdrawn

FERGUSON, Mr. R. C. MUNRO-, *Ross and Cromarty*
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FORSTER, Right Hon. W. E., *Bradford*
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FOWLER, Right Hon. R. N. (Lord Mayor), *London*
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FOWLER, Mr. H. H. (Under Secretary of State for the Home Department), *Wolverhampton*
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FOWLER, Mr. W., *Cambridge*
Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 4), 2R. 1099
Registration (Occupation Voters), Comm. 1669
Supply—Vote of Credit—Division of the Vote, Res. 838

Friendly Societies Act (1875) Amendment Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord Greville*)
l. Presented; read 1ª * *April* 21 (No. 77)
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª" *May* 7, 1815; after short debate, on Question? Cont. 32, Not-Cont. 33; M. 1; resolved in the negative

Friendly Societies Act (1875) Amendment Bill (*Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. Stanhope, Mr. Whitley, Captain Aylmer*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *April* 23 [Bill 139]
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Gas and Water Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill (*Mr. Holms, Mr. Chamberlain*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 1 [Bill 149]

Gas Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill (*Mr. Holms, Mr. Chamberlain*)
c. Read 2° * *April* 24 [Bill 126]
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Question, Mr. Gorst; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley *April* 17, 23

GIBSON, Right Hon. E., *Dublin University*
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GILES, Mr. A., *Southampton*
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GLADSTONE, Right Hon. W. E. (First Lord of the Treasury), *Edinburghshire*
Asia (Central)—Questions
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Seed Supply (Ireland) Act—Extension of Time for Repayment of Loans, Question, Colonel Nolan; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *May* 7, 1839

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The Shannon Salmon Fishery, Question, Mr. Tomlinson; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *April* 30, 1111

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Skibbereen Union, Co. Cork, Question, Mr. Deasy; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *April* 27, 807;—*Election of Chairman and Deputy Chairman*, Questions, Mr. Deasy; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *April* 28, 961

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Assistant Clerks to County Inspectors, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *April* 30, 1102

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[See titles *Land Law (Ireland) Act*, 1881
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Ireland—Industries

Moved, "That the Select Committee on Industries (Ireland) do consist of Twenty-four Members" (*Sir Eardley Wilmot*) *April* 24, 780; Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Parnell*); after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

Debate resumed *April* 28, 1032

Amendt. to leave out "Twenty-four," insert "Twenty-five" (*Mr. Sheil*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That 'Twenty-four,' &c.;" after debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Molloy*); after further short debate, Motion withdrawn

Original Question put, "That 'Twenty-four,' &c.;" A. 6, N. 24; M. 18 (D. L. 30)

40 Members not being present

[House adjourned]

Debate resumed *April* 30, 1256

Amendt. to leave out "Twenty-four," insert "Twenty-five" (*Mr. Sheil*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That 'Twenty-four,' &c.;" after short debate, Question put, and negatived

Question, "That 'Twenty-five' be there inserted," put, and agreed to; main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to; Committee nominated; List of the Committee, 1257

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Considered * *April* 27 [Bill 129]
Read 3° * *April* 28
l. Read 1ª * *April* 30 (No. 93)

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]
c. Read 1° * *April* 17 [Bill 128]
Read 2° * *April* 22
Report * *May* 7

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 2) Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord FitzGerald*)
l. Read 2ª * *April* 20 (No. 64)
Committee *; Report *April* 28
Read 3ª * *April* 30
c. Read 1° * *May* 4 [Bill 155]

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 3) Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord President*)
l. Presented; read 1ª * *April* 24 (No. 84)
Read 2ª * *May* 7

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Public Health Act) (No. 1) Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord FitzGerald*)
l. Read 2ª * *April* 23 (No. 63)
Committee *; Report *May* 1
Read 3ª * *May* 4
c. Read 1° * *May* 7 [Bill 162]

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Public Health Act) (No. 2) Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord President*)
l. Presented; read 1ª * *April* 24 (No. 83)
Read 2ª * *May* 7

Local Government Provisional Orders Bill (*Lord Carrington*)
l. Read 2ª * *April* 21 (No. 66)
Committee *; Report *April* 23
Read 3ª * *April* 24
Royal Assent *April* 28 [48 *Vict.* c. i]

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill (*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke*)
c. Report * *April* 24 [Bill 120]
Read 3° * *April* 27
l. Read 1ª * (*Lord Carrington*) *April* 28 (No. 89)
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Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill (*Lord Carrington*)
l. Read 2ª * *April* 21 (No. 67)
Committee *; Report *April* 23
Read 3ª * *April* 24
Royal Assent *April* 28 [48 *Vict.* c. ii]

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 2) Bill (*Lord Carrington*)
l. Read 2ª * *April* 23 (No. 71)
Committee *; Report *April* 24
Read 3ª * *April* 28

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 3) Bill (*Lord Carrington*)
l. Read 2ª * *April* 23 (No. 72)
Committee *; Report *April* 24
Read 3ª * *April* 28

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c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 23, 461
Moved, "That the Debate be adjourned till Thursday next" (*Mr. Raikes*); after short debate, Motion agreed to; Debate adjourned
Debate resumed *April* 30, 1098; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2° [Bill 116]

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 5) Bill (*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke*)
c. Report * *April* 24 [Bill 117]
Read 3° * *April* 27
l. Read 1ª * (*Lord Carrington*) *April* 28 (No. 90)
Read 2ª * *May* 7

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 6) Bill (*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke*)
c. Report * *April* 24 [Bill 118]
Considered * *April* 27
Read 3° * *April* 28
l. Read 1ª * (*Lord Carrington*) *April* 30 (No. 94)
Read 2ª * *May* 7

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 7) Bill (*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke*)
c. Report * *April* 24 [Bill 119]
Read 3° * *April* 27
l. Read 1ª * (*Lord Carrington*) *April* 28 (No. 91]
Read 2ª * *May* 7

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 8) Bill
(*Mr. George Russell, Sir Charles Dilke*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 5 [Bill 158]

Local Option—Legislation
Question, Mr. Whitworth; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *April* 20, 143

London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway (Various Powers) Bill
c. Moved, "That the Chairman of the Committee on Standing Orders be appointed Chairman of the Committee on the Bill" (*Sir Arthur Otway*) *April* 20, 136; Question put, and agreed to

London Government—Legislation
Questions, Mr. Firth, Colonel Makins, Mr. Coope; Answers, Sir William Harcourt *April* 20, 158

London Street Tramways (Extensions) Bill (by Order)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" (*Mr. Dodds*) *April* 24, 629
Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Gregory*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after short debate, Question put, and agreed to
Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2°

LOPES, Sir M., *Devonshire, S.*
Navy Estimates—Seamen and Marines, 253, 257
Parliament—Business of the House, 1811
Registration Expenses—Relief as to Boroughs, 1517
Registration (Occupation Voters)—Registration Expenses, 15
Registration (Occupation Voters), Comm. Amendt. 1654

LOWTHER, Right Hon. J., *Lincolnshire, N.*
Asia (Central)—Russia and Afghanistan—Agreement of March 17 and Action of March 30, &c.—Reported Occupation by Russia of Penjdeh, 30
Parliament—Business of the House, 34
Registration of Voters, 1327

LOWTHER, Mr. J. W., *Rutland*
Registration (Occupation Voters), Comm. *add. cl.* 1779, 1781

LUBBOCK, Sir J., *London University*
School Board Elections (Voting), Nomination of Select Committee, 281
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 1165

Lunacy Acts Amendment Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Chancellor*)
l. Read 2ª, after debate *April* 27, 795 (No. 60)

Lunacy Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord Chancellor*)
l. Presented; read 1ª * *April* 27 (No. 88)

Lunacy Laws
Detention of Pauper Lunatics, Questions, Mr. J. G. Talbot; Answers, Mr. George Russell *April* 21, 304
Mr. Hillman's Case, Questions, Mr. W. J. Corbet, Mr. Grantham; Answers, Sir William Harcourt *May* 7, 1846

LYONS, Dr. R. D., *Dublin*
Industries (Ireland), Nomination of Select Committee, 790, 1035
Inland Navigation and Drainage — Ulster Canal, 1840
Medical Act (1858) Amendment, Motion for Leave, 124; 2R. 1254
Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution), Comm. Schedule 7, 383; Consid. Schedule 4, 1071
Registration of Voters (Ireland), Comm. *cl.* 3, 696; *cl.* 6, 770; *add. cl.* 1365
Supply — Disturnpiked and other Roads in Scotland, 548

MACARTNEY, Mr. J. W. E., *Tyrone*
Parliament—Business of the House — Vote of Credit, 1523
Registration of Voters (Ireland), Comm. *add. cl.* 1345, 1353, 1354, 1359, 1360, 1362, 1400; Schedule, 1420

MCARTHUR, Mr. A., *Leicester*
Post Office—Madagascar, 1321
Registration (Occupation Voters), Comm. *cl.* 4, Amendt. 1735; Schedule 3, 1963
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 1188

M'CARTHY, Mr. J., *Longford*
Egypt—Seizure of the "Bosphore Egyptien"—Recall of the French Consul, 793
Industries (Ireland), Nomination of Select Committee, 1038, 1039
Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution), Consid. *cl.* 15, 1004

M'CARTHY, Mr. J. Huntly, *Athlone Bo.*
Education, Science and Art — Royal Irish Academy—Celtic Manuscripts, 808
Egypt (Events in the Soudan) — M. Olivier Pain, 1851
Ireland—Poor Law—Election of Guardians—Armagh Division of Athlone, 16
Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution), Consid. *cl.* 15, 1005

M'COAN, Mr. J. C., *Wicklow*
Declaration of Paris, 1856, 310
Egypt—Rumoured Negotiations for Occupation by a Turkish Force, 316
Parliament—Oath of Allegiance, 475, 477

MACFARLANE, Mr. D. H., *Carlow Co.*
Army — Ordnance Department — Martini-Henry Rifle, 655

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MACFARLANE, Mr. D. H.—*cont.*
Egypt (Military Expedition)—The New South Wales Contingent, 1110
Troops in the Soudan, 313
Scotland—Law and Justice — Highland Crofters, 1640

McGAREL-HOGG, Sir J. M., *Truro*
Metropolitan Board of Works—Questions
Fire Brigade Committee, 1485
Japanese Village—Construction and Means of Exit, 1835
Recreation Grounds, 968

MAC IVER, Mr. D., *Birkenhead*
Parliament—Business of the House — Vote of Credit, 1522
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 1239
Ways and Means—Financial Statement—Spain and the Wine Duties, 1644, 1645

McKENNA, Sir J. N., *Youghal*
Registration (Occupation Voters), Comm. *add. cl.* 1806
Registration of Voters (Ireland), Comm. *add. cl.* 1371, 1375
Ways and Means — Financial Statement, Comm. 1242

MACLIVER, Mr. P. S., *Plymouth*
Post Office Mail Contract (Royal Steam Packet Company), Res. 1258

MAKINS, Colonel W. T., *Essex, S.*
London Government, 158
Waterworks Clauses Act (1847) Amendment, Comm. 426, 429; *cl.* 1, 1452, 1453, 1457, 1466

Malta
List of the Nobles, Question, Observations, Viscount Sidmouth, The Duke of Edinburgh; Reply, The Earl of Derby *April* 20, 131
Salary of the Governor and other Officials, Question, Observations, Viscount Sidmouth; Reply, The Earl of Derby *April* 20, 130

MANNERS, Right Hon. Lord J. J. R., *Leicestershire, N.*
Asia (Central) — Russia and Afghanistan—Questions
Afghan Boundary Commission — Recall of Sir Peter Lumsden, 1651, 1652
Attack by the Russians on the Afghans at Penjdeh—Sir Peter Lumsden's Despatch, 316
Diplomatic Negotiations—Treaty of Paris, 1856, 659
Production of Papers—Vote of Credit, 488
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Parliament—Business of the House — Vote of Credit, 1521, 1522
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Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution), Consid. *cl.* 9, 995; *cl.* 11, *ib*
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MANNERS, Right Hon. Lord J. J. R.—*cont.*
Supply—Officers of the House of Lords, 880
Vote of Credit — Remaining Charges in the Soudan, &c., Report, 1612

MARLBOROUGH, Duke of
Egyptian Loan, 2R. 450

MARRIOTT, Mr. W. T., *Brighton*
Army (Contracts)—Beeswax, 304

MARTIN, Mr. P., *Kilkenny Co.*
Ireland—Land Law Act, 1881—The Purchase Clauses, 22
Law and Justice — Scale of Expenses in Crown Cases, 19

MARTIN, Mr. R. B., *Tewkesbury*
Registration of Voters (Ireland), Comm. *add. cl.* 1384, 1394

MARUM, Mr. E. P. M., *Kilkenny Co.*
Ireland—Questions
Inland Navigation and Drainage — The Kilkenny Drainage District Scheme, 1845
Law and Police—Police District at Johnstown, 1641
Magistracy—Proceedings for Alleged Trespass at Johnstown, Co. Kilkenny, 1315
Prisons—Kilkenny Female Prison, 1116
Royal Irish Constabulary—The Free Force, 1643
Ireland — Industries, Nomination of Select Committee, 1047
Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution), Consid. *cl.* 15, 1005
Registration (Occupation Voters), Comm. *add. cl.* 1784
Registration of Voters (Ireland), Comm. *add. cl.* 1408, 1417, 1418

MAXWELL, Sir H. E., *Wigtonshire*
Army (Contracts)—Tinned Meat for Field Service, 480, 805
Metropolitan Improvements—Colonnade of Old Burlington House, 153
Parliamentary Elections (Scotland)—Fees of Returning Officers, 149
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Registration of Voters (Scotland), Comm. *cl.* 3, 1424; *cl.* 11, 1429, 1435
Supply—Disturnpiked and other Roads in Scotland, 523

Medical Act (1858) Amendment Bill
(*Dr. Lyons*)
c. Motion for Leave *April* 17, 124; after short debate, Motion agreed to; Bill ordered
Read 1° * *April* 20 [Bill 130]
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 30, 1254; Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. T. P. O'Connor*); after short debate, Question put, and agreed to; Debate adjourned

MELLOR, Mr. J. W., *Grantham*
Registration (Occupation Voters), Comm. *cl.* 4, 1747, 1752, 1753, 1754; *cl.* 13, 1777

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Merchant Shipping—Sale of the "Kinfauns Castle" to Russia
Question, Mr. Coleridge Kennard; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *April* 30, 1115

Mersey Railway Bill
c. Moved, "That the Petition of Peter Williamson Dumville and Henry Daniel Davies, presented on the 17th instant, be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, with an Instruction to report whether Standing Order 62 has been complied with" (*Sir James Clarke Lawrence*) *April* 24, 643; after short debate, Question put, and negatived

METROPOLIS
Metropolitan Improvements — Colonnade of old Burlington House, Question, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answer, Mr. Herbert Gladstone *April* 20, 153

Public Health
Small-Pox at West Ham, Question, Mr. Hopwood; Answer, Mr. George Russell *May* 1, 1313
State of the River Lea, Question, Mr. James Stuart; Answer, Mr. George Russell *May* 5, 1632
The Metropolitan Asylums District — The Eastern Hospitals, Questions, Baron Henry De Worms, Lord Algernon Percy; Answers, Mr. George Russell *April* 20, 152
[See title *Public Health*]

Metropolis (Hughes Fields, Deptford) Provisional Order Confirmation Bill
[H.L.] (*The Earl of Dalhousie*)
l. Presented; read 1ª * *April* 24 (No. 82)

Metropolis Management Acts Amendment Bill (*Viscount Lewisham, Sir Charles Mills, Sir Trevor Lawrence, Mr. James Stuart, Mr. Grantham, Mr. Boord*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *April* 23 [Bill 138]
Read 2° * *May* 1
Committee *—R.P. *May* 4

Metropolis Management Elections (Ballot) Bill (*Mr. Eugene Collins, Sir Thomas Chambers, Mr. Daniel Grant*)
c. Read 2° * *April* 29 [Bill 46]

Metropolis (Tabard Street, Newington) Provisional Order Confirmation Bill
[H.L.] (*The Earl of Dalhousie*)
l. Presented; read 1ª * *April* 24 (No. 81)

Metropolitan Board of Works
Recreation Grounds, Question, Mr. Bryce; Answer, Sir James M'Garel Hogg *April* 28, 968
The Fire Brigade Committee, Questions, Baron Henry De Worms, Mr. Causton; Answers, Sir James M'Garel Hogg *May* 4, 1485

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Metropolitan Board of Works—cont.
The Japanese Village — Construction and Means of Exit, Question, Mr. Onslow; Answer, Sir James M'Garel Hogg *May* 7, 1835

Metropolitan Streets Act (1867) Extension Bill (*Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Secretary Sir William Harcourt*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *April* 23 [Bill 137]
Read 2° *April* 30, 1253
Committee; Report *May* 1, 1449
Read 3° * *May* 4
l. Read 1ª * (*E. Dalhousie*) *May* 5 (No. 101)

MILLTOWN, Earl of
Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 2, Amendt. 940; *cl.* 4, Amendt. 941; *cl.* 9, Amendt. 949
Egypt (Affairs of the Soudan)—Egyptian Frontier, 1477
Lunacy Acts Amendment, 2R. 795
Naval and Military Operations, 1885-6—(Vote of Credit), Ministerial Statement, 290
Northfleet Docks Bill, Res. 1271
Poisons, Comm. 135

MILNER, Sir F. G., *York City*
Army—Ordnance Department—Questions
Martini-Henry Cartridges, 1844
Military Swords, 25
War in the Soudan—Defective Cartridges, 1504
Egypt (Military Expedition)—Troops in the Soudan, 313;—Troops on the Nile, 313

MOLLOY, Mr. B. C., *King's Co.*
Industries (Ireland), Nomination of Select Committee, 783; Motion for Adjournment, 1044, 1049
Supply—House of Commons Offices, 919, 920, 922
Public Works in Ireland, 591, 592, 593, 594
Treasury, &c. 931

MONK, Mr. C. J., *Gloucester City*
Industries (Ireland), Nomination of Select Committee, 780
Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution), Consid. *cl.* 28, Amendt. 1022, 1023
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (No. 2), 2R. 406

MORGAN, Right Hon. G. Osborne (Judge Advocate General), *Denbighshire*
Army Estimates—Administration of Military Law, 1873, 1875, 1877, 1878, 1879, 1887, 1889, 1891, 1911
Registration of Voters (Ireland), Comm. *add. cl.* 1403
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (No. 2), 2R. 409

MORLEY, Earl of (Under Secretary of State for War)
Africa (South)—Methuen's Irregular Horse—Militia Lieutenants, 1272

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MORLEY, Earl of—*cont.*
Army (Ordnance Department)—Forty-pounder Guns, 803
Army Organization—Third Battalions, Motion for an Address, 3
Egypt (Military Expedition)—Expedition up the Nile, 1095
Naval and Military Operations, 1885-6 (Vote of Credit), Ministerial Statement, 294, 296

MORLEY, Mr. J., *Newcastle-upon-Tyne*
Asia (Central)—Afghanistan—Engagements with the Ameer, 1122, 1123,
Egypt (War in the Soudan), 1860, 1862

MOUNT-TEMPLE, Lord
Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 5, 945; *cl.* 7, Amendt. 948

MUNDELLA, Right Hon. A. J. (Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education), *Sheffield*
City of London Parochial Charities Commission, 1494
Education Department (England and Wales)—Questions
Education Loans, 815
Intermediate and Higher Education (Wales)—The Welsh Colleges, 479
Pensions to Teachers, 1488
School Examinations—The Portsmouth District, 475
Education Department (Scotland)—Revised Code, 1885—Education in the Highlands, 815
Medical Act (1858) Amendment, 2R. 1255

Municipal Corporations (Ireland) (Borough Funds) Bill
(*Mr. Gray, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Meagher*)
c. Read 2° *April* 22, 398 [Bill 81]
Moved, "That this House will, To-morrow, resolve itself into a Committee on the Bill"
Amendt. to leave out "To-morrow," insert "upon Monday next" (*Mr. Lewis*); Question put, "That 'To-morrow,' &c.;" A. 67, N. 5; M. 62 (D. L. 119)
Main Question put, and agreed to

Municipal Corporations (Quarter Session Boroughs) Bill (*Mr. Dodds, Mr. John Bright, Mr. Barran, Mr. Jackson*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *April* 20 [Bill 133]
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 22, 413; Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Hibbert*); Question put, and agreed to; Debate adjourned

Municipal Voters (Relief) Bill
(*The Earl of Rosebery*)
l. Royal Assent *April* 28 [48 *Vict.* c. 9]

MUNTZ, Mr. P. H., *Birmingham*
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (No. 2), 2R. 412

MUNTZ, Mr. P. A., *Warwickshire, N.*
Registration (Occupation Voters), Comm. 1699
Supply—Vote of Credit—Remaining Charges in the Soudan, &c., Report, 1615

NAPIER OF MAGDALA, Lord
Naval and Military Operations, 1885-6 (Vote of Credit), Ministerial Statement, 290

Navy
Admiralty — Office of the Accountant General of the Navy, Question, Baron Henry De Worms; Answer, Mr. Caine *April* 23, 479
H.M.S. "Agamemnon," Questions, Admiral Egerton, Mr. W. H. Smith, Sir John Hay, Mr. Gorst; Answers, Sir Thomas Brassey *April* 28, 962
Naval Artillery Volunteers, Question, Mr. Gourley; Answer, Sir Thomas Brassey *April* 20, 143
Naval Expenditure — Application of Votes, Question, Sir Robert Peel; Answer, Sir Thomas Brassey *April* 17, 26
Paymasters, Question, Mr. Gabbett; Answer, Sir Thomas Brassey *April* 20, 153
Scarlatina in the "Britannia" Training Ship, Question, Mr. Tottenham; Answer, Sir Thomas Brassey *April* 27, 817

Ships—Armament, &c.
Armament for Ships completing for Sea, Question, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answer, Sir Thomas Brassey *April* 27, 812
Cost of Ships Building, Questions, Sir Edward J. Reed, Mr. Carbutt; Answers, Sir Thomas Brassey *April* 27, 812
Ships Building—The Ministerial Programme, Question, Observations, The Earl of Ravensworth; Reply, The Earl of Northbrook *April* 28, 953
Manufacture of Guns for the Navy, Question, Mr. Charles Palmer; Answer, Sir Thomas Brassey *April* 30, 1101

State of the Navy — Sir Edward J. Reed's Notice of Motion, Question, Mr. A. J. Balfour; Answer, Sir Edward J. Reed *April* 20, 163; Question, Sir Edward J. Reed; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 27, 821

NOLAN, Colonel J. P., *Galway, Co.*
Army Estimates—Administration of Military Law, 1892
Egypt (Military Expedition)—Nile Force—Condition of the Troops, 1653
Ireland—Questions
Customs Department — Galway Custom House—Amount Paid for Overwork, 1884-5, 1483
Prevention of Crime Act, 1882—Riot at Oranmore Barracks, 1499, 1500
Public Health—Contamination of Drinking Water by the Police at Oranmore, 1323
Seed Supply Act—Extension of Time for Repayment of Loans, 1839
Ireland — Industries, Nomination of Select Committee, 1044
Parliament—Business of the House, 1081
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NOLAN, Colonel J. P.—*cont.*
Registration of Voters (Ireland), 2R. 394; Comm. *cl.* 3, 689; *cl.* 5, 712; *cl.* 6, 725, 730; Amendt. 735, 765, 768, 772, 1329
Supply—Disturnpiked and Main Roads in England and Wales, 497, 500
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Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 1234

NORTHBROOK, Earl of (First Lord of the Admiralty)
Crime and Outrage (England and Wales)—Explosion at the Admiralty, 459
Navy (Ships Building) — Ministerial Programme, 954, 956

NORTHCOTE, Right Hon. Sir S. H., *Devon, N.*
Army (Auxiliary Forces)—The Volunteer Medical Staff Corps—Edinburgh Staff Corps, 1496
Asia (Central) — Russia and Afghanistan — Questions
Afghan Boundary Commission—Recall of Sir Peter Lumsden, 1649
Afghanistan, 1328
Agreement of March 17 and Action of March 30, &c.—Reported Occupation by Russia of Penjdeh, 28, 30;—Sir Peter Lumsden's Despatch, 316, 393;—Negotiations, 1506
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Customs and Inland Revenue, 1328
Egypt—Seizure of the "Bosphore Egyptien," 158, 1508;—Recall of the French Consul, 660
Egypt and France—Rupture of Diplomatic Relations, 662
Ireland—Labourers' Act, 1883—Annual Repayments, 1318
Naval and Military Operations, 1885-6 (Vote of Credit), Res. 322, 323
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Supply—Treasury, &c. 932
Vote of Censure—Remaining Charges in the Soudan, &c., Report, 1598, 1608, 1610, 1618

NORTHCOTE, Right Hon. Sir S. H.—*cont.*
Supply—Vote of Censure—Division of the Vote, Res. 844; Personal Explanation (Mr. Gladstone), 1128
Ways and Means—Deficit of 1884-5, 1638
Financial Statement—Incidence of the Malt Tax, 1497
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 1160, 1233; Report, Res. 1, 1447

Northfleet Docks Bill
l. Moved, "That the Examiners' Certificate of non-compliance with the Standing Orders be referred back to the Standing Orders Committee" (*The Marquess of Salisbury*) *May* 1, 1267; after short debate, on Question? resolved in the negative

NORTON, Lord
Criminal Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 5, Amendt. 943, 948; *cl.* 9, 952
Federal Council of Australasia, 2R. 441
Friendly Societies Act (1875) Amendment, 2R. 1818
Infants, 3R. Amendt. 1084

NORWOOD, Mr. C. M., *Kingston-upon-Hull*
Navy Estimates—Seamen and Marines, 239

O'BEIRNE, Colonel F., *Leitrim*
Army—Cameron Highlanders, 142
Army Estimates—Yeomanry Cavalry, 1936
Supply—Disturnpiked and other Roads in Scotland, 557

O'BRIEN, Sir P., *King's Co.*
Registration of Voters (Ireland), Comm. *add. cl.* 1340, 1341

O'BRIEN, Mr. W., *Mallow*
Ireland—Poor Law—Election of Guardians, Mallow, 1836
Post Office — Sunday Delivery in Co. Mayo, 1837

O'CONNOR, Mr. A., *Queen's Co.*
Army Estimates—Medical Establishment and Services, 1921
Asia (Central)—Questions
Afghanistan—Engagements with the Ameer, 1110, 1123
Afghan Boundary Commission—Expenditure, 482
Russia and Afghanistan—Production of Papers—Vote of Credit, 489, 490
Customs Department—Redundant Clerks, 1500
Egypt—Events in the Soudan—M. Olivier Pain, 1852
Military Expedition—Health of the Troops, 20
Ireland—Inland Navigation and Drainage—Questions
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O'Connor, Mr. A.—*cont.*
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Poor Law—Election of Guardians—Esker Division, Edenderry Union, 1839
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Post Office—Committee on Postage Stamps, 485
Registration of Voters (Ireland), Comm. *add. cl.* 1416
Supply—Disturnpiked and Main Roads in England and Wales, 495, 514, 516
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Supply—Vote of Credit—Division of the Vote, Res. 827
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Res. 1208, 1251; Amendt. 1252

O'Connor, Mr. J., *Tipperary*
Ireland—Magistracy—Arms Licence—Nenagh Petty Sessions—Case of George Napier, 1858
Registration of Voters (Ireland), Comm. *add. cl.* 1399

O'Connor, Mr. T. P., *Galway*
Asia (Central)—Afghanistan—Engagements with the Ameer, 1123
Ireland—Questions
Labourers Act, 1883—Annual Repayments, 1318
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Roman Catholic Church—The Archbishopric of Dublin, 661
Ireland—Industries, Nomination of Select Committee, 1035
Medical Act (1858) Amendment, 2R. Motion for Adjournment, 1254, 1255
Parliament—Business of the House—Vote of Credit, 1517
Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution), Comm. Schedule 7, 109, 334, 345, 374; Consid. *cl.* 8, 984, 987, 988; *cl.* 9, 993; *cl.* 11, 999; *cl.* 15, 1003, 1005; *cl.* 28, 1027, 1028; Schedule 6, Amendt. 1073, 1078
Post Office Mail Contract (Royal Mail Steam Packet Company), Res. 1259, 1263
Registration of Voters (Ireland), Comm. *cl.* 3, 702, 703; *cl.* 6, 772; *add. cl.* 1341, 1375
Registration (Occupation Voters), Comm. *cl.* 4, 1734; *cl.* 13, 1765; Schedule 2, 1953, 1961
Supply—Disturnpiked and other Roads in Scotland, 524, 534, 553

O'Donnell, Mr. F. H., *Dungarvan*
Egypt—Questions
Affairs of the Soudan—Military Situation, 1114
Military Expedition—The New South Wales Contingent, 1119
Seizure of the "Bosphore Egyptien," 163, 1129

O'Donnell, Mr. F. H.—*cont.*
Ireland—Tramways and Public Companies Act, 1883—The Migration Clauses, 806, 1118
Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution), Consid. *cl.* 15, 1003; Schedule 6, 1079
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O'Gorman Mahon, The, *Clare*
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O'Kelly, Mr. J., *Roscommon*
Asia (Central)—Afghan Boundary Commission—Sir Peter Lumsden, 1126
Russia and Afghanistan—Production of Papers—Vote of Credit, 488;—Sir Peter Lumsden's Despatch, 392, 393
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Military Expedition—Health of the Troops on the Nile, 1843
Egypt and France—Rupture of Diplomatic Relations, 662, 819
Ireland—National League Meetings—Cootehill—Intrusion of Police—Sergeant Harvey, 649
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Public Health—Cremation, 628, 1623

Onslow, Mr. D. R., *Guildford*
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Egypt—Seizure of the "Bosphore Egyptien"—Recall of the French Consul, 794
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O'SHEA, Mr. W. H., *Clare*
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O'SULLIVAN, Mr. W. H., *Limerick Co.*
Ireland—Labourers Act, 1883 — Annual Repayments, 1317, 1318
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OTWAY, Sir A. J. (Chairman of Committees of Ways and Means and Deputy Speaker), *Rochester*
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Oyster and Mussel Fisheries Provisional Order Bill (*Mr. Holms, Mr. Chamberlain*)
c. Report * *April* 29 [Bill 124]
Read 3° * *April* 30
l. Read 1ª * (*Lord Sudeley*) *May* 1 (No. 96)

Pacific—see title *Western Pacific*

PAGET, Mr. R. H., *Somersetshire, Mid*
Parliament — Palace of Westminster — Westminster Hall (Restoration), 1831
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PALMER, Mr. C. M., *Durham, N.*
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Papal See, The — Diplomatic Communication with the Vatican — The Catholic Archbishop of Dublin — Mr. Errington
Question, Mr. Sexton ; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 27, 822 ; Questions, Mr. Sexton, Mr. W. J. Corbet, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Lord Randolph Churchhill ; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice ; Question, Mr. Leamy [no reply] *April* 28, 967 ; Questions, Mr. W. J. Corbet, Mr. Sexton ; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice ; Question, Mr. Healy [no reply] *April* 30, 1114 ; Questions, Mr. Sexton, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Mr. Mitchell Henry, Mr. Bourke ; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 4, 1492 ; Question, Mr. T. D. Sullivan ; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 7, 1841
Roman Catholic Church — The Archbishopric of Dublin, Questions, Mr. Sexton, Mr. T. P. O'Connor ; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *April* 24, 661

Parliament
LORDS—
BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE
Moved, "That this House sits on Mondays at Five o'clock, in lieu of a quarter past Four o'clock" (*The Lord Denman*) *May* 1, 1283 ; after short debate, on Question ? resolved in the negative

COMMONS—
Committee for Privileges — The Lovat Peerage —Removal of Coffin Plates from Vault at Kirkhill, Question, Mr. Morgan Lloyd ; Answer, The Lord Advocate *May* 5, 1629

PRIVATE BILLS
Railway Rates and Charges Bills—The North-Eastern Railway Company's Bill, Questions, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Lord Randolph Churchill ; Answers, Sir Joseph Pease, Mr. Speaker *April* 24, 652

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PARLIAMENT—COMMONS—*cont.*

SITTINGS AND ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Sir William Hart Dyke*) *April* 22, 415; after short debate, Question put, and negatived

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE AND PUBLIC BUSINESS

Ministerial Statement, Mr. Gladstone; short debate thereon *April* 17, 32; Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Warton; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 22, 391; Questions, Mr. Ritchie, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Gibson; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *April* 23, 493; Statement, Sir Charles W. Dilke; short debate thereon *April* 29, 1080; Questions, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Serjeant Simon; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *April* 30, 1128; Questions, Mr. Serjeant Simon, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke *May* 4, 1515; Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *May* 5, 1654; Observations, Mr. Gladstone; short debate thereon *May* 6, 1810;—*Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill*, Questions, Mr. Warton, Mr. Healy, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 20, 155;—*Central Asia—Russia and Afghanistan—Diplomatic Negotiations*, Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. E. Stanhope, Mr. Ritchie; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *April* 27, 823;—*The Vote of Credit*, Observations, Mr. Courtney, The Marquess of Hartington, Mr. Jacob Bright *April* 27, 936; Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 28, 970; Questions, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Onslow; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke; short debate thereon *May* 4, 1517;—*The Registration of Voters Bills*, Questions, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Gorst, Sir Stafford Northcote, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *May* 7, 1865

PALACE OF WESTMINSTER

Ventilation of the Houses of Parliament, Question, Mr. Alderman Lawrence; Answer, Mr. Herbert Gladstone *April* 23, 470; Question, Mr. J. G. Talbot; Answer, Mr. Herbert Gladstone *April* 30, 1108; Question, Sir Lyon Playfair; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *May* 4, 1484

Westminster Hall (Restoration), Question, Mr. Causton; Answer, Mr. Herbert Gladstone *April* 30, 1117; Question, Mr. Mitchell Henry; Answer, Mr. Herbert Gladstone *May* 5, 1630; Questions, Mr. R. H. Paget, Mr. Mitchell Henry; Answers, Mr. Herbert Gladstone, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *May* 7, 1831

Admission of Strangers to the House—The New Regulations, Question, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *April* 30, 1116

The Oath of Allegiance, Question, Mr. M'Coan; Answer, The Attorney General *April* 23, 475

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Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act, 1883—*Parliamentary Candidates and Free Breakfasts in the East End*, Question, Mr. Lewis; Answer, The Attorney General *April* 21, 307;—*Voting of Servants and Employés*, Questions, Mr. R. H. Paget; Answers, The Attorney General *April* 23, 464

Parliamentary Franchise—Electoral Districts, Question, Sir Eardley Wilmot; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 21, 312

Parliament—Business of the House—Registration of Voters Bills

Moved, "That the several stages of any Bills for the Registration of Voters, in England, Scotland, and Ireland, have precedence of all Orders of the Day and Notices of Motions, on every day on which they shall be set down, by the Government, as the first business of the day" (*Mr. Gladstone*) *April* 20, 165; after short debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Lord R. Churchill*); after further short debate, Question put; A. 63, N. 157; M. 94 (D. L. 115)

Original Question put, and agreed to

Parliament—Business of the House (Standing Order, Putting the Question)

Resolution, Mr. Biggar *April* 21, 390 [House counted out]

Parliamentary Elections and Corrupt Practices Consolidation Bill

(*Mr. Hardcastle, Sir Alexander Gordon*)

c. Ordered; read 1° * *April* 22 [Bill 135]

Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt Practices) Bill (*Mr. Richard Paget, Sir Joseph Pease, Mr. Bulwer*)

c. Ordered; read 1° * *April* 30 [Bill 148]

Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill

Observations, Sir Charles W. Dilke; Questions, Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. Gorst, Mr. Ritchie, Mr. Onslow, Mr. Raikes, Mr. Healy; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Sir Stafford Northcote *April* 24, 663; Question, Mr. Sydney Buxton; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 27, 824

The New Divisions of Counties—Alternative Names, Question, Mr. Francis Buxton; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *May* 7, 1857

Town Clerks of Irish Boroughs, Question, Mr. John Redmond; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *April* 20, 155

Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill (*Mr. Gladstone, The Marquess of Hartington, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Attorney General, The Lord Advocate, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman*)

c. Committee (*on re-comm.* [Sixteenth Night]—R.P. *April* 17, 35 [Bill 49]

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Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill—cont.
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PARNELL, Mr. C. S., *Cork City*
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PEASE, Sir J. W., *Durham, S.*
Railway Rates and Charges Bills — North-Eastern Railway Company's Bill, 652, 653
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PEDDIE, Mr. J. DICK-, *Kilmarnock, &c.*
Registration of Voters (Scotland), Comm. 604; *cl.* 11, 1438; Consid. *cl.* 16, 1968

PEEL, Right Hon. A. W. (*see* SPEAKER, The)

PEEL, Right Hon. Sir R., *Huntingdon*
Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—Diaries of Colonel Stewart, 24
Naval Expenditure—Application of Votes, 26

PELL, Mr. A., *Leicestershire, S.*
Registration (Occupation Voters), Comm. 1660; *cl.* 13, 1765, 1777; *add. cl.* 1807

PEMBERTON, Mr. E. L., *Kent, E.*
Mersey Railway—Reference of Petition, Res. 645

PERCY, Lord A. M. A., *Westminster*
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Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution), Consid. Schedule 3, 1056
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PHIPPS, Mr. P., *Northamptonshire, S.*
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PICTON, Mr. J. A., *Leicester Bo.*
Registration (Occupation Voters), Comm. *cl.* 4, 1736; *add. cl.* 1808; Schedule 3, Amendt. 1961

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders Bill (*Mr. Holms, Mr. Chamberlain*)
c. Read 2° * *April* 17 [Bill 123]
Report * *May* 7

PLAYFAIR, Right Hon. Sir Lyon, *Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities*
Parliament—Palace of Westminster—Ventilation of the Houses of Parliament, 1484
Vaccination—Hospital Attendants, 1828

PLUNKET, Right Hon. D. R., *Dublin University*
Barristers Admission (Ireland), 2R. 424, 425
Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution), Comm. Schedule 7, 58, 88, 101, 362, 369; Consid. *cl.* 8, 988; *cl.* 9, 993
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Supply — Disturnpiked and other Roads in Scotland, 531

Poisons Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord President*)
l. Bill referred to a Select Committee, after short debate *April* 20, 134 (No. 33)

Pollution of Rivers Bill
(*Mr. Hastings, Earl Percy, Colonel Walrond*)
c. Bill withdrawn * *April* 29 [Bill 34]

Poor Law
Prescot (Lancashire) Union—Appointment of Rate Collector—Mr. Dunn, Questions, Mr. Biggar; Answers, Mr. George Russell *April* 30, 1120; *May* 4, 1494
Poor Rates—3 & 4 Will. IV. c. 30*—Exemption of Chapels, &c. in England and Wales*, Question, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answer, Mr. George Russell *April* 23, 469

Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill
Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *May* 5, 1646

POST OFFICE (*Miscellaneous Questions*)
Annuities and Insurance Tables, Question, Mr. Rankin; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *May* 5, 1634
Folkestone Post Office, Question, Sir Edward Watkin; Answer, Mr. Herbert Gladstone *April* 30, 1118
Madagascar, Question, Mr. A. M'Arthur; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *May* 1, 1321
Parliamentary Elections—Disabilities of Postmasters, Question, Mr. Buszard; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *April* 20, 154
Professor S. P. Thompson's Valve Telephone, Question, Mr. Kenny; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *May* 1, 1322

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Rural Letter Carriers—Boot and Shoe Money, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *May* 1, 1319
Sunday Delivery in the Metropolitan District, Question, Mr. Small; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *May* 7, 1838
The Committee on Postage Stamps, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *April* 23, 485

Post Office Mail Contract (*Royal Mail Steam Packet Company*)
Moved, "That the Contract with the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company, for the conveyance of the Mails to and from the West Indies, be approved" (*Mr. Hibbert*) *April* 30, 1258; after short debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Sexton*); after further short debate, Motion withdrawn; original Question put, and agreed to

Post Office Sites [*Purchase of Land and Expenses*]
Moved, "That this House will, To-morrow, resolve itself into Committee upon Post Office Sites [Purchase of Land and Expenses]" (*Mr. Shaw Lefevre*) *April* 20, 137; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to
c. Res. considered in Committee, and agreed to *April* 27, 936
Res. reported *April* 28

Power, Mr. J. O'Connor, *Mayo*
Barristers Admission (Ireland), 2R. 424

Power, Mr. R., *Waterford City*
Industries (Ireland), Nomination of Select Committee, 791
Registration of Voters (Ireland), Comm. *cl.* 6, Amendt. 715, 735

Power, Mr. P. J., *Waterford Co.*
Explosives Act—Enforcement of Act in Ireland, 810
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Prevention of Crime (*Ireland*) *Act*, 1882—*Riot at Oranmore Barracks*
Questions, Colonel Nolan, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *May* 4, 1499

Private Bill Legislation Bill
(*Mr. Sellar, Mr. Davey, Mr. Raikes, Sir Lyon Playfair*)
c. Bill withdrawn * *May* 1 [Bill 25]

Private Lunatic Asylums (Ireland) Bill
(*Mr. William Corbet, Mr. Mayne, Mr. Dillwyn, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Richard Power*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 22, 430; after short debate, Question put; A. 42, N. 77; M. 35 (D. L. 123) [Bill 60]

Public Departments — The Paymaster General's Department
Question, Mr. John Redmond; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *April* 27, 805

Public Health—Cremation
Questions, Observations, The Earl of Onslow; Answers, The Earl of Dalhousie *April* 24, 628; *May* 5, 1623 [See title *Metropolis*]

Public Health (Members and Officers) Bill (*Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Long, Mr. Cowen*)
c. Read 2° *April* 22, 413 [Bill 114]

Public Offices, The New—The War Office and Admiralty — The Stone for Building
Questions, Lord Lamington, The Earl of Wemyss; Answers, The Earl of Rosebery *May* 4, 1477

Public Schools—Death of a Student at King's College School
Questions, Mr. Acland, Mr. Alderman W. Lawrence; Answers, Sir William Harcourt *May* 4, 1490

Puleston, Mr. J. H., *Devonport*
British Empire—Native Princes of India, 1647
Currency — Gold and Silver Coinage — The Conference, 1645
London Street Tramways (Extensions), 2R. 640, 641
Navy Estimates—Seamen and Marines, 262, 279
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Raikes, Right Hon. H. C., *Cambridge University*
Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 4), 2R. 461
Mersey Railway—Reference of Petition, Res. 644
Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution), 664; Consid. *cl.* 28, 1015; Schedule 3, 1055, 1065
Registration (Occupation Voters), Comm. *add. cl.* 1792
Supply—Vote of Credit—Remaining Charges in the Soudan, &c. Report, 1619

Railways
Level Crossings, Question, Lord Braye; Answer, Lord Sudeley *May* 4, 1478

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Railways—cont.
Railway and Canal Traffic Regulation Act—*Railway Rates*, Question, Mr. J. W. Barclay; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *April* 30, 1106
Railway Brakes—*Legislation*, Question, Observations, Earl De La Warr; Reply, Lord Sudeley *May* 5, 1622
Railway Regulation Acts—*Preferential Rates*, Questions, Mr. R. H. Paget, Mr. Tomlinson; Answers, Mr. Chamberlain *April* 23, 491

RAMSAY, Mr. J., *Falkirk, &c.*
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RANKIN, Mr. J., *Leominster*
Agricultural Department—Insects Injurious to Crops, 1633
Post Office—Annuities and Insurance Tables, 1634

RAVENSWORTH, Earl of
Naval and Military Operations, 1885-6 (Vote of Credit), Ministerial Statement, 296
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READ, Mr. Clare S., *Norfolk, W.*
Supply — Disturnpiked and Main Roads in England and Wales, 505
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 1177, 1181

REDESDALE, Earl of (Chairman of Committees)
Dominion of Canada—Insurrection in the North-West Territory, 1814
Northfleet Docks, Res. 1269

REDMOND, Mr. J. E., *New Ross*
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REDMOND, Mr. W. H. K., *Wexford*
Army Estimates—Administration of Military Law, 1894, 1895, 1912, 1915
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Egypt (Events in the Soudan) — Military Expedition — The New South Wales Contingent, 1119
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Ireland—Piers and Harbours—Arklow Harbour Works, 1853, 1854
Royal Irish Constabulary—Police Force at Esker, 1322
Ireland — Industries, Nomination of Select Committee, 1039
Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution), Consid. *cl.* 15, 1004
Registration of Voters (Ireland), Comm. *add. cl.* 1346
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 1244

REED, Sir E. J., *Cardiff*
Navy (Ships)—Cost of Ships Building, 812
State of the Navy—Sir Edward Reed's Notice of Motion, 164, 821
Navy Estimates—Seamen and Marines, 203, 223, 257
Parliament—Business of the House—Registration of Voters Bills, Res. 177, 178

Regent's Canal, City, and Docks Railway Bill (*by Order*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" (*Mr. Dodds*) *May* 1, 1286
Amendt. to leave out from "That," add "it is not expedient to pass any Railway Bill which involves the payment of interest out of capital during the construction of works pending the introduction of a public measure on this subject, as recommended by a Committee of this House in 1882, especially where such a Bill practically makes the alteration of the Standing Orders of this House retrospective in their action" (*Sir Joseph Pease*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 187, N. 117; M. 70 (D. L. 145)
Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2°

Registration of Voters Bills
Questions, Mr. Gregory; Answers, Mr. Gladstone; short debate thereon *May* 1, 1324; Questions, Mr. Healy, Lord John Manners, Colonel Nolan, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Gorst, Sir George Campbell, Mr. Gibson; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke, The Lord Advocate, The Solicitor General for Ireland *May* 4, 1512
Registration Expenses—*Relief as to Boroughs*, Question, Sir Massey Lopes; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *May* 4, 1517

Registration (Occupation Voters) Bill
(*Mr. Attorney General, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Henry H. Fowler*)
c. Registration Expenses, Question, Sir Massey Lopes; Answer, The Attorney General *April* 17, 15
Report of Select Comm. * *April* 24 [No. 162]
Order for Committee (*on re-comm.*) read [First Night]; Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" *May* 5, 1654
Amendt. to leave out from "That," add "this House, while desirous of facilitating in every way the Registration of Voters, is of opinion that, inasmuch as the preparation of the Register for Parliamentary Elections is a matter of National rather than local concern, the expenses connected therewith should not be imposed on ratepayers in counties and boroughs, and levied in respect of the occupation of a single description of property" (*Sir Massey Lopes*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after long debate, Question put; A. 240, N. 237; M. 3
Division List, Ayes and Noes, 1721
Main Question put, and agreed to; Committee—R.P. [Bill 140]

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Registration (Occupation Voters) Bill—cont.
Committee (*on re-comm.*) [Second Night]—R.P. *May* 6, 1735
Committee (*on re-comm.*) [Third Night]—Report *May* 7, 1944

Registration of Voters (Ireland) Bill
Question, Mr. Lewis; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *April* 21, 307; Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 27, 824; Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland *April* 28, 971; Question, Mr. Brodrick; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *April* 30, 1120; Questions, Mr. Healy, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *May* 1, 1320

Registration of Voters (Ireland) Bill
(*Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland*)
c. Read 2°, after short debate *April* 22, 393
Committee *—R.P *April* 23 [Bill 110]
Committee—R.P. *April* 24, 667
Committee; Report *May* 1, 1328

Registration of Voters (Ireland) [*Payment of Additional Barristers*]
c. Res. considered in Committee, and agreed to *April* 27, 937
Res. reported *April* 28

Registration of Voters (Ireland) [*Remuneration of Officers*]
c. Res. considered in Committee, and agreed to *May* 4, 1620
Res. reported *May* 5

Registration of Voters (Scotland) Bill
(*The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *April* 20 [Bill 132]
Read 2°, after short debate *April* 22, 396
Committee—R.P. *April* 23, 598
Committee; Report *May* 1, 1421
Considered *May* 7, 1967 [Bill 151]

REID, Mr. R. T., *Hereford*
Barristers Admission (Ireland), 2R. 422
Parliament—Business of the House—Vote of Credit, 1520

Representation of the People Act, 1884
Admission of Soldiers to the Franchise, Question, Mr. Leahy; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland *May* 1, 1321
Household Qualifications, Question, Sir Alexander Gordon; Answer, The Lord Advocate *April* 24, 656
Returns under the Act, Question, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answer, The Attorney General *May* 7, 1829

Representation of the People (Consolidation) Bill (*Mr. Hardcastle, Sir Alexander Gordon*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 6 [Bill 160]

RICHARD, Mr. H., *Merthyr Tydvil*
Asia (Central)—Russia and Afghanistan—Diplomatic Negotiations—Treaty of Paris, 1856, 657
Cemeteries, 151

RICHMOND AND GORDON, Duke of
Crime and Outrage (England and Wales)—Explosion at the Admiralty, 459
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RIPON, Marquess of
Honorary Freedom of Boroughs, 2R. 129
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RITCHIE, Mr. C. T., *Tower Hamlets*
Egypt (Events in the Soudan)—Diaries of Colonel Stewart, 24
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Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution), 664, 665; Consid. *cl.* 28, Amendt. 1050; Schedule 3, Amendt. 1051, 1058, 1062
Regent's Canal, City, and Docks Railway, 2R. 1305
Supply—Vote of Credit—Remaining Charges in the Soudan, &c. Report, 1615
Waterworks Clauses Act (1847) Amendment Comm. 427; *cl.* 1, 1465

ROGERS, Mr. J. E. Thorold, *Southwark*
Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution), Consid. *cl.* 11, 998; *cl.* 28, Amendt. 1017
Registration (Occupation Voters), Comm. *add. cl.* 1795, 1796
Registration of Voters (Ireland), Comm. *cl.* 6, Motion for reporting Progress, 774
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ROLLS, Mr. J. A., *Monmouthshire*
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ROSEBERY, Earl of (Lord Privy Seal and First Commissioner of Works)
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New Public Offices—War Office and Admiralty—The Stone for Building, 1477, 1478

ROUND, Mr. J., *Essex, E.*
Registration (Occupation Voters), Comm. 1686

Royal Irish Constabulary Redistribution Bill (*Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland*)
c. Read 3° * *April* 17 [Bill 105]
l. Read 1ª * (*Lord President*) *April* 20 (No. 75)
Read 2ª *April* 23, 443
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RUSSELL, Mr. C., *Dundalk*
Registration of Voters (Ireland), Comm. *cl.* 3, 697; *cl.* 6, 722, 727, 729, 733; Amendt. 735, 738, 740, 742, 743, 745, 755, 756, 766, 773

RUSSELL, Mr. G. W. E. (Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board), *Aylesbury*
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RUSSELL, Mr. T., *Glasgow*
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RYLANDS, Mr. P., *Burnley*
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Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (No. 2) Bill (*Sir Joseph Pease, Earl Percy, Mr. Tremayne, Mr. Charles Palmer*) [Bill 74]
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 22, 398
Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Warton*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after short debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Gourley*); Question put, and agreed to; Debate adjourned

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Asia (Central)—Russia and Afghanistan—Diplomatic Negotiations, 801, 1621, 1622
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Egypt and France—Seizure of the "Bosphore Egyptien"—Rupture of Diplomatic Relations, 939;—Negotiations, 1470, 1472, 1473, 1474
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SALT, Mr. T., *Stafford*
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SAMUELSON, Sir B., *Banbury*
Egypt (Soudan) — Military Operations — Suakin-Berber Railway, 1832
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School Board Elections (Voting)
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The Scottish Islands—Deaths in the Island of Rona, Questions, Dr. Cameron; Answers, The Lord Advocate *May* 5, 1631

Education Department (Scotland)
The Secretary for Scotland, Question, Mr. Dalrymple; Answer, The Lord Advocate *April* 30, 1120
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SCOTLAND—*Education Department*—cont.
Revised Code, 1885 — *Education in the Highlands*, Question, Mr. Munro-Ferguson; Answer, Mr. Mundella *April* 27, 814
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Law and Justice (*Scotland*)
The Highland Crofters, Question, Mr. Macfarlane; Answer, The Lord Advocate *May* 5, 1640
Work of the Court of Session, Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The Lord Advocate *May* 5, 1628

SCOTT, Mr. M. D., *Sussex, E.*
Asia (Central) — Russia and Afghanistan—Russo-Afghan Frontier, 1863
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[H.L.] (*The Earl of Dalhousie*)
l. Presented; read 1ª* *May* 5 (No. 102)

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SMITH, Lt.-Colonel G., *Wycombe*
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SMITH, Mr. S., *Liverpool*
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Solicitors (Ireland) Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord FitzGerald*)
l. Committee * *April* 20 (No. 53)
Report * *April* 21
Read 3ª * *April* 24
c. Read 1° * (*Mr. Patrick Martin*) *May* 4
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STANLEY, Right Hon. Colonel F. A., *Lancashire, N.*
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STANLEY, Hon. E. L., *Oldham*
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STEBLE, Colonel R. F., *Scarborough*
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STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL, Lord
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STRATHNAIRN, Lord
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STUART, Mr. J., *Hackney*
Public Health (Metropolis)—State of the River Lea, 1632
Registration (Occupation Voters), Comm. *add. cl.* 1789

STUART, Mr. H. VILLIERS-, *Waterford Co.*
Registration (Occupation Voters), Comm. *add. cl.* 1810
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Submarine Telegraph Cables Bill

(*Mr. Holms, Mr. Chamberlain*)

c. Ordered; read 1° * *April* 22 [Bill 136]
Read 2° * *April* 27
Committee *; Report *May* 4
Considered *; read 3° *May* 5
l. Read 1ª * (*Lord Sudeley*) *May* 7 (No. 104)

SUDELEY, Lord
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Suez Canal Commission
Question, Mr. Puleston; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 5, 1645

Sugar Bounties—Proposed Conference
Question, Mr. E. Stanhope; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 7, 1833

SULLIVAN, Mr. T. D., *Westmeath*
Asia (Central)—Russia and Afghanistan—Russian Attack on Penjdeh—Proposed Arbitration, 1858
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Registration of Voters (Ireland), Comm. *add. cl.* 1394
Supply—Disturnpiked and other Roads in Scotland, 557, 566

Sunday Closing Extension (Ireland) Bill
Question, Mr. Gibson; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *May* 4, 1502

Sunday Closing (Wales) Act (1881) Amendment Bill (*Mr. Morgan Lloyd, Mr. Roberts, Mr. Richard*)
. Ordered; read 1° * *April* 24 [Bill 141]

SUPPLY
Considered in Committee *April* 20, 182—NAVY ESTIMATES, Votes 2 and 3
Resolution reported *April* 23
Considered in Committee *April* 23, 494—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES — CLASS I. — PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS, Votes 20 to 26
Resolutions reported *April* 24, 779
Resolution 1; after short debate, A. 61, N. 21; M. 40 (D. L. 128)
Subsequent Resolutions agreed to

SUPPLY
Naval and Military Operations, 1885-6 (*Vote of Credit*)
Questions, The Earl of Carnarvon; Answers, Earl Granville *April* 20, 129; Ministerial Statement, Earl Granville; short debate thereon *April* 21, 284
Estimate presented (*Mr. Gladstone*) *April* 21, 317; after short debate, Estimate referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed [No. 155]
Military Expedition to Egypt—The Vote for Charges, Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *April* 23, 481
Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" (*Mr. Gladstone*) *April* 27, 825
Amendt. to leave out from "That," add "in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that the Vote of Credit to be submitted in Committee of Supply on account of the Soudan Expedition should be considered separately from the Vote of Credit to be submitted on account of other Military and Naval expenditure" (*Mr. Arthur O'Connor*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 229, N. 186; M. 43 (D. L. 129)
Considered in Committee *April* 27, 847—VOTE OF CREDIT
£11,000,000, Naval and Military Operations, 1885-6 (Vote of Credit); Question put, and agreed to
CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS, Votes 1 to 3
Resolutions reported *April* 28, 1029
First Resolution postponed
Subsequent Resolutions agreed to
Personal Explanation, Mr. Gladstone; Observations, Sir Stafford Northcote *April* 30, 1127

SUPPLY—*cont.*
Postponed Resolution [27th April] further considered
Motion made, and Question proposed, That a sum, not exceeding £11,000,000, be granted to Her Majesty, beyond the ordinary grants of Parliament, to defray the Charge which may come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1886, for (1) Remaining Charges in the Soudan and Upper Egypt; (2) Special Naval and Military Preparations" *May* 4, 1523
Amendt. proposed, to leave out "£11,000,000," insert "£7,000,000" (*Mr. Labouchere*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That £11,000,000 stand part of the proposed Resolution;" after debate, Question put; A. 79, N. 29; M. 50 (D. L. 151)
Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution," 1553; after debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Chaplin*); after long debate, Question put; A. 114, N. 181; M. 67 (D. L. 152)
Original Question again proposed, 1605; Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Baron H. De Worms*); after short debate, Question put; A. 111, N. 169; M. 58 (D. L. 153)
Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Sidney Herbert*); after short debate, Question put; A. 106, N. 164; M. 58 (D. L. 154)
Original Question again proposed, 1616; Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Mr. Brodrick*); after short debate, Question put, and negatived; original Question put; A. 130, N. 20; M. 110; (D. L. 155
Considered in Committee *May* 7, 1869—ARMY ESTIMATES—Votes 2 to 6
Resolutions reported *May* 11

SUTHERLAND, Mr. T., *Greenock*
Navy Estimates—Seamen and Marines, 257

SYNAN, Mr. E. J., *Limerick Co.*
Registration of Voters (Ireland), Comm. *cl.* 5, 711

TALBOT, Mr. J. G., *Oxford University*
Lunacy Laws—Detention of Pauper Lunatics, 304
Parliament—Palace of Westminster—Ventilation of the Houses of Parliament, 1108

Telegraph Acts Amendment Bill
(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre, Mr. Hibbert*)
c. 2R. deferred, after short debate *April* 17, 121 [Bill 121]

THURLOW, Lord
Friendly Societies Act (1875) Amendment, 2R. 1816

TOLLEMACHE, Mr. H. J., *Cheshire, W.*
Registration (Occupation Voters), Comm. *cl.* 7, 1761; Schedule 3, 1764

TOMLINSON, Mr. W. E. M., *Preston*
Ireland—Fisheries—Shannon Salmon Fishery, 1111
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Railway Regulation Acts—Preferential Rates, 493
Registration (Occupation Voters), Comm. *cl.* 4, Amendt. 1729, 1730, 1731, 1732, 1740, 1741, 1749, 1754; *add. cl.* 1783, 1945; Schedule 2, Amendt. 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1961; Schedule 3, Amendt. 1963, 1964, 1965
Registration of Voters (Ireland), Comm. *add. cl.* 1408
Registration of Voters (Scotland), Consid. *cl.* 18, 1969
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (No. 2), 2R. 407

TORRENS, Mr. W. T. M'C., *Finsbury*
London Street Tramways (Extensions), 2R. 633
Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution), Consid. Schedule 6, 1073
Waterworks Clauses Act (1847) Amendment, Comm. 428; *cl.* 1, Amendt. 1450, 1454, 1457, 1458, 1468; *add. cl. ib.*; Preamble, Amendt. 1469

TOTTENHAM, Mr. A. L., *Leitrim*
Army—Rifle Brigade—Numbers, 473
Navy—Scarlatina in the "Britannia" Training Ship, 817
Supply—Public Works in Ireland, 576

Tramways (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord President*)
l. Read 3ª * *April* 17 (No. 34)
c. Read 1° * *April* 20 [Bill 131]
Read 2° * *April* 27

Tramways (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord FitzGerald*)
l. Read 2ª * *April* 28 (No. 65)

Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill (*Mr. Holms, Mr. Chamberlain*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *April* 30 [Bill 143]

TREVELYAN, Rt. Hon. G. O. (Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster) *Hawick, &c.*
Agricultural Department—Insects Injurious to Crops, 1633
Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Foot-and-Mouth Disease;—East Riding of Yorkshire, 1324;—Outbreak at Hamburgh, 22
Pleuro-Pneumonia at Fearn (Scotland), 1498
Parliament—Business of the House—Registration of Voters Bills, Res. 178
Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution), Comm. Schedule 7, 53, 55; Consid. *cl.* 9, 992; Schedule 3, 1061, 1062

TREVELYAN, Right Hon. G. O.—*cont.*
Registration of Voters (Ireland), Comm. *cl.* 2, 680; *cl.* 6, 753, 755
Supply—Disturnpiked and other Roads in Scotland, 536
House of Commons Offices, 904
Vote of Credit—Remaining Charges in the Soudan, &c., Report, 1559

Trustees Relief Bill (*Mr. Ince, Mr. Whitley*)
c. Read 2° * *May* 4 [Bill 83]

Turbary (Ireland) Bill (*Mr. Lea, Mr. Thomas Dickson, Mr. Findlater*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *April* 30 [Bill 146]

Turkey
The British Embassy at Constantinople, Question, Mr. Cartwright; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 5, 1641
The Dardanelles and the Black Sea, Question, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 21, 314

Turkey—The Bosphorus and Dardanelles—Convention of Paris, 1856, *and Treaty of Berlin*, 1878
Postponement of Resolution, Lord Stratheden and Campbell *May* 4, 1479
Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Protocols or treaties by which the authority of the Sublime Porte to admit foreign ships of war into the Dardanelles is regulated" (*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell*) *May* 7, 1818; after short debate, on Question? resolved in the negative

Vaccination
France—Mortality arising from the Operation at Villefranche D'Aveyron, Question, Mr. Hopwood; Answer, Mr. George Russell *May* 1, 1312
Sheffield Hospital, Questions, Mr. Hopwood; Answers, Mr. George Russell *May* 4, 1480
Hospital Attendants — Metropolitan Asylums Board Hospitals, Question, Sir Lyon Playfair; Answer, Mr. George Russell *May* 7, 1828

VERNEY, Sir H., *Buckingham*
Army—Garrison Rations, 24

VIVIAN, Sir H. Hussey, *Glamorganshire*
Channel Tunnel (Experimental Works), 2R. 1626, 1627

Wales, H.R.H. the Prince and Princess of — Visit to Ireland — The City of Londonderry
Questions, Mr. Parnell; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *April* 24, 666

Wales — Intermediate and Higher Education—The Welsh Colleges
Question, Mr. Morgan Lloyd; Answer, Mr. Mundella *April* 23, 478

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WALKER, Mr. S. (Solicitor General for Ireland), *Londonderry Co.*
Ireland—Charitable Bequests—Bequest of Catherine Eaton, Wicklow, 147
Prisons Act, 1877—Illegal Levy on Co. Cork—Repayment, 21
Ireland—Law and Justice—Questions
Barbavilla Prisoners, 1122
Monaghan Licensing Sessions, 1108
Tubbercurry Case—Payment of Costs of Accused, &c. in Defence, 21
Local Authorities (Expenses of Conferences), Comm. *cl.* 2, 122; *cl.* 3, Amendt. *ib*; *add cl.* 123
Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution), Comm. Schedule 7, 343
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Registration of Voters (Ireland), 2R. 396; Comm. *cl.* 2, 671, 672, 678, 681, 683; *cl.* 5, 708, 710, 713, 971; *cl.* 6, 1329; *add. cl.* 1348, 1349, 1352, 1353, 1355, 1356, 1361, 1370, 1371, 1374, 1375, 1376, 1379, 1380, 1381, 1411, 1413, 1414, 1416; Schedule, 1419
Registration Bills, 1515

WARTON, Mr. C. N., *Bridport*
Barristers Admission (Ireland), 2R. 420
East India Unclaimed Stocks, 2R. 606
Egypt (Expeditionary Force)—Troops at Korti, 964
Highways, 2R. 414
Ireland—Law and Justice—Clerk of the Crown in Dublin, 309
Local Authorities (Expenses of Conferences), Comm. *cl.* 2, Amendt. 122
Parliament—Business of the House, 155, 392
Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution), Comm. Schedule 7, 67, 69, 364, 365, 381; Schedule 8, Amendt. 385, 388; Consid. *add. cl.* 976; Amendt. 981, 983; *cl.* 8, Amendt. 985; *cl.* 9, Amendt. 994, 995; *cl.* 12, Amendt. 1001; *cl.* 22, Amendt. 1011; *cl.* 23, Amendt. 1012; *cl.* 28, 1017; Schedule 3, 1068
Registration (Occupation Voters), Comm. 1718; *cl.* 4, Amendt. 1727, 1728, 1731, 1738, 1739; *cl.* 7, 1760; *cl.* 13, 1766
Registration of Voters (Ireland), 2R. 395; Comm. *cl.* 2, Amendt. 677, 679, 680, 681, 682; *cl.* 6, 763
Registration of Voters (Scotland), Comm. 601, 605
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (No. 2), 2R. Amendt. 398
School Board Elections (Voting), Addition to Select Committee, 607
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Telegraph Acts Amendment, 2R. 121
Waterworks Clauses Act (1847) Amendment, Comm. 428, 430

Water Companies (Regulation of Powers) Bill [H.L.] (*The Earl of Camperdown*)
l. Report of Select Comm. * *April* 27 [No. 86]
Report * *April* 27 (No. 21)

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Water Companies (Regulation of Powers) Bill—cont.
Committee, after short debate *May* 1, 1282
Report * *May* 4 (No. 87)
Read 3ª * *May* 5
c. Read 1° * (*Mr. Ritchie*) *May* 7 [Bill 161]

WATERLOW, Sir S. H., *Gravesend*
Waterworks Clauses Act (1847) Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 1, 1451, 1453, 1455, 1464, 1468

Water Provisional Orders Bill (*Mr. Holms, Mr. Chamberlain*)
c. Ordered * *April* 24
Read 1° * *April* 28 [Bill 142]

Waterworks Clauses Act (1847) Amendment Bill (*Mr. Daniel Grant, Mr. Torrens, Mr. Sclater-Booth, Mr. Arthur Cohen, Mr. Ritchie, Mr. Alderman W. Lawrence, Baron Henry De Worms*)
c. Order for Committee read; Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" *April* 22, 426
After short debate, Amendt. to leave out from "That," add "the Bill be referred to a Select Committee" (*Mr. Coope*); Question proposed, "That the words, &c;" after further short debate, Question put; A. 147, N. 15; M. 132 (D. L. 122)
Main Question again proposed, 430; after short debate, main Question put, and agreed to; Committee—R.P. [Bill 7]
Committee; Report *May* 1, 1450 [Bill 152]

WATKIN, Sir E. W., *Hythe*
Channel Tunnel (Experimental Works), 2R. 302, 304
Law and Police—The Folkestone Abduction Case, 1843
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Infants, Report, *cl.* 3, 619

WAYS AND MEANS (*Questions*)
The Deficit of 1884-5, Questions, Mr. Gorst, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answers, Mr. Hibbert *May* 5, 1638
The Income Tax on Tenant Farmers, Question, Mr. Birkbeck; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *April* 28, 960

Inland Revenue Department
Excise Collection, Question, Mr. Kenny; Answer, Mr. Hibbert *April* 23, 474
Receipts from Income Tax, 1881-4, Question, Mr. Rolls; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *April* 20, 151
The Stamp Duties — Stamps upon Receipts in Payment of Accounts by Cheque, Question, Mr. Barry; Answer, The Attorney General *May* 1, 1314
Stamp Duties on Patent Medicines, Question, Mr. Stuart-Wortley; Answer, Mr. Hibbert *May* 4, 1479

[*cont.*

WAYS AND MEANS—*Inland Revenue Department*—cont.

Stamp Duty on Foreign Bonds, Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, Mr. Hibbert *May* 7, 1854

The New Beer Duty, Questions, Sir Joseph Bailey, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Allsopp; Answers, Mr. Hibbert *May* 5, 1638

The Financial Statement

Incidence of Taxation, Question, Mr. R. H. Paget; Answer, Mr. Hibbert *May* 7, 1827

Revenue and Expenditure, Question, Sir R. Assheton Cross; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *April* 21, 317

Spain and the Wine Duties, Question, Mr. Whitley; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 4, 1501; Questions, Mr. Mac Iver; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *May* 5, 1644

The "Death Duties," Question, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answer, Mr. Hibbert *May* 5, 1640

The Malt Tax, Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Hibbert *May* 4, 1497; Question, Sir Walter B. Barttelot; Answer, Mr. Hibbert, 1516

WAYS AND MEANS

Considered in Committee *April* 30, 1129—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Moved, "That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, there shall be charged, collected, and paid for the year which commenced on the sixth day of April, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five, in respect of all Property, Profits, and Gains mentioned or described as chargeable in the Act of the sixteenth and seventeenth years of Her Majesty's reign, chapter thirty-four, the following Duties of Income Tax (that is to say):

For every Twenty Shillings of the annual value or amount of Property, Profits, and Gains chargeable under Schedules (A), (C), (D), or (E) of the said Act, the Duty of Eight Pence;

And for every Twenty Shillings of the annual value of the occupation of Lands, Tenements, Hereditaments, and Heritages chargeable under Schedule B of the said Act,—

In England, the Duty of Four Pence;

In Scotland and Ireland respectively, the Duty of Three Pence;

Subject to the provisions contained in section one hundred and sixty-three of the Act of the fifth and sixth years of Her Majesty's reign, chapter thirty-five, for the exemption of persons whose income is less than One Hundred and Fifty Pounds, and in section eight of 'The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1876,' for the relief of persons whose income is less than Four Hundred Pounds" (*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*); after long debate, Question put, and agreed to

Resolutions 2 to 6, inclusive, agreed to

(7.) Motion made, and Question put, "That, in lieu of the Duty of Excise now payable on British Spirits under the Act of the twenty-third and twenty-fourth years of Her Majesty's Reign, chapter one hundred and twenty-nine, there shall be charged and paid the Duty of Excise following, that is to say:—

For and upon every gallon, computed at hydrometer proof, of spirits distilled in the United Kingdom, the duty of twelve shillings;

and so in proportion for any less quantity" (*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*); A. 109, N. 27; M. 82 (D. L. 143)

Resolutions 8 to 11, inclusive, agreed to

(12.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Duties of Customs now chargeable upon Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-five, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-six, on the importation thereof into Great Britain or Ireland (that is to say):

Tea . . . the pound . Sixpence"

Amendt. to leave out "Sixpence," insert "Four Pence" (*Mr. Arthur O'Connor*) *v.*; Question, "That 'Sixpence,' &c.," put, and agreed to; main Question put, and agreed to

(13.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That on a day to be fixed by the Commissioners of the Treasury the Duties of Customs now chargeable on Wine shall cease and determine, and that on and after such day there shall be charged the Duties following (that is to say):—

	£	s.	d.
Wine containing less than 30·1 degrees of proof spirit, and less of such Wine, the gallon . .	0	1	0
Wine containing less than 42 degrees of proof spirit, and less of such Wine, the gallon . .	0	2	6

And for every degree of strength beyond the highest above specified an additional Duty of 3d. the gallon" (*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*), 1252; after short debate, Question put; A. 98, N. 26; M. 72 (D. L. 144)

Resolution 14 agreed to

Resolutions reported *May* 1, 1446

Resolution 1 (Income Tax) read a first time

Moved, "That the Resolution be read a second time;" after short debate, Question put, and agreed to; Resolution agreed to

Resolution 2 (Stamp Duties on Account of Property), 1448; after short debate, Resolution agreed to

Remaining Resolutions agreed to

[See title *Customs and Inland Revenue Bill*]

Order for Committee read; Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" *May* 5

[House counted out]

Considered in Committee *May* 7, 1970

Resolved, That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886, the sum of £13,315,334 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom

Resolution reported *May* 8

WEBSTER, Mr. J., *Aberdeen*

Channel Tunnel (Experimental Works), 2R. 1626

WEMYSS, Earl of
Army (Ordnance Department)—Forty-pounder Guns, 802
Burgh Police and Health (Scotland), 2R. 615

WENTWORTH, Lord
Egyptian Loan, 2R. 452

Western Pacific, The—Occupation of Port Hamilton (Corea)
Question, Mr. O'Kelly; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 28, 969; Question, Viscount Lewisham; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *May* 4, 1505

WHITLEY, Mr. E., *Liverpool*
Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution), Comm. Schedule 7, 119; Consid. Schedule 6, 1075
Post Office Mail Contract (Royal Mail Steam Packet Company), Res. 1260
Registration (Occupation Voters), Comm. 1695
Ways and Means—Financial Statement—Spain and the Wine Duties, 1501

WHITWORTH, Mr. B., *Drogheda*
Local Option, 143

WILLIAMSON, Mr. S., *St. Andrews, &c.*
Registration of Voters (Ireland), Comm. *add. cl.* 1384
Registration of Voters (Scotland), Comm. *cl.* 11, Amendt. 1428, 1433, 1437

WILMOT, Sir J. E., *Warwickshire, S.*
Industries (Ireland), Nomination of Select Committee, 784, 787, 1034, 1256
Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution), Consid. Schedule 5, Amendt. 1071
Parliamentary Franchise—Electoral Districts, 312

WILSON, Mr. I., *Middlesborough*
Education Department—Education Loans, 815

WOLFF, Sir H. D., *Portsmouth*
Asia (Central)—Russia and Afghanistan—Afghan Boundary Commission—Recall of Sir Peter Lumsden, 1647, 1848
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Civil Service (Parliamentary Candidature)—Mr. W. Johnston, Inspector of Irish Fisheries, 966
Dardanelles and the Black Sea, 314
Education Department (England and Wales)—School Examinations—The Portsmouth District, 475
Navy Estimates—Seamen and Marines, 267
Parliament—Admission of Strangers to the House—New Regulations, 1116
Business of the House—Vote of Credit, 1519
Parliament—Business of the House—Registration of Voters Bills, Res. 177
Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution), Consid. Schedule 3, 1063
Registration (Occupation Voters), Comm. *add. cl.* 1806
Supply—House of Commons Offices, 900, 903, 905
Vote of Credit—Remaining Charges in the Soudan, &c. Report, 1574

WOODALL, Mr. W., *Stoke-on-Trent*
Industries (Ireland), Nomination of Select Committee, 1048

Woods and Forests—The Forest of Dean
Question, Mr. Ackers; Answer, Mr. Hibbert *May* 5, 1636

Working Classes, Housing of the—Report of the Commissioners
Question, Sir Walter B. Barttelot; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 21, 309

WORTLEY, Mr. C. B. STUART-, *Sheffield*
Ways and Means—Inland Revenue—Stamp Duties—Patent Medicines, 1479

WYNDHAM, Hon. P. S., *Cumberland, W.*
Army—Brigade of Guards, 964

YORKE, Mr. J. R., *Gloucestershire, E.*
Spain—Zamora Waterworks Company, 1834

END OF VOLUME CCXCVII., AND FIFTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1884-5.

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